

GLOBAL Leaders TODAY

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Global Leaders Today Turns 1! Anniversary Edition

ALSO INSIDE

Meet Our Board Of Advisors
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From the Editor

Dear Readers,

We are incredibly excited to release our first-anniversary issue of Global Leaders Today! On this momentous occasion, we have also taken the opportunity to introduce to you our esteemed members of the Advisory Board of Global Leaders Today. It is an honour to officially welcome each of them to our Advisory Board. We look forward to growing our organization with their valuable insights.

In this issue, we celebrate one glorious year of Global Leaders Today! At GLT, we take celebrations seriously, and we give you a glimpse of all the festivities that took place to celebrate all our milestones. We also bring you on a trip back to 2020, highlighting the beautiful year and the inspiring leaders that arose during the difficult time of the pandemic.

We also give you a glimpse of the pioneering event, International Real Estate Community Management Summit(IRECMS), held in December for those who could not attend the brilliant event. Ending on a sweet note, we give you our fresh perspective for 2022!

Conclusively, I would like to thank the team at Global Leaders Today for their efforts in putting together a compelling edition. We hope we can continue adding value to your lives.

Happy New Year to all our beautiful readers; we wish you all the best!

Warm Regards,
Sherlyn Gomes
Editor at Global Leaders Today

in @ f gltmagazine

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If you would like to get involved or have any news you would like to share, please contact us on (913) 380-9528 or email us at editor@globalleaderstoday.online

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Introducing The Advisory Board Of Global Leaders Today



PROF. JEEVAN D'MELLO

CEO, Zenesis Corp (United Arab Emirates)

Professionally trained as an Architect, Prof. D'Mello is the pioneer of the Community Management industry in the Middle East. Popularly known as the 'Father of Community Management in the Middle East', he set up the region's biggest community management company for Emaar Properties, managing some 170 towers and 14,000 homes and the tallest tower in the world, Burj Khalifa. He also set up Nakheel Community Management that is responsible for managing iconic master communities like the Palm Island, Jumeirah Islands, the Gardens, among many others. He has also worked on several other iconic master plans in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

A US, Dubai and Bahrain-authorized lecturer, in 2008 he became the first certified Community Management professional in the region earning the CMCA, AMS, LSM and PCAM credentials. He received a doctorate in Educational Management at Aztec University, Mexico and serves as their visiting Professor of Real Estate. Prof. D'Mello also teaches at the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance and several other institutions around the world. In 2011 he received the Community Association Institute's 'Rising Star Award' and in 2014 the prestigious 'President's Award' in the USA. He has received awards and accolades from across the world including the recent 'Visionary Leader in Community Management' at IRECMS Dubai.

A regular on the international speaking circuit, he has spoken in conferences and workshops around the world including the USA, Spain, Italy, San Marino, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, South Africa, India, Bahrain and the UAE.

Prof. D'Mello is a board member of the US-based Community Associations Institute and the prestigious Rotary Club of Dubai, which is focused on humanitarian services.



Welcoming Prof. Jeevan D'Mello To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Prof. Jeevan D'Mello to our prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, he adds, "I am very excited about being part of the Advisory Board. Indeed it is a great honour to be in the company of luminaries and I am grateful for being invited."

Prof. D'Mello is one of the leading figures in Real Estate and Customer Experience in the Middle East Region and the GLT team is delighted to have his decades of experience and agility to help guide the magazine. Talking about how he would like to contribute, he says, "I believe GLT is a great platform to showcase global talent and leadership in the world today. We live in a very distracted world and young professionals need good role models and positive stories on successes and tips to manage failures. I would like to contribute by highlighting such stories from my region."

In conclusion, he shares his views about the magazine, "GLT is a very high-quality top-notch publication that is on par with some of the world's best magazines. It's hard to believe it's only one year old. I am sure, very quickly it will be one of the most sought after journals for both global leaders and for those who seek to learn and get inspired by them."

DR. ARIELLA ROSITA KING

Founder, The Ariel Foundation International (Switzerland)

Dr. Ariella (Ariel) Rosita King (www.drarielking.com) founded The Ariel Foundation International (www.arielfoundation.org) in 2002 as a non-profit organization with an international focus on children and youth-inspired leadership and participation worldwide.

Dr. Ariel King is a Rotarian for over 20 years. She is the Main Representative at the United Nations (Geneva, New York and Vienna) for AFI, with Special Economic, Cultural and Social Council Special (ECOSO). She has also represented other NGOs in Geneva since 2008, the United Nations in Vienna (UNOV) since 2010 and United Nations in New York since 2000.

Dr. King is also an NGO Representative at the European Parliament. Dr. King's life focus is on inspiring leadership and participation of the world's children and youth. Ariel Foundation International is a member of EuroChild, Dr. King was a Trustee for Children's Rights Alliance England (CRAE), Now Just for Law Kids, and the Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI) United Kingdom.

Dr. King is also the Founder (2000), and President of Ariel Consulting International, Inc., which creates and enhances Public-Private Partnerships in international diplomacy and policy. She has over 35 years of experience in international public policy and international management in government, business and NGOs. As a Professor in International Health, Management, Policy and Environment she has taught at Universities in the USA, Europe and Africa. Dr. King has published on the topics of Kangaroo Newborn Baby Care, International Health Policy and Management, Medical Ethics, Organ Transplantation, National Essential Drugs Policy, HIV/AIDS; Breast Cancer; Violence Against Women; Youth Participation at the United Nations and Children's Human Rights.



Welcoming Dr. Ariella King To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Dr. Ariella King to the prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, she adds, "Being asked to be on the GLT Advisory Board is a rare opportunity to serve with colleagues from various fields from all over the world to be of service in bringing ideas, people, and a sense of wonder to our amazingly inter-connected world. In short, it is not only an opportunity for me to contribute to the GLT team and family but also to learn and grow. Then I will once again pass it on to our young leaders worldwide."

With her extensive business knowledge and leading one of the most renowned organizations in the world, Dr. King will be a great asset to GLT, she says, "One of the ways that I will contribute is to bring the international voices of young leaders (up to 35) to the forefront while also exporting them to the GLT Magazine along with all the advice, services and leaders that it highlights. In addition, in all that I do I will remember our foundation vision: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, then when?" -Hillel If not me, then who? - Dr. King"

In conclusion, she shares her views about GLT, "GLT is the pinnacle of the highlight of Leadership Worldwide. It allows us to learn, see, and experience leaders, businesses, opportunities that are rare and now come in an extremely accessible format - our magazine. It is an outstanding resource not only for those who are 'Global Leaders', but for all who want to know, understand, imitate, and be inspired to know that what they would like to do and be is possible."

DR.SOPON

PORNCHOKCHAI

President, FIABCI (Thailand)

Dr. Pornchokchai has had experience in real estate research and valuation since 1982. He teaches valuers, brokers, developers, financiers, planners and consultants at undergraduate and graduate levels in Thailand and abroad. He gained a PhD in land and housing from AIT and had further property valuation training from LRTI-Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and housing from KU Leuven (Belgium).

Currently, Dr. Pornchokchai is the President of FIABCI Thai, the Thai Appraisal and Estate Agents Foundation and the Agency for Real Estate Affairs, IAAO representative to Thailand, Director of Thai Real Estate Business School, and a member of the Global Valuation Forum of the Appraisal Foundation (USA).

His research masterpieces include the discovery of 1,020 slums (1985), CAMA (computer-assisted mass appraisal) modelling (1990), forecast of 300,000 unoccupied housing units (1995 and 1998), study for property information centre (2000), roadmap for valuation, Ministry of Finance, Vietnam (2006), Ministry of Finance, Indonesia (2008), World Bank Indonesia (2010), Ministry of Finance, Cambodia (2012), UN World Cities (2015), ASEAN Property Surveys (2017), Global Municipal (2017), and Bangkok Zoo relocation (2019).



Welcoming Dr. Sapon Pornchokchai To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Dr. Sapon Pornchokchai to the prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, he adds, “It is an incredible opportunity to be a part of Global Leaders Today Advisory Board. I looking forward to sharing my expertise and using it to guide the magazine.”

Dr. Pornchokchai with his decades of experience, leading some of the biggest organizations globally will greatly aid GLT to provide greater value to all. Talking about his contribution to the magazine, he says, “I will help GLT gain new insights based on my experience and help the brand advance in every aspect.”

In conclusion, he shares his views about GLT, “The magazine has wonderfully curated the incredible journeys of multiple leaders in a compelling format, with thought-provoking articles that offer great insights. I am glad to be a part of GLT and look forward to many more years of success with the magazine.”

NKEMDILIM UWAJE

BEGHO

CEO, Future Software Resources Ltd. (Nigeria)

Currently, the CEO of Future Software Resources Ltd. (Futuresoft), one of Nigeria’s leading digital & technology solutions companies, provides a broad range of solutions for the scaling African enterprise, to consistently attract and retain its target audience, optimize its processes and increase its bottom line.

Futuresoft has served over 170 clients across 20 industries and has trained over 1,500 CEOs and executives in Digital & Social Media Marketing. Begho is recognized as an Obama African Leader, Forbes’s Top Ten Female Tech Founders in Africa, Global Digital Women top 10 Most Inspiring Women in Africa, Lionesses of Africa top 100 Women and Ventures Africa 42 most Innovative Africans. She serves on the board of Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC as well as the board of the Society for Corporate Governance in Nigeria where she chairs the Digital and Innovation Committee. She also serves in the leadership of the NESG Digital Economy Thematic group; is a member of The Nigerian National IT Software Committee and the Nigerian Electronic Voting Think Tank where she actively contributes to the advancement of digitalization and shaping policy to support its inclusive delivery.



Welcoming Nkemdilim Uwaje Begho To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Nkemdilim Uwaje Begho to the prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, she adds, “It’s a great honour to be part of the carefully curated Global Leaders Today and I am excited to contribute my industry experience and knowledge to the growth and sustainability of this important magazine that has taken a unique approach in showcasing and highlighting the phenomenal journeys of a diverse suite of global leaders.”

With her extensive business acumen, Begho will be a great asset to GLT, she says, “I am known for my attention to detail, the ability to pinpoint key issues and ask questions that unlock alternative viewpoints and have designed and led strategy and implementation of digital marketing and digital transformation projects across Africa. My industry experience coupled with my entrepreneurial background and standing within the global leadership space will allow me to make valuable contributions to achieving the mission of Global Leaders Today!”

In conclusion, she shares her views about GLT, “I am very impressed with the diversity of leaders featured in Global Leaders Today Magazine - they are from countries across the globe - USA, Australia, Kenya, Iraq, India, China, Japan, Israel, Denmark, New Zealand, Nigeria, Malawi and the United Kingdom. I am especially happy to see features on African Leaders telling African stories of leadership, professional journeys and experts that are working hard at creating sustainable socio-economic development for the content.”

LARRY ROBERTSON

Founder, Lighthouse Consulting (United States Of America)

As an innovation advisor and the Founder of Lighthouse Consulting, he has advised leaders in growth, strategy, adaptability, and innovation for more than three decades. He's been described as 'a big firm consulting brain, without all the worthless baggage.' His knowledge is deep, and his style is direct, passionate, and creative. The results, and nearly 30 years in business, speak for themselves.

Robertson is the award-winning author of three books: A Deliberate Pause, The Language of Man, and his newly released Rebel Leadership: How to Thrive in Uncertain Times. He's a popular columnist for Inc. Magazine, The Creativity Post, SmartBrief on Leadership, and CEOWorld Magazine, as well as a regular contributor to Fast Company, Thrive Global, Productive Flourishing, and other respected publications.

In 2021 Robertson was named a Fulbright Scholar, a rarity for non-academic professionals. He's a sought-after keynote speaker—as engaging, impactful, and memorable in a one-on-one podcast as he is in front of a 3,000+ audience. He's a proud graduate of Stanford University and Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, and a former Adjunct Professor of Entrepreneurship at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business.



Welcoming Larry Robertson To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Larry Robertson to our prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, he adds, "It's an honor and a privilege to be able to contribute to this magazine and its mission."

Robertson, an expert on leadership and its evolution during recent times will be a great asset to the GLT team and adds how he would like to contribute, "The GLT team consciously seeks a diverse range of perspectives and experiences - a truly important guiding principle. My hope is to add to that quilt of views and experience as a member of the Board of Advisors."

In conclusion, he shares his views about the magazine, "GLT is a much needed fresh view on leadership in the world today. From its crisp presentation, to its truly unique range of stories and perspectives, GLT is an important resources for leaders hoping to have lasting impact in today's rapidly changing world."

JEANNE AGIUS

Founder, Self Care Journey Coaching (Canada)

Jeanne Agius is a certified holistic health coach, life coach, personal trainer and nutrition coach (in-training), and a mind-body practitioner. She is known for being every woman's Self-Care Coach and is currently an Executive Contributor for a digital global magazine as a Holistic Lifestyle Expert. Her work has led her to be featured in a number of publications such as Yahoo Finance as one of the Top 20 Female Entrepreneurs, The Digital Journal as the Top 20 Female Entrepreneurs to look out for in 2021, Thrive Global, Authority, Medium, and Brainz Online Magazine. Agius is a 2021 honoree of the CREA Global Awards for top entrepreneurs, influential leaders, and innovators who have been recognized for their accomplishments in the areas of mental health. With decades of experience in the fitness industry and several certifications in the holistic health and wellness space, she has been fortunate to help teach hundreds of do-it-all women to get to the root of their sabotage, restore balance and teach them how to build a strong body, mind and lifestyle so they can re-ignite their inner spark and reclaim their time, energy, and joy with her signature Self-Care System.

Since becoming a mom of two and being the co-creator of her dream life with her husband, she has been a frequent speaker on guiding women, especially moms, to prioritize themselves with holistic self-care practices without feeling guilt, despite the many hats they wear. She is currently working on her book to redefine self-care for today's women because she knows the right self-care isn't always easy but essential. She is dedicated to helping women create a thriving lifestyle through her signature self-care system so they can reap the benefits of living their life to their fullest potential, while being healthy, happy, and energized!



Welcoming Jeanne Agius To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Jeanne Agius to the prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, she adds, "I am honored to be a part of the Global Leaders Today advisory board. I'm looking forward to enriching my expertise and enhancing my professional visibility. It's a rewarding opportunity to be able to share my knowledge, interact with others, and offer some of my insights."

Agius will propel GLT's mission of leadership combined with wellness and well-being, a critical component to be a successful leader in the 21st century. Talking about her contribution to the magazine, she says, "I will help GLT gain new insights and provide my two cents with any decision-making or exploration of opportunities. Based on GLT's purpose and objectives, I will contribute to the organization's goals and desired outcomes."

In conclusion, she shares her views about GLT, "I love how the magazine highlights the world's entrepreneurs and thought leaders by providing a platform with appeal and thought-provoking articles and interviews. I am an advocate of personal development in the business, mindset, innovation, leadership, and entrepreneurial space and I think the magazine's focus will help many future entrepreneurs and leaders."

MARIO TURA

DE MARCO

Founder, *Administratore Evoluto* (Italy)

Mario Tura De Marco is one of the leading coaches in the world of real estate management in Italy and helps managers develop their human and professional potential through *Administratore Evoluto*®, his Training Path that is able to teach a consolidated method resulting from the endless study, experimentation and experience gained during twelve years as a condominium manager and sixteen years as a trainer, consultant, coach and mentor.

Before acquiring this position, De Marco has done countless jobs, some that were humble and modest that helped him in the development of his multifaceted and volcanic personality. Determination, courage, confidence, constancy and self-esteem led him from taking night shifts in the warehouse of a company that produces industrial bread, to pave the way for leadership training in condominium management, a sector capable of producing 1% of Italian GDP, all passing through numerous challenges.



Welcoming Mario Tura De Marco To The Advisory Board

Global Leaders Today is delighted to welcome Mario Tura De Marco to our prestigious Board of Advisors, while talking about being a part of the Board, he adds, “I am pleased to be a part of a magazine who strives to raise the standards of leadership especially since these ideas are shared at a global level and this contributes to welcoming new ways of living and thinking.”

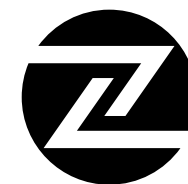
De Marco with his decades of experience in Condo Management will be a valuable addition to the team and adds how he would like to contribute, “I would like to contribute by speaking to my clients about GLT during my training events and sharing the inspiring stories of the magazine to take their vision ahead. And to contribute to the growth of GLT in whatever way I can.”

In conclusion, he shares his views about the magazine, “The magazine is very well crafted, it is rich, professional, with attractive graphics, well-formatted and stimulating content. I look forward to being a part of GLT and helping it grow further.”

2022

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NEWS

Chile Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage In Historic Vote



Chile's government passed a law to legalize same-sex marriage on Tuesday, December 7, a significant milestone for the conservative South American nation after a decade-long legal battle. The Senate of Chile and the lower house of parliament both voted heavily in favour of the bill, which had previously been partially approved in November before the Senate sent it back to the committee to clarify ambiguities. Current President Sebastian Pinera, who will leave office in March, has fully backed the bill and is expected to sign it into law soon.

The vote is the culmination of a process that began in 2007 when then-President Michelle Bachelet pushed Congress to pass a same-sex law. According to the Human Rights Campaign, Chile will now join 30 other countries where same-sex marriage is legal — including Costa Rica, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay in Latin America.

“Today is a historic day, our country has approved same-sex marriage, one more step forward in terms of justice, in terms of equality, recognizing that love is love,” said Minister of Social Development Karla Rubilar after the vote.

New Zealand Makes Plans To Ban Cigarettes For Future Generations

New Zealand has made plans to ban young people from ever buying cigarettes in their lifetime in one of the world's most brutal crackdowns on the tobacco industry, arguing that other efforts to extinguish smoking will take too long. People aged 14 and under in 202

to purchase cigarettes in the Pacific country of 5 million; part of proposals unveiled on Thursday, December 9 that will also put restrictions on the number of retailers authorised to sell tobacco and reduce nicotine levels in all products.

According to government figures, currently, 11.6% of the population in New Zealand aged over 15 smoke, a proportion that has risen to 29% among indigenous Maori adults. In the coming months, the government will consult with a Maori health task force before introducing the legislation into parliament in June next year to make it law by the end of 2022.



“We want to make sure young people never start smoking so we will make it an offence to sell or supply smoked tobacco products to new cohorts of youth,” New Zealand Associate Minister of Health Ayesha Verrall said in a statement. “If nothing changes, it would be decades till Maori smoking rates fall below 5%, and this government is not prepared to leave people behind.”

Crypto Millionaires Have Moved To Puerto Rico As US Territory Becomes A Tax Haven

Under a law called Act 22, people who live in Puerto Rico for at least six months are exempt from taxes on dividends, interest and capital gains — meaning they can cash in on earnings from crypto and other investments without paying any tax. In a bid to take advantage of the lax tax laws, leading crypto firms, including the hedge fund NFT marketplace SuperRare and Pantera Capital, have left New York and Silicon Valley for Puerto Rico in recent years.

Other crypto investors, flushed with cash amid the crypto boom, have used their little-taxed profits to buy properties in San Juan with a vision to build a new society called ‘Puertopia.’ Crypto Investor and YouTube star Logan Paul also shifted



to the country earlier this year and has been renting a mansion for about \$US55,000 (\$A73,000) per month — a move that Logan admitted was mainly motivated by the country's tax policies.

“In Puerto Rico you're motivated to do more and make more money because of the implications that come with it,” Logan said in an interview.

Elon Musk Says Tesla Will Accept Cryptocurrency Dogecoin For Merch, Pushes Crypto Up 24%



Tesla CEO Elon Musk on Tuesday, December 14, announced that his electric automaker would accept cryptocurrency Dogecoin for the purchase of their merchandise. Taking to Twitter, Musk, an avid supporter of cryptocurrency, said, “Tesla will make some merch buyable with Doge & see how it goes” Following the news, Dogecoin increased by 24 per cent to \$0.195.

The EV maker sells merchandise such as mini models of its vehicles, apparel, belt buckle, ‘Cyberwhistle’ modelled after its much-awaited Cybertruck and quad bike ‘Cyberquad’ for children. With a following of more than 66 million, Elon Musk had asked his followers in May if they wanted Tesla to accept Dogecoin in a Twitter poll.

Earlier this year, Elon Musk had led to a fall in Bitcoin price, the largest cryptocurrency, after he had tweeted that Tesla had “suspended vehicle purchases using bitcoin,” out of concern over “rapidly increasing use of fossil fuels for Bitcoin mining.”

Business Has a New Favorite Buzzword: Journey



As companies grapple with the pandemic, rising inflation and the great resignation, they all agree: It has been quite a journey. Mentions of the word ‘journey’ by S&P 500 Executives on conference calls in 2021 have risen by almost 70% to 3,091, making it one of the fastest-growing corporate buzzwords in recent history. The term was rarely used before -- in fact, it was used just once in 2001 -- but it is now used to describe practically any kind of business goal, even if it's mundane.

Types of corporate journeys vary widely; they can be strategic, pricing or even

inclusion and diversity. Typically they are strategic like CVS Health Corp. is on a journey to evolve their business model by closing hundreds of brick-and-mortar pharmacies and focusing on their digital healthcare services.

Grant Barrett, Co-Host of the public radio show and a Linguist and shares his opinion, “You're always looking for new ways to say the same things. I like ‘journey’ for this purpose. It's less clinical and corporate than saying something like, ‘during the last eight quarters,’ and it's more affirming than talking about a period of transition or uncertainty.”

New York City Has Named Its First Female Police Chief

Keechant Sewell is a 23-year veteran of the Nassau Police Department in Long Island, where she became Chief of Detectives in September 2020. Sewell, originally from the New York borough of Queens, previously served in New York's Nassau County narcotics and major case units and as a hostage negotiator. When she will take over the department in January 2022, Sewell will also become the third black commissioner to take the helm of NYPD.

Speaking to media on Wednesday morning, December 15th, Mr Adams - a former NYPD captain - said that women often are “sitting on the bench” and “never allowed to get in the game” when it comes to policing. “That is stopping today,” he added.



Sewell taking on the position as the first female Police Chief, said, “I bring a different perspective to make sure the department looks like the city it serves and making the decision, just as Mayor Adams did, to elevate women and people of colour to leadership positions.” She added that as commissioner, she plans to be ‘laser focused’ on violent crimes, particularly gun crimes.

UAE Will Switch Weekend to Saturday-Sunday, Adopts 4 ½ Day Week



The United Arab Emirates has made plans to move its weekend to Saturday and Sunday for state employees and had broken ranks with the rest of the Gulf as it accelerated a push to draw in international business and investment.

Like other Gulf nations, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE has a Sunday-to-Thursday working week. The government said the changes will allow the UAE to align more closely with global markets and will come into effect on January 1 and apply to the public sector and schools. All private schools in Dubai will move to the new weekend, the KHDA schools authority in Dubai said in a tweet on Tuesday, December 7, adding it is 'working closely with our community to ensure a smooth transition.'

There will be a four 1/2-day working week with Friday -- a holy day in Islam -- being a half-day, the federal government said in a statement. The government, however, didn't say whether the private sector would adopt the new four 1/2-day week, with the door being left open for private companies to decide how to allocate resources.

Zuckerberg And Chan Have Pledged \$500 Million To Create An AI Institute At Harvard

According to a spokesperson for the organization, the company that runs the philanthropy of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan, his wife is investing up to \$3.4 billion to advance human health over 10 to 15 years. The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, or CZI, was announced Tuesday, December 7. Its new effort aims to "observe, measure, and analyze any biological process throughout the human body - across spatial scales and in real-time."

The philanthropy said in its announcement that it would focus its science work over the next ten years on developing new research, institutes and technologies that can help its mission. Jeff MacGregor, a CZI spokesperson, said \$500 million would be given to establishing an institute at Harvard University that focuses on artificial intelligence. The institute will get the funding over the next 15 years, will be named after Karen Kempner Zuckerberg, Zuckerberg's mother.

MacGregor said \$600 to 900 million



would go towards a new biomedical imaging institute at CZI. Another \$1 billion will be given to the Chan Zuckerberg Biohub Network, a new initiative that seeks to bring together scientific institutions to pursue 'grand scientific challenges.'

In A First, Luxury Brand, Chanel Has Picked A Fashion Outsider As Their New CEO

The haute-couture house, Chanel has announced on Wednesday, December 15, that Leena Nair, the former Unilever Human-Resources Chief, would take up the role of CEO in January. She will be replacing Alain Wertheimer, Chanel's Co-Owner. Nair is set to become the company's first Woman Chief and one of the few women of colour in the industry's exclusive leadership ranks.

Nair, who is of British Indian descent, will join the industry rocked by the pandemic as stores have shut down and consumers have flocked to e-commerce. And unlike its competitors — Versace, Prada, and Gucci — Chanel hasn't shifted online, making Nair's job more arduous.



However, Nair brings a bold vision with her. Recent interviews have shown that Nair wasn't afraid to speak about the need for global leaders to make companies more inclusive. "I believe every voice matters," she said in a 2019 interview with the cloud company KRISIN. "Inclusion is at the heart of everything I do."

Scotland Marks End To Coal Power As They Blow Up The Last Coal-Powered Chimney



Scotland has marked the end of its coal-powered era by demolishing the massive chimney at its last remaining coal plant at Longannet in Fife. The chimney, Scotland's largest freestanding structure, dominated the skyline for more than half a century before it was destroyed on Thursday, December 9 morning with 700kg of explosives.

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's First Minister, who pressed the ignition button on the controlled implosion, described the demolition as "a symbolic reminder that we have ended coal-fired power generation in Scotland, as we work in a fair and just way towards becoming a net zero nation by 2045".

Sturgeon said Scotland plans to generate half of its overall energy consumption from renewable sources by 2030 by investing in hydrogen, renewables and energy storage to help tackle the climate crisis "in a way that leaves no one behind." Over the next decade, she said growth in these sectors would be "transformative for Scotland, delivering further good, green jobs, strengthened energy security, and benefits for local communities".

Needle-Free Air-Powered COVID-19 Vaccine Trial Begins In UK

Scientists at the University of Cambridge on December 14, Tuesday, began a clinical trial of an air-powered needle-free vaccine, which is expected to help combat future variants of COVID-19. Professor Jonathan Heeney developed it at the University of Cambridge and spin-out company DIOSynVax; the new DIOSvax technology is dubbed a next-generation coronavirus vaccine administered through a blast of air that will deliver the dose into the skin.



It offers a possible alternative to people who fear needle-based vaccination jabs. If successful, it could be scaled up and manufactured to boost global vaccination efforts, particularly in middle and low-income countries. "The response of the scientific and medical communities to the development and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines has been incredible, but as new variants emerge and immunity begins to

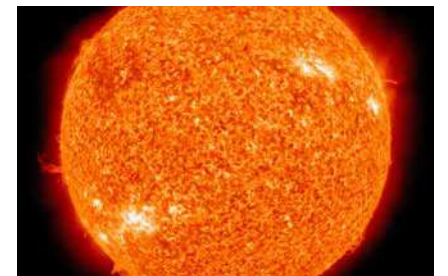
wane, we need newer technologies," said Heeney.

"It's vital that we continue to develop new generation vaccine candidates ready to help keep us safe from the next virus threats. Our vaccine is innovative, both in terms of the way it primes the immune system to respond with a broader protective response to coronaviruses and how it is delivered," he said.

For The First Time in Human History, NASA Probe Has 'Touched' The Sun

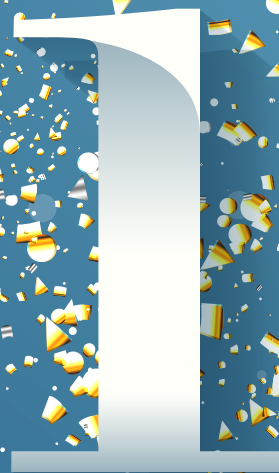
In a marvellous historic first, a human-made spacecraft has swooped in and made contact with the Sun. On 28 April 2021, NASA's Parker Solar Probe flew into and through the solar corona, the upper atmosphere of the Sun. Not only did the spacecraft live to tell the tale – proving the efficacy of Parker's high-tech heat shielding – it took in situ measurements, giving us a wealth of never-before-seen data on the heart of our Solar System.

During the historic moment, as the probe passed through the corona on one of its flybys, it transmitted back to Earth images of 'coronal streamers,' structures where particles slowed down because of strong magnetic forces. This was the first time these 'pseudostreamers,' as NASA called them, were seen up-close; they are visible from Earth during solar eclipses but had not been viewed at their origin before.



"Parker Solar Probe' Probe' touching the Sun" is a monumental moment for solar science and a truly remarkable feat," said Astrophysicist Thomas Zurbuchen, Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters. "Not only does this milestone provide us with deeper insights into our Sun's evolution and its impacts on our Solar System, but everything we learn about our own star also teaches us more about stars in the rest of the Universe."

GLOBAL LEADERS TODAY TURNS



ANNIVERSARY C E L E B R A T I O N

GLT Now Goes Quarterly!

Global Leaders Today is proud to announce the completion of one year of sharing inspiring leadership stories. We would like to thank our entire team working relentlessly at Global Leaders Today, our staff writers, the design team, the administration department, the management and all our freelancers for their contribution to making this magazine a success. We would also like to thank our leaders who came forward to share their brilliant stories and gave our readers an insight into the struggles they had to endure to reach their peak. And last but not least, we would like to thank each and every one of our readers for always supporting us and being with us every step of the way.

While the pandemic brought the world to a halt, leadership evolved with an empathetic approach. It served as an inspiration to start a magazine where such stories could be told as powerful reminders to aspiring leaders across the globe that great leadership can help us endure the toughest of times- in business and in life.

During these past twelve months, the magazine has curated phenomenal journeys of leaders in the arena of technology, environment, politics, business, art, social causes and more. We have found leaders creating an impact in countries as diverse as the USA, Australia, Kenya, Iraq, India, China, Japan, Israel, Denmark, New Zealand, Nigeria, Malawi and the United Kingdom and hope to cover every country in the world soon.

GLT carefully curates all the content featured in the magazine, every profile featured is selected after extensive research, in-depth analysis, and a stringent set of established parameters by the GLT team. The organization intends to ensure that we profile a leader who has an authentic story to share and a purpose that goes beyond the financial motivators to serve a larger cause. We seek to identify leaders who drive the phenomenal holistic growth of their companies, their employees, their stakeholders, and the larger community that they serve and are glad to note that we have accomplished this goal in 2021.

2021 has been an incredible journey for us at Global Leaders Today, sharing insights from top leaders in our articles to collaborating with global events such as IRECMS and Global Business Forum - ASEAN with many more lined up for 2022. While we are proud that we released an issue every month, GLT will now shift to a quarterly magazine but will introduce verticals of the magazine that will be released every month. We hope you will support us during this transition and help us grow the magazine with every step we take.

We are overwhelmed by the response we have received this year and are glad that we were able to publish an issue every month in 2021. However, GLT has now decided to shift to a quarterly magazine but will introduce verticals of the magazine that will be released every month to keep all our dear readers engaged. We hope our readers will support us during this transition and help us grow the magazine with every step we take.

In the future, GLT plans to establish an online learning platform to help leaders across the world enhance their leadership skills as the world continues to evolve. We also plan to host our first GLT Awards for Inspiring Leaders in 2022, and we look forward to numerous nominations when we make our announcement in the future.

This one year has been filled with multiple milestones for our organization, and we hope that with each passing year, we may be able to empower, enrich and add more verticals to our brand that can connect to all our stakeholders. Cheers to the Global Leaders Today family!

Celebrating One Year Of Global Leaders Today

“

The magazine is fantastic. Huge TA DA to the entire team. Here is to your continued success. ”

Joel Zeff

*Live and Virtual Keynote Speaker,
Founder of Jol Zeff Creative*

“

Thank you for the feature GLT Magazine! Honored to have been included in this list alongside other inspiring people ”

Latifa Bin Haider
Founder, Baytuki



“

CX and Customer Happiness - what an honour and a privilege to be featured on the front page of Global Leaders Today Magazine as a top CX Leader in the Middle East, and in the company of so many other amazing & passionate leaders from the Region. ”

Dr. Debbie Stanford-Kristiansen
General Manager, Bahrain IECC



“

Such an honour to be included in such an inspiring and value-creating group. Thank you Sherlyn Gomes and Global Leaders Today Magazine, and keep up the good work. ”

Larry Robertson

Founder of Lighthouse Consulting



“

It's Customer Service Week (Oct 4 - 8 2021) and what better way to celebrate it than being published on the front page of Global Leaders Today Magazine, one of the most respected magazines on global leaders along with an august company of great CX leaders and my fellow JURY members of the Customer Happiness Summit and Awards, Dr. Debbie Stanford-Kristiansen, Dr. Louise Lambert, Craig Lee “Transforming Experiences”, Hani Masgidi and Kristina Vaneva. Thank you Global Leaders Today for considering me and my colleagues as leaders in the CX World in the Middle East. ”

Prof Jeevan D'Mello
CEO of Zenesis Corp

“

I'm honoured to be featured in the June edition of Global Leaders Today Magazine! Thank you Sherlyn Gomes for this heartfelt conversation. ”

Dr Oleg Konovalov
*Member of Thinkers50 Radar,
Consultant, C-Suite coach*



“My profile was posted in the August edition of Global Leaders Today magazine. I was delighted to be interviewed by them and in the process become better acquainted with their professional and stylish publication. I suggest you browse through the useful and inspiring stories in the magazine.”

Ken Pasternak
Keynote Speaker, Brand Ambassador
at Hinsta Performance



“

It is an honour to be featured and be in the company of so many esteemed leaders - Thank you!”

Dr Maja Zelihic
Interim Dean Of Forbes Business School

“

Welcome November, Thanksgiving Month, and what better way to celebrate it than being published on Global Leaders Today Magazine, one of the most respected magazines on global leaders. Thank you Global Leaders Today Magazine.”

Madelin Santana
Client Engagement Partner, Degreed



“

The issue is great. It's well laid out, beautiful to look at, and has solid content. I hate wasting my time reading fluff, so this was nice.”

Dr Louise Lambert
Associate Professor, Canadian
University Dubai

“

I am honoured to have Global Leaders Today Magazine highlight my life's path in a recent article.”

Dr Diane Hamilton
Founder, Tonerra

“

Honoured to have been featured on Global Leaders Today Magazine - explaining my story of how I got to coliving and beyond. That's one of the first interviews that actually went beyond the pure professional part, exploring also what influenced me in my childhood and which experiences led me to believe in the entire coliving movement. Thanks, Sherlyn Gomes for this!”

Gui Perdrix
Director at Co-Liv



“Thank you Global Leaders Today Magazine and thank you so much Sherlyn Gomes for your work and support. Every day, every day, I always remember the words of when I met Paolo Gallo “don’t tell me what you can do, but tell me what you can be useful in, and to whom!!!” In addition to being simply thrilled and honoured, If someone thought of me, I owe a lot to these people.”

Fausto Turco
CEO, SI-NET S.R.L.



“

Honored to be selected to appear in this new online magazine, Global Leaders Today Magazine! Thanks Stacey Morrison it was great working with you! #globalleaders #remarkable”

Sue Falcone
CEO & Founder, Remarkable! A
Speaker's Bureau



“

I am delighted and it is a huge and incomparable honor, as CEO and Founder of Urbefincas and Founder of Administrapolis, to share the cover of the December issue of the prestigious Global Leaders Today magazine in Dubai together with the cast of expert colleagues worldwide in the Community Management sector and whose content collects our opinions on business activity in each of our countries”

Fausto Turco
CEO, SI-NET S.R.L.



“

5 October was Global CX Day. (Although we know it is a 365 day quest!). And a great way to celebrate it was being published on the front page of Global Leaders Today Magazine, a respected magazine on global leaders in the company of great CX leaders and fellow JURY members of the Customer Happiness Summit and Awards, Dr. Debbie Stanford-Kristiansen, Jeevan D'Mello GArch, CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM, Hani Masgidi, Kristina Vaneva and Dr. Louise Lambert.”

Craig Lee
Director Strategy & Transformation,
Customer Experience Group

“

It is an honour to be featured and be in the company of so many esteemed leaders - Thank you!”

Dr Maja Zelihic
Interim Dean Of Forbes Business
School

A GLT THROWBACK TO 2021!

We are glad to have been a monthly magazine in 2021. Here is a throwback into the wonderful year we had at GLT.



2021 THROWBACK
January


Transforming Into A Leader

- Sherlyn Gomes
JANUARY 2021


■ Transparency is key

Your team is built and centred around trust. Nurture it and tend to it by always keeping your employees in the loop. As rightly said by John Hingley, Co-founder of Startup Dasheroo, you need to be as transparent as you can with your team members. The more they know, the more you all are part of the same dream and vision, and you'll all work harder to get where you need to go as a team. If you're keeping information from your team members, they'll lose trust and start to feel like they're not contributing to the bigger picture. That's when they look elsewhere.

■ Walk The Talk

Always remember to model the qualities that you would like to see in your employees. Your team will look up to you as their role model. You want your employees to incorporate a skill or habit? You do it first and watch them follow. Research suggests that teammates with leaders who set an example for their team show higher levels of motivation and are more likely to imitate their leaders' qualities. They also tend to be more optimistic and have higher standards of performance.

"As a leader, a lot of your job is to make those people successful. It's less about trying to be successful (yourself), and more about making sure you have good people and your work is to remove that barrier, remove roadblocks for them so that they can be successful in what they do. So that's how I've always thought about it." Quoted by Sundar Pichai, the CEO of Alphabet and Google at Think Marketing.

Ultimately, great leaders are the ones that build successful companies, high-performing, and efficient teams, and most importantly help create more leaders and success stories.

How do you become the Herb Kelleher or the Richard Branson of the Corporate world? How did they end up becoming the legendary leaders that transformed not only their companies but revolutionized the face of their entire industry? Was it their emotional intelligence or their charm and charisma that got their employees to give their all to the company? Maybe, maybe not.

Is one born with a leadership flair, or can some essential leadership skills be learned through practice? Business leaders worldwide believe that leadership is a continual learning process and can be sharpened with deliberate practice. Here are four skills that the most celebrated leaders swear by:

■ Listen, Learn And Improvise

According to Richard Branson, leaders must be willing to listen, learn, and improvise. The theory behind it is simple, we never stop learning, it doesn't matter if you are a CEO or a fresh graduate, learning is a continuous process. "As a leader, you should always be listening. Be visible, note down what you hear and you'll be surprised how much you learn," he advised. While in conversation with

Forbes, he claimed that learning and leadership skills go hand in hand. "Too much credit goes to me for what we have achieved at Virgin," he claimed. "The successes happen from working and learning with some of the world's most inspiring and inspired people."

■ Empathize With Your Employees

How do you get your team to perform better if the team morale is low? You have to find ways to lift the confidence of the group. Coronavirus is a perfect example of this. While some companies failed to boost employee morale, other companies such as Culligan Water excelled at it. Because of its established commitment to well-being, employees have access to various resources already in place, including an onsite HealthSource Solutions, Well-being Program Manager and health coach, virtual well-being portal, and Employee Assistance Program counselling.

It doesn't just end there, Culligan is also utilizing leadership testimonials to inspire, engage and empower Culligan employees on a personal level to take care of their mental health, especially during the pandemic.

The Self Made Billionaire

JANUARY 2021

Sophie Amoruso is an Award-Winning Serial Entrepreneur and a New York Times Best Selling Author, and Founder of the famous brands, Nasty Gal and GirlBoss. She has forged an unparalleled path in building iconic brands and has evolved from one of the most prominent figures in fashion to a cultural thought leader.

Written by Alexis Miller

We all have experienced ups and downs in our lives. Through failures and heartbreaks, we learn to evolve and grow. We have all heard the saying change is the only constant. But as we grow up, we recognize the reality of it all. In the end, it all comes down to how strong we are, do we choose to pick ourselves up? Or do we decide to sit down and wallow in it?

That brings us to the story of Sophie Amoruso. A story of failure with a silver lining. Raw, passionate, relentless. She never backed down and faced all her challenges head-on. Sophie was the infamous Founder and CEO of Nasty Gal, an icon for Girl Bosses worldwide.

Amoruso was a troubled adolescent and a college dropout who bounced from one minimum-wage job to the next. She is a fashion enthusiast who stumbled upon the opportunity of selling vintage clothes online. Amoruso paved her way through hard work and determination to build a business at the early age of just 22. She started the brand selling clothes on E-Bay in her bedroom, and after only a year and a half of this, Nasty Gal Vintage was doing around \$115,000 in sales and earning \$20,000 in profit. However, credibility on E-Bay was shot down due to some reasons, and her sales started dropping.

But that did not stop young Amoruso; she thought it would be even better if she could start her site. She soon moved into a store and named it Nasty Gal, that was

such a big hit that it blossomed into a thriving company pulling in \$100 million in revenue with almost 200 employees just after six years of its inception.

Due to Nasty Gal's initial success and Amoruso's great marketing genius, the entrepreneur's autobiography, "#Girlboss," was a hit, spending 18 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list in 2014.

In her interview with The Cut, she explained what her book was all about. "Like most books by CEOs, #GIRLBOSS is a marketing tool—an effort to broadcast the author's brand more widely—but it is also a passion project. When someone tweeted a complaint about the book's title, suggesting that grown women shouldn't be calling themselves girls, Amoruso responded immediately: "How's #BROADBOSS? or would you prefer #MATRONBOSS?" "I mean, come on," she says later in her unruffled tone. "I don't like it when an old man says, [creepy voice] 'Let's invite the girls to dinner,' but I think it's okay to call girls, girls." Pause. "And I think it's okay to call girls bossy."

The front cover of #GIRLBOSS has Amoruso in a tight black dress and spiky necklace, fists balled against her hips. One of her eyebrows is arched, not the typical #GirlBoss you would have envisioned, but a rather spectacular one who is relatable to every millennial.

In 2016, Netflix announced that it had a series based on Amoruso's life in the works. That year, Forbes called Amoruso

one of America's richest self-made women. However, behind the facade, her Nasty Gal's sales had been steadily dropping, from \$85 million in 2014 to \$77 million in 2015, according to bankruptcy documents.

A year later, Sophie's life came crashing down before her own eyes. Her company was failing, her one-year-long marriage was on the cusp of a bitter divorce, but she held her head high and smiled for her bold shot on the cover of Forbes Magazine, 2016. In her interview with The Los Angeles Times, she admitted that appearances could be deceiving, she pointed to her 2016 Forbes cover as an example.

After being charged with multiple lawsuits, Amoruso stepped down as Nasty Gal's Chief Executive Officer in 2015 but stayed on for a time as Executive Chairwoman. In 2016, Nasty Gal filed for bankruptcy, and she resigned. Her marriage also ended by then.

In an interview with the Los Angeles Times, she said, "It's a different world, about how things have shifted since the release of "#Girlboss." "I've been processing and learning from everything that I've experienced while at the same time being inspired by the girls who are experiencing the same thing."

With the encouragement and support of her peers, Amoruso did not wallow around and kept working towards building her empire, she said, "rather than accepting what the world has said

In 2016, Netflix announced that it had a series based on Amoruso's life in the works. That year, Forbes called Amoruso one of America's richest self-made women.

about me." She quickly launched Girlboss by using the community she had built through her book and its subsequent endeavours, the Girlboss Radio podcast, the Girlboss Rally, and not forgetting the infamous Netflix series #GirlBoss.

In an instant, women everywhere were using the term, from Instagram to LinkedIn, as it came to encompass more than the definition of a female CEO and instead embodied women's overall attitude and empowered them to achieve anything they desired. The girl boss Instagram account has 1.7 million followers, and to date, the term has been hashtagged more than 22.4 million times. Celebrities from Miranda Kerr to Gwyneth Paltrow have self-identified as girl bosses amongst others.

But then disaster hit again. The company found itself drowning amidst the pandemic. Amoruso said on Instagram that she and ten others would leave the company, calling the Covid-19 pandemic "a head-on, high-speed collision" that "decimated" revenue for Girlboss, derailing a "high 8-figure partnership" and other deals. "As you know, the

effects of Covid on our business have been devastating," she said. "The pandemic has wreaked havoc upon countless experiential and ad-supported businesses, and sadly, we are not exempt."

Just three months later, Amoruso is using her hard-earned experience as a founder, CEO, and serial brand builder to build a new project, Business Class. The in-depth online entrepreneurship course provides the next generation of entrepreneurs with the tools they need to build and scale businesses positioned for long-term success. Amoruso said, "I'm 36 years old, I've been building businesses for 15 years, I've extracted a lot, and all I want to do is give back," says Amoruso. "I've stepped in a lot of the land mines. I know how to step over them now." The biggest lesson learned through it all, never to shy away from a challenge."



Image Credit: Shutterstock

2021 THROWBACK

February



Life-Long Habits For Leadership Development: Self-Discipline

FEBRUARY 2021

If you want to be an effective leader, you need to learn, grow and evolve every day. Happiness, success, and fulfilment stem from our will to focus and control our emotions. Small habits drive the change that leads us to success eventually. The book Atomic Habits encapsulates this very idea that simple decisions taken every day can have a compounding effect on the end results we achieve. How do you pick habits that will take you toward, not away, from the life that you desire. Below is a carefully curated list of habits followed by the most admired leaders in their day-to-day living that could give you some ideas.



1. Take Notes

One of the most important habits, as quoted by Business Mogul Richard Branson, “Regardless of where I am or what I’m doing – perhaps with the exception of kitesurfing or swimming – I always have a notebook on hand. My secret ‘life hack’ has also been to write it down! I can’t tell you where I’d be if I hadn’t had a pen on hand to write down my ideas as soon as they came to me,”

It’s a simple behaviour that has a significant impact on you and your team. Taking notes is critical to you as a leader and often very helpful for your team. It helps you organize your thoughts, have a record and demonstrate what’s truly important.

2. Take Your Time In The Morning

Jeff Bezos shared that he tries to match his rise with the sun, never setting an alarm clock, but allowing himself to wake up naturally. He then proceeds to spend time reading the news and enjoying breakfast with his wife of 25 years and their four children.

If you find it difficult to wake up several hours before you need to, you can read about the benefits it has on your overall health. Psychologists stand by the Bezos’ method, articulating the benefits of enjoying the beginning of

our days instead of rushing through them in setting our mind in a positive light to get our day started.

3. Try To Learn Something New Every Day

In an interview, Mark Zuckerberg, Founder of Facebook, shared that he tries to read a book every two weeks and even takes on yearly challenges that give him time to dive deep into a topic or expertise. From learning Mandarin Chinese to running one mile every day and building an AI for his home, he uses these mile markers to keep him focused and inspired.

Setting personal goals is a handy tool in the self-development process. It is a brilliant way to truly improve your cognitive abilities, practice self-reliance and enhance your creativity.

4. Maintain A Work-Life Balance

Reed Hastings, Co-Founder of Netflix, takes six weeks of vacation every year. He makes an effort to get away from work to relax, replenish and take care of his physical and mental health. He strongly feels that taking breaks makes him better at his work.

Psychologists are strong proponents of taking more vacation time, citing its benefits to productivity in the workplace. Some other benefits include improved physical and mental health, increased mental power and decreased burnout.

5. Make Health A Priority

Arianna Huffington, Co-Founder of The Huffington Post and the Founder and CEO of Thrive Global, acknowledged this need and said, “We need a third metric of success, which include our health and our being, first of all, because if we sacrifice that, what do we have? And our capacity to tap into our own wisdom, our own sense of wonder at the beauty of life that we so often miss, and our capacity to give, and to be kind.”

Health and overall wellbeing is a critical component to achieving success. You do not have to forgo your health or work yourself to burnout to achieve success. As Jim Rohn states in his book the 7 Strategies For Health and Happiness, “Remember this rule: INCOME RARELY EXCEEDS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. That’s why all of us must subject ourselves to self-examination”, and one of the main points of your self-examination should be your physical and mental health because, without your health, you have nothing. Set goals everyday to workout and eat healthily, and bit by bit, you will transform into the person you desired to be all along.

We leave you with this quote to reflect upon, “You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems” - James Clear.

Brave, Not Perfect - The Story Of Reshma Saujani

FEBRUARY 2021



Reshma Saujani, Founder and CEO of Girls Who Code is a celebrated advocate, working towards closing the gender gap in technology and changing the image of what a computer programmer looks like and does. She is the author of the International Bestseller *Brave, Not Perfect*, which has inspired many and was born out of her famous TEDx talk. She also wrote the New York Times Bestseller *Girls Who Code: Learn to Code and Change the World*.

Written by Brianna Da Cruz

Image Credit: Wikipedia

Saujani is the leading advocate for equality for women in the U.S. She is known for her positive impact on minimizing the gender gap. She is also the poster child for the perfect work-life balance. She not only leads her organization but also allots free time to spend with her family and encourages her staff to do the same. She started her career as an activist and attorney. In 2010, she set foot in the political scene as the first Indian American woman to run for U.S. Congress. Her journey began when she campaigned for New York City public advocate in 2013 (she ran in the Democratic primary). On the political front, Saujani has served as the Deputy Public Advocate for New York and ran a spirited campaign for Public Advocate in 2013.

In an interview, Saujani revealed how Girls Who Code was born, “When I ran for Congress in 2010, I visited schools and classrooms along the campaign trail. And when I lost, something about my time visiting those schools stuck with me: the lack of girls in computer science classrooms. After doing more research, I realized that no one was even talking about the lack of women and girls in computer science. So I pulled together some funding and a team, and together we taught 20 girls how to code in a tiny bit of borrowed office space. And now, six years later, we’ve reached 90,000 girls, and we’re not slowing down. We’re well on our way to reaching gender parity in entry-level tech jobs by 2027. I never could have imagined seeing this kind of success so soon — our college-aged alumni are choosing to major in computer science or related fields at 15 times the national rate — and I’m so excited to see what’s next.”

One of the most impactful moments in Saujani’s life was when she tried to bring her idea of Girls Who Code to life. She asked many people for help, help with brainstorming new ideas, help with funding, and help with transforming this idea into something that would revolutionize the world. When she approached her friend, Brian O’Kelley, then the CEO of AppNexus, he offered her something genuinely invaluable- Space. Saujani says, “Thanks to him, we have been able to change the lives of nearly

100,000 girls nationwide. Sometimes those unexpected gifts can be the ones that impact you the most!”

Girls Who Code teaches computer science to young girls from the sixth to twelfth grade, with almost 8,500 programs worldwide. The course curriculum is based on the beginner-level Scratch and the advanced-level JavaScript programming languages. Volunteer instructors lead classes at host sites provided by volunteer organizations. They currently offer membership to their clubs, college looks, summer immersion programs and code at home in four countries: United States, Canada, United Kingdom and India.

In February 2019, she published her book *Brave, Not Perfect*. The book addresses how girls learn at an early age to be perfectionists and afraid of failing, rather than being brave. She shares several perceptions and practices to become courageous in life. Based on hundreds of interviews with women across the country, they are about the

willingness to transform the world and their accounts of the journey to accepting imperfections.

The book, was inspired by the popular TED Talk by Saujani, reveals women’s pressure to look perfect and the patterns of beauty that control their lives.

Saujani says, “To me, bravery is about embracing imperfection. And that has nothing to do with being nice or being a mean girl. Being a “nice girl” shouldn’t mean you have to say yes to every request or turn down the things that put you in the spotlight. Women deserve the chance to shine, to be bold, and that comes from learning to be brave.”

Saujani runs her organization differently than most people do. She tries to give every employee the liberty to do the things that they love while also working at their job. “I love that she’s developed that atmosphere with the team,” said Emily Reid, Director of Education at Girls Who Code. “A lot of [the children of staffers] will come in and visit. She’s built that kind

The book, was inspired by the popular TED Talk by Saujani, reveals women’s pressure to look perfect and the patterns of beauty that control their lives.

of culture and environment. I love that her husband will come in and bring Shaan. She’s a great example of how to balance those parts of your life. I’ve worked a lot of places where that wouldn’t be a part of the culture. At Girls Who Code you can be on a conference call and you can be hanging out with one of the ‘Babies Who Code,’ as we call them.”

Saujani encourages staffers to spend time with their children, hit the gym, or whatever it is that brings each employee their sense of balance before stepping into the office. She also encourages staffers to leave the office at 5 PM every day. Girls Who Code offers a work-from-home option on Fridays to maintain a better work-life balance.

She was upfront in revealing about what it is like to be a successful woman,

mother, and wife, while also being married to a successful man. Her husband, Nihal Mehta, is the Founding General Partner at Eniac Ventures, an investment firm focused on mobile technology.

Saujani waited till she was 36 years to get married as she knew exactly the type of man she wanted to be married to, who would give his career and parenting tasks equal importance. Mehta asked her to marry him twice, Saujani finally agreed on the third proposal. She said, “I knew I needed a co-parent. Some guys weren’t up for that. I am moulding Shaan to grow up like his father. He’s going to be a feminist. He’s going to have a deep appreciation for women, and he’s going to support someone who’s interested in making a difference in the world.”

2021 THROWBACK

MARCH



Employee Appreciation: Simple Ways To Show Your Employees That They Truly Matter

MARCH 2021



For many of us, a large portion of our days is spent at work; in fact, the average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over a lifetime. Statistics revealed that an average human spends 1/3rd of their life at work. If we spend so much of our time at work, shouldn't we strive to make it a place we look forward to visiting every day instead of living for the weekends? As a leader or as an organization, it is our responsibility to create a haven for our employees. They will perform at their peak only when they know they are valued, appreciated and motivated to keep outperforming themselves.

1. Go Above And Beyond To Help Them Personally

Merely assisting your employees with work-related issues does not suffice any longer. A great leader should keep his eyes open for ways to help out with personal problems as well. Companies are revisiting their culture and transforming to inculcate care and consideration for their employees like never before. Increase in parental leave, bereavement leave, and even period leaves are being offered by companies like Zomato.

Another excellent example of this can be seen at Apple, where the mothers are given four weeks of paid leave before delivery and 14 weeks after. At the same time, the non-birth parents get six weeks of paid leave,

2. Add Gratitude To The Agenda

Studies show that consistent gratitude

practices within the workplace have the power to transform the entire culture of an organization. When employers show appreciation regularly, employees report increased well-being, stronger relationships with coworkers, and increased job satisfaction.

Bensussen Deutsch & Associates, LLC. (BDA) was placed among WA's 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2017. The company achieved this status as they worked hard to show appreciation daily and not just when they achieved an extraordinary feat in their career. "Employees applauded their company for taking the time to care for and appreciate them through more than just yearly bonuses, creating opportunities for teams to connect and refuel through office events and activities," reported Seattle Business Magazine.

3. Find Ways To Make Your Workplace Happier

"Broadcasting a compliment makes both the giver and the receiver happier," Bock wrote in his book: Work Rules!: Insights from Inside Google that Will Transform How You Live and Lead.

Find ways to bring out the positive emotions in the employees of your organization that will eventually start reflecting on their work. Google is a great example of this.

Google's former Senior Vice President of People Operations created what he

called a "Wall of Happy." Laszlo Bock developed an online tool called thanks, where employees could publicly thank one another for outstanding contributions or even small things they appreciated. He would print out those kudos and tack them up on a sign outside his office for all to see.

4. Give Public Recognition For A Job Well Done

This can be done by creating a unique hashtag to appreciate your employees on social media channels, like KFC's version of Employee Of The Month. Some companies have gone beyond that, such as Disney that does a marvellous job expressing their appreciation for their employees. Disney has created the #castcompliment social media recognition program that allows customers to recognize Cast Members via Twitter.

For an added personal touch, if a Cast Member's name were included in correspondence from customers, Lee Cockerell, the former Executive Vice President of Operations, would make a copy of that letter and send it to the Cast Member along with a unique pin he had designed. He also recognized Cast Members for a job well done by writing a short note in the weekly employee newspaper, the Main Street Diary, or making a simple phone call.

In conclusion, as rightly said by David Novak, Executive Chairman of Yum! Brands, "People leave when they don't feel appreciated. That's why we've made recognition a really high value. Our business is people-capability first; then you satisfy customers; then you make money." Looking after our employees' needs is a foolproof way to succeed and reach new avenues of growth.

The Mastermind Behind Queer Kid Stuff

MARCH 2021

Lindsay is the Founder and CEO of Queer Kid Studios, a multimedia production company based in Portland, Maine, with queer-focused, intersectional all-ages media. She is an LGBTQ+ activist and digital creator, a true pioneer in queer and children's media. Lindsay is also a Creative Resident at SPACE on Ryder Farm, a TED Resident and was named a Rising Star by GLAAD, a Queero by them.us were a Webby Honoree. She secured grants from the Made in NYC Women's Media Fund, the Awesome Project and VidCon's Emerging Creator program for her breakthrough in queer media.

Written by Justin Roberts

Lindsay Amer was born and bred in New York City and hailed from a Jewish family. In a blog titled What, Should We Do, Amer revealed her struggle growing up as a queer kid, "I definitely struggled growing up queer. My family is and always has been very accepting and liberal, but being gay or queer wasn't really something I thought I could be. It was OK for other people to be gay, but it took me a really long time to see that it was something that I could be, too. I had a particularly hard time with it in high school and ended up coming out later in college."

Lindsay developed a keen interest in theatre at Friends Seminary in Middle School, which continued throughout Upper School. The inclusive spirit which infuses Lindsay's work was nurtured at Friends Seminary. "Friends was instrumental to me in making me believe that I had a voice...I think Friends was really important in my early years of moving toward becoming an activist."

She then went on to Northwestern to study theatre, focusing on young audiences' performance and gender studies. During this time, they pooled all of their interests together, which, to a stroke of her sheer good luck, ended up being queer storytelling for children. Her passion for the cause began to bloom from here, and she continued her education.

Lindsay achieved her MA in Theater and Performance from Queen Mary University in London. While studying abroad, she transformed her feelings of homesickness into a creative catalyst and watched her works turn into inspirational projects. "I watched a lot of queer YouTubers and found that this was a great platform."

During her journey to bringing queer stories to the mainstream theatre, Lindsay encountered several obstacles; that's when she turned to YouTube as the channel offered a space that she could define for herself. Soon after that, Queer Kid Stuff was launched.

Lindsay started Queer Kid Stuff because she saw a gaping hole in children's media and media in general around queerness. The Law of Marriage equality had just been passed, and the world was still figuring out how queer people fit into the larger culture.

In her blog interview, Amer discloses how she was drawn to younger audiences and how educating the masses became her life's mission, "I've been working in theatre for young audiences since I was in undergrad. I have my degree in theatre and gender studies, and I wrote my thesis on queer storytelling in theatre for young people. Then I got my master's in theatre and performance studies, where I continued refining that speciality. I used to work at a preschool, and now I teach music to young kids. So I've spent the better part of the last six-ish years working at the intersection of media-slash-storytelling, early childhood development, and gender studies."

The channel received praise from various noteworthy places including, The Huffington Post that called Queer Kid Stuff a "groundbreaking YouTube educational resource." Teen Vogue praised their episode on consent during the height of #MeToo that "shows exactly why there's no excuse not to grasp consent. Even toddlers can understand it." Even @shondarhimes took to Twitter to express her praise for Lindsay, she's "so here for this!"

This popular and groundbreaking web series has served as a resource for people of all ages and helped define a space that didn't exist a few years ago. "The biggest secret is it's not for kids; it's for everybody. People use it to tell their grandparents about their gender identity. I feel I have filled that gap to a certain extent in the grassroots space," says Lindsay

However, every yin has yang, and she received much criticism for creating a platform to educate people. Through the years, she has learnt to pay no heed to their baseless concerns; Lindsay says, "At this point, honestly, I try to ignore them. I have a great therapist, and taking care of my mental health is a top priority. And staying connected with my community is really helpful; it reminds me that I'm not alone in dealing with this, whether it's other online creators or my friends and family. I definitely get scared; we're living in a really scary time. But we can't let that stop us."

In the future, Lindsay hopes to bring about a world where conversations around gender identity are more nuanced and normalized. She will continue to work to bring about media that represents a multiplicity of perspectives. "I'm working on moving into television and how to do queer storytelling and media for all ages...I have big, bold dreams."

I'm working on moving into television and how to do queer storytelling and media for all ages... I have big, bold dreams.



Image Credit: lindsayamer.com

2021 THROWBACK

APRIL



The Curious Case Of The 4-Day Work Week

- Siya Mehta



The four-day working week has been exponentially gaining attention. Governments across the world are evaluating the viability of the revolutionary four-day workweek concept and whether it will change the course of history.

The four-day workweek can be implemented in two ways: the first one consists of an overall decrease in hours and the second one highlights longer hours for fewer days.

How can a four-day workweek be viable?

While AI has been a controversial topic in the labour force, it is paving the way to implement the four-day workweek. Advanced technological developments are creating the possibility of the shortened working hours as humans are obtaining the ability to complete fixed work in lesser time without sacrificing consumer satisfaction and quality.

What additional benefits does a four-day workweek offer?

Companies are experiencing heightened levels of employee satisfaction and motivation stemming from the decrease in working hours. Companies have recorded an increase in company loyalty and collaborative spirit along with a decrease in stress levels. Liz Supinski, director of research and product for SHRM (the Society for Human Resource

Management) said, "Generally speaking, workflex variations are one of the least expensive ways to make employees happier."

Additionally, productivity and output levels are not damaged, proving that a four-day workweek is perhaps the answer.

Stanford University also conducted a holistic review to confirm the relationship between productivity and hours worked. Overworked employees correlated to less productivity compared to regular de-stressed employees. Nordic Countries such as Denmark, which are regarded as the world's most productive countries calculate an average of only 27 hours a week. Microsoft Japan also experimented and modelled productivity during a four-day workweek. A staggering 40% boost in productivity was discovered.

Furthermore, a four-day workweek is environmentally favourable. Microsoft Japan also found a 23% drop in electricity costs during their experiment. Employees tend to commute less and use fewer resources of office buildings if their hours are decreased, which leads to a sharp decline in the carbon footprint a company creates. The government of Utah also conducted a trial that decreased the workweek from five to four-days and concluded that it saved 12,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide, the equivalent to removing 2,300 cars off the road for

one year. This conclusive study proved that the effect of four-day workweeks is constructive.

Can the workforce improve and benefit through the four-day workweek?

Workplaces can advocate for higher gender equality by allowing employees to maintain a better work/life balance through a four-day workweek. It further enables female employees to maintain households and children peacefully, especially since studies have proved that women tend to bear a higher percentage of the burden.

A four-day workweek also leads to more satisfied employees who can help control the absenteeism and labour turnover rate. Newer generations also opt for companies that offer higher flexibility and variable opportunities, making the four-day workweek proposition an important aspect for potential employees. Happier employees influence better communication and greater engagement, leading to an overall increase in the quality of the workforce and innovation.

Countries across the globe are currently evaluating the benefits of a four-day workweek. Spain is currently running the first pilot test with thousands of employees, while India is working on amending labour laws.

The Final Evaluation

The implementation and type of the four-day workweek play a crucial and pivotal part in the impact. Not all businesses can adapt to the four-day workweek; for example, direct retailers and businesses in the hospitality sector cannot benefit without losing customers and potential revenue. Supinski, said, "It's not that flexible initiatives can't be done; it gets more complex." This complexity makes the process taxing and extremely costly. Customers expect some businesses to be available 24x7. Cali Williams Yost, a workplace futurist and strategist noted, "You have to have serious logistics in place and be able to respond to customers and compete."

While implementing a four-day workweek can be complicated and tricky, with the right business model, workforce type, and preparation, it can prove to be successful and beneficial for employees and employers.

The Culinary Genius Feeding People In Need

APRIL 2021

José Andrés is more than a chef. He's an entrepreneur, a T.V. personality, a teacher, and a humanitarian all at once, heading up a constant stream of projects. He is one of the most influential proponents of Spanish gastronomy in the U.S. Spain. Its culinary beauty is now familiar to the U.S. public thanks to the determination and efforts of this great fan of cuisine 'Made in Spain.'

Written by Kyle Goldberg



Andrés was born to a family who loved to serve people; both his parents were nurses by professions — and great cooks at home. “My mom could do anything with leftovers,” he reminisced. That led to his passion for cooking while not forgetting his parent’s advice to always help if you can.

In 2013, Andrés became a U.S. citizen, but his love for his country did not expire. He is very popular in Spain; he even starred in a famous Spanish cooking show named *Vamos a cocinar con José Andrés* that was a hit.

In Hispanic cultures, food, family, caregiving and community are tightly interconnected. In 2010, he founded the World Central Kitchen, the love child of his love for cooking and caregiving. It is a non-profit organization (NPO) that has dramatically helped serve a billion people across the globe. In 2010 the NPO responded to a massive earthquake that devastated Haiti and

Bill Clinton, Former President whose Clinton Global Initiative has supported World Central Kitchen, said Andrés’ empathic action is more crucial than ever in these divided times. “If you spend more time on your fears than your hopes, on your resentments than your compassions, and you divide people up, in an interdependent world, bad things are going to happen.”

killed millions. The goal of the NPO from the start was to provide food relief and longer-term resilience. They have gone above and beyond and have launched feeding missions in 13 countries, serving 15 million meals and corralling more than 50,000 volunteers with a burning desire to help people. In 2017, when the deadly Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, Andrés and his group delivered almost 4 million meals.

World Central Kitchen has a vast network of volunteer chefs that also provide education and empowerment — for instance; they helped Haitian families replace toxic fuels used for cooking with healthier and cleaner natural gas and solar power. “Pragmatic hard work, boots on the ground — these are the things that make good ideas succeed,” Andrés said in an interview. “We believe a plate of food can be the beginning of a better tomorrow.”

This work has brought Andrés multiple honours that include a James Beard award for Humanitarian of the Year and National Humanities Medal. In addition, he is also a renowned restaurateur who employs around 1,600 people in his 28 owned restaurants and two food trucks in nine cities (including two two-star Michelin Guide honorees, Minibar and Somni).

World Central Kitchen has figured out a rather vital feat to help feed people, rather than relying on packaged food that needs to be airlifted in from the outside—meals ready to eat (MREs) in relief parlance—Andrés and his team tap into existing supply chains and local chefs to prepare hot, nutritious meals.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization provides more than 300,000 meals per day to people in need throughout the country U.S. “Some of the first places where we began were homes for the elderly, from Washington, D.C., to New Orleans to Chicago,” Andrés said. He pointed out that older people living independently may not have family members nearby, so their hardships may not be only financial ones.

“We’re partnering with AARP, which provides solutions for programs like SNAP [the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and the other forms

of food aid used by seniors,” Andrés said. “These programs are digital so that the elderly can order online and receive their meals at home.” (AARP is currently helping World Central Kitchen provide meals for older people in Washington, D.C.; the Bronx, New York; and Oakland, California.)

World Central Kitchen has also responded to COVID 19 by directing its focus on developing a rescue plan for the badly hit restaurant industry. In collaboration with a group of lawmakers, Andrés helped craft a bill designed to simultaneously feed people and save restaurants. The FEMA Empowering Essential Deliveries (FEED) Act would legally authorize the federal government to pay 100 per cent of the cost for state and local governments to collaborate with restaurants to serve food to those in need, as well as support farmers and businesses fighting to survive the pandemic.

As the organization’s profile has expanded, its revenues have ballooned from around \$650,000 in 2016 to \$28.5 million in 2019, as per their audit reports available on their site. They now have the wherewithal to hire local help and send out their operations experts to kick-start the food economy revolution.

Almost two-thirds of World Central Kitchen’s 2019 revenues, or \$19.1 million, came from individual donations, ranging from large gifts from philanthropists (including TIME’s owners and co-chairs, Marc and Lynne Benioff) to teenagers and kids giving \$10 out of their monthly allowance.

Bill Clinton, Former President whose Clinton Global Initiative has supported World Central Kitchen, said Andrés’ empathic action is more crucial than ever in these divided times. “If you spend more time on your fears than your hopes, on your resentments than your compassions, and you divide people up, in an interdependent world, bad things are going to happen,” Clinton, who first spent significant time with Andrés in Haiti after the earthquake said in an interview with TIME. “If that’s all you do, you’re not helping the people who have been victimized or left behind or overlooked. He’s a walking model of what the 21st-century citizen should be.”

2021 THROWBACK

MAY



Chatbots And The Ever Changing Consumer Experience

- Siya Mehta

MAY 2021

Chatbots are software programs that enable and stimulate a textual or voice-based conversation with a user through applications, websites or phone. Chatbots are famously known as one of the most technologically advanced forms of interaction between humans and machines.

Chatbots were often only seen as robotic interaction and were dismissed due to the myth of lacking the human touch. However, natural language processing (NLP) has revolutionised chatbot technology and helped customers feel like they're talking to an actual human.

Why have chatbots generated interest?

With the COVID-19 pandemic, customer needs for a seamless and swift online experience have doubled. In this age of e-convenience, buyer patience is minimal and is a vital factor that companies need to consider. Almost ¾ of buyers expect a response within 10 minutes to any marketing, sales, or customer service inquiry. This frightening statistic highlights that companies critically need to use advanced technology to maintain consumer satisfaction. It is impractical, costly and nearly unachievable to adequately cater to impatient consumers without using technology. Customers have flocked to brands that provide quick assistance and consistency. The sudden saturation in e-commerce services have created intense competition and is driving brands to strengthen their customer experience strategies.

Chatbot applications efficiently modernize interactions between people and services. They allow businesses to interact with individual consumers impeccably and provide companies with opportunities to increase and improve customer engagement levels. The rising use of chatbots has allowed consumers to feel quickly heard.

Do chatbots provide substantial benefits to a company?



Chatbots have allowed companies to develop a strong USP and brand image associated with care and personalisation. Chatbots help businesses gain valuable insight into user experience (UX) by tracking and collecting data from chatbot conversations. Chatbots can also compile user demographics and allow businesses to easily compile leads. These leads can be sent to sales representatives who can then follow up with the consumers. These chatbots can also filter out serious and valuable consumers to minimise wastage in the organisation.

Further, efficiency is also maximised as chatbots allow uniform and streamlined with an ability to cover a larger amount of customer concerns and questions across multiple devices worldwide. Chatbots facilitate this enhanced customer experience while creating a reduction in the hefty cost of customer service. Some chatbots even allow payments via chats and search options. Sectors across the world, including government and education, have expanded their chatbot services to further improve user satisfaction.

Do customers react positively to chatbots?

Companies have started to utilize the prominent advantages that chatbots offer. 80% of routine customer queries have been resolved by relying on chatbots to answer basic consumer queries and provide useful information. These chatbots have also successfully pushed sales and accurately recommended products for the customer. 48% of

consumers prefer connecting with a company through live chat than any other means of contact and 57% prefer chatbots because of their accelerated nature. The strong preference towards chats proves that chatbots are an important aspect of a consumer experience.

According to a survey conducted by Helpshift, 94% of over 2,000 respondents dread contacting customer support. Chatbots can also help customers manage and create appointments for further and elaborate queries. Chatbots not only enable customers to get answers to basic queries instantly, they are also excellent in classifying the queries they are unable to resolve and sending them to appropriate agents/departments for resolution. Their 24/7 availability feature allows maximum consumer convenience and reduce the dissatisfaction that is often received via manual customer service and their limited time frame.

Moreover, if chatbots are integrated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine-Learning (ML), the natural conversation is incorporated with personalisation. AI chatbots are flexible and actively learn more with each interaction. Real-time personalisation within the context of the conversation can also greatly improve CX. Bots can create continuity and refer to earlier conversations to guide users effectively. Conclusively, chatbots have proved to be the answer to unsatisfactory customer service and their numerous cost-saving benefits make it a perfect tool for every business in the age of e-commerce.

The Youngest Self Made Billionaire - Whitney Wolfe Herd

MAY 2021

Whitney Wolfe Herd is well-known for her bold decisions and stance, and it has reflected in her business ideas as well. She started the dating app Bumble, where women get to make the first move over conventional male-dominated dating culture. The 31-year-old also recently became the world's youngest self-made female billionaire when she took Bumble public in February 2021.

Written by Justin Roberts



Herd attended college at the Southern Methodist University, where she majored in international studies and was a Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority member. While still in college, she was always passionate about helping people and decided to start a business selling bamboo tote bags to help areas affected by the oil spill of BP. She partnered with celebrity stylist Patrick Aufdenkamp and launched the non-profit organization named the 'Help Us Project.' The bags were a hit and received national press after celebrities such as Rachel Zoe and Nicole Richie were photographed. Shortly after that, she began working on a second business with Aufdenkamp called 'Tender Heart', a clothing line dedicated to raising awareness around human trafficking and fair trade. After graduating, Herd travelled to Southeast Asia, where she worked with orphanages and helped in any way that she could. Herd said, "I knew I was ambitious, I knew I was passionate, and that I wanted to change the world in some shape or form, but I had no idea what that might look like."

At age 22, Herd joined Hatch Labs. Through the company, she got involved with the startup Cardify. Sean Rad led the project through Hatch Labs IAC incubator; however, the project was later abandoned. By then, Herd has the opportunity to join the development team for the dating app Tinder with Rad and Chris Gulczynski within the IAC startup incubator in 2012.

Due to her excellent marketing skills, she soon found herself named the Vice President of Marketing for the dating app Tinder. Tinder was an instant hit not just in the US but around the globe. She was also reportedly the mastermind behind the name of the app, taking inspiration from the flame logo and the idea of Tinder, which is a combustible material used to start a fire. She was also credited with fueling its popularity on college campuses and growing its user base.

Before founding Bumble, Herd was not just the VP of Marketing but also among Tinder's founding team. However, due to tensions with other executives - especially one of whom she had been dating previously - she left the

organization. Shortly after, she filed a sexual harassment case against the company.

Match Group Inc, Tinder's parent company, denied her claims but paid around \$1m to settle the dispute. As a result of the case and her allegations, she experienced online abuse that even prompted her to delete her Twitter account.

Wolfe Herd said in an interview, "I've been in a place in my life where I've had no confidence, no self-respect, zero self-worth and it was really easy to hurt my feelings. Then when you rebuild some of that, you become stronger."

That's when Bumble was born in 2014. The misogyny of tech—is precisely why Bumble was invented. It's also why Herd designed the app so only women can send the first message when users match on the platform. In an online dating landscape where women—particularly women of colour—are routinely harassed and bullied, she set out to build the closest thing to a safe space for digital romance. "Honestly, my ambition comes from abusive relationships," Herd said. "I've never had this healthy male relationship until I created it. I engineered an ecosystem of healthy male relationships in my life."

She founded the app, Bumble with help from early investor Andrey Adreiev, a Russian billionaire who has a stake in Badoo and sold both in November 2019.

Herd currently owns an 11.6% stake in dating app, Bumble, which gives her an estimated net worth of \$1.3bn while she also heads Badoo. The two apps have a combined 40 million users, 2.4 million of whom pay a subscription.

Wolfe Herd has always been open about her mental health battles and says she is still trying to figure it out with a therapist and her favourite meditation app, Headspace. Herd feels as the CEO of Bumble, it is her responsibility to talk about these mental health challenges and influence her audience in a positive light. She said, "I do [feel a responsibility to be open]. I like being honest and I know how bad it made me feel when I was going through dark times and I would read about all these 'boss girls'

"I've been in a place in my life where I've had no confidence, no self-respect, zero self-worth and it was really easy to hurt my feelings. Then when you rebuild some of that, you become stronger."

and successful tech people. They sounded so perfect and I thought, This will never be me because I have all these problems. I think it's healthy and important [to be open and honest]. We have an audience of 22 to 23 millions users now – that's a lot of people and as the CEO, it's my responsibility to ensure that both my team and our users feel healthy and happy."

The brand of Bumble is deeply embedded in the Empowerment Industrial Complex. "I think empowerment has probably commercially been taken advantage of, the word itself, and we're probably part of that," Wolfe Herd said. "We started saying this before Time's Up, before #MeToo—we were saying these things before our peers. Every single company right now is doing 'girl power' and 'the future is female.'" Herd knows that keeping her brand relevant means expanding her vision for the company beyond the women she imagined when launching the app. And, of course, she knows how to brand this too. In conclusion, Herd said, "I'm so happy to own our shortcomings because that's the only way we're ever going to get better."

2021 THROWBACK

JUNE



ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION



Lessons From The Corporate Rebel - Semco

- Sherlyn Gomes

JUNE 2021



The Semco Style of working started when 21-year-old Ricardo Semler took over the Semco Group after his father handed over the reins of the dwindling company to him. On his first day, he fired 60 percent of all top managers and started his journey to democratize the company. When Semler noticed that his employees were not happy, he decided to do something about it. He introduced a radical new concept: The Semco Way.

The Philosophy: Give Employees Complete Freedom, As Long As Their Work Is Completed In Time.

Over the next two decades, with a maverick strategy and outstanding work ethic, Semler grew the company from just 90 to 5000 employees. Impressively, he also raised the company's revenue from \$4 million to \$212 million, with the company growing at an average rate of 47 percent. With this new way of managing employees, Semco also achieved a phenomenally low employee turnover rate of just 2 percent under Semler's outstanding leadership.

Semco leaves remarkable lessons for companies worldwide to follow:

Nurture And Cultivate A Trusting Environment

At Semco, they function with two ruling assumptions:

1. 'Trust in adult behavior'— Do not try to micro-manage the actions of every employee. Trust the primary human drive to build toward the future, be productive and to contribute to something larger than themselves, and
2. Every person's rhythm is different when it comes to working; when, where and how they do their best work.

That goes for the young, ambitious employee working twelve plus hours a day but also taking time off for regular lunches with his girlfriend, or the Shop Floor Manager who takes the day off before a new project launch to spend

time in reflection at home. "We want people to work on a structure of their own," said Semler.

There is no right way to find the right balance. Semler defined human equilibrium as the right mix of challenging, meaningful work and truly rejuvenating pursuits. It is the best ground for producing life's true highs—the exhilaration, Semler said, is the whole point of the exercise.

The Three Whys

Semco's primary strategy relies on asking the question, 'Why?' Semler called it the 'Three Whys.' When faced with a dilemma, "We simply ask 'Why?' three times in a row. 'Why do you do things the way you do? Why is it important for people to come in at the same time? Why is it important for meetings to happen in a certain way?' You keep asking why and you generally get to the answer, 'it is what it is.' And when people realize they're stuck in a mode they really can't explain, this works wonders in breaking down resistance and opening up new possibilities."

Semler admitted, "it's not very comfortable for anyone." But he says that's the point. When people are actively encouraged to question, get up and leave a meeting that bores them to their core, bop into a discussion that interests them, and push back on previous conclusions, it builds a culture that encourages curiosity and empowers employees.

Cede Control And Make Room For Innovation

All of Semco's experiences are focused on "returning control to our people over a very important piece of real estate—their destiny," said Semler. The Semco group is ruthless when it comes to clearing the junk in people's to-do lists, "waste and distraction in all the logistics, the getting around, the sitting in meetings, and the overhead that defines 'normal' work."

Semler's experiment in cutting out the clutter include:

1. Up'n Down Pay - This is an adaptable

system of flexible pay wherein employees elect to increase or decrease their work hours and consequent pay. Parents with young children, for example, may want to cut back on hours for a certain period. The pay structure is completely transparent allowing coworkers to know how much salary each employee in the organization earns.

2. Retire-a-Little- Ricardo Semler also introduced a program for employees to buy back one day a week, so they can spend time on activities that are important to them. Like learning to play the violin or climbing a mountain. The idea behind the Retire-a-Little program is that there are three important things in people's lives: health, money and time. In the beginning of your career, you're healthy, you have some money, but no time. When you retire you have time, some money, but not always the health to do what you want to do.

With the program, employees are able to buy back one day a week for 10% of their salary. After retirement, Semco can do the opposite and hire them back for one day a week. After retirement, a lot of people still want to work and Semco can still appeal to the experience and knowledge of ex-employees.

In Conclusion:

Semler said, "We're in favor of a hierarchy of self-interest and talent and opposed to the symbols of power and control that come with it."

Insights From The Da Vinci Of Visionary Leadership

JUNE 2021

Dr Oleg Konovalov is a Global Thought Leader, Author, Business Educator, Consultant, and C-Suite Coach with over 25 years of experience operating businesses and consulting Fortune 500 companies both in the UK and internationally. He has been named ‘the da Vinci of Visionary Leadership’ by many leading authorities of our time. Dr Konovalov empowers companies to create and execute their vision, maintain a strong, productive corporate culture and achieve superior business performance.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes

Dr Oleg Konovalov was born and raised in Murmansk, located in the northern part of Russia, just above the arctic circle surrounded by scenic beauty and wild nature that he thinks was a compelling experience. Dr Konovalov recalled, “I was brought up in the former Soviet Union, where all people were restricted in terms of freedom of their source of what they can do. These restrictions made me think, what I could do differently, or how we could do things differently. It’s like being caged, to be placed in a box in a box and expected to be happy. It wasn’t about happiness.”

He continued, “Kids those days just accepted to be happy. You know how much we understand about happiness when we are kids? Actually, only when we mature we try to find happiness. And then you realize that it’s not about happiness. It’s about freedom.”

Living in the Soviet Union taught Dr Konovalov an important lesson about freedom. Talking on the subject, he said, “There was no freedom there. When you shift to a different place, you realize there is a concept of freedom, freedom of your thoughts, that you can do something beyond your most limiting beliefs, something that has never been explored or done before. And you realize you are capable of it. That has been the main driving force for me, and inspired me to work for freedom and liberty, where no

one could tell me you shouldn’t do this.”

In pursuit of more liberating prospects, Dr Konovalov shifted to the United Kingdom when he was 28. And he says that was when he realized the world is much greater than we perceive it to be. He explained, “When we live in one country, we don’t realize much of the greatness of this world. When we move to another country, we learn to think in a different language. So our mind is growing. Our understanding of the world is growing; we become more grateful for our lessons. Yes, we become stronger. And you immediately realize that everything that you have learned was relevant to one country and you must learn again so you can become relevant for a new country and the world at large. And that drove me to study again and again and again and again.” Dr Konovalov had previously obtained his Diploma from Russia. However, in his quest for continuous education, he started studying for a Diploma in the UK which led to a Master’s Degree and eventually to a Doctoral degree.

Dr Konovalov describes his work experience as colourful; his first job was at a deep-sea trawler engine room in the United Kingdom which pushed him to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit, resilience to face challenges and agility to

keep evolving. It was during this time that he stumbled upon a life-changing opportunity.

His company was looking for a resource to explore the international market in Eastern Europe. Dr Konovalov grabbed the opportunity by insisting that he had the business competence and the people skills to crack the market. Within no time, he was promoted as the Sales Manager followed by the Eastern Europe Sales Director.

Looking back, Dr Konovalov reflects that it wasn’t the case of merely an opportunity presenting itself. It was a classic case of an opportunity crossing the path of a prepared mind that allowed him to assess the opportunity and leverage it to its full capacity!

Dr Konovalov spent the next two decades holding top managerial positions at Icebrit Limited, SeaForce and Nord Fresh Limited, where he learnt a great deal about crafting effective business strategies and growing

companies. During that time, he was also called to share his expertise as a Lecturer and Visiting Professor at various colleges in Russia that would later translate into his passion for consulting companies.

After accumulating tremendous work experience, he said, “I had learnt quite a lot and I was yearning to share my knowledge with others. I decided I will start consulting and help companies do better in their field. Soon my friends persuaded me to write my first book to share my experience with a much larger audience.”

After writing four best-sellers, Dr Konovalov has now written his fifth book, *The Vision Code*, published in 2021. Talking about the book, he says, “It will be important because we need visionary leadership. It was challenging to reveal the nature of vision, to turn it into a practical business tool, and share the mindset of visionaries with my readers. Because thinking about the concept of vision, and putting that into action are two very different things. This work impacted me more than anything else I have done in my life. And it will definitely help everyone else as well.”

He explained that each one of us has a great asset; that is life itself, but it is given to us, and it is then up to us to make it meaningful. But to do that, we must have a vision, a vision for our personal life and a vision for our businesses. Dr Konovalov said, “Vision is a field that was hardly explored, and I took a risk. And it was quite challenging. Because I think, for instance, when we talk about love, it is too big a concept to explain. I wouldn’t touch it. But most people can hardly explain what love is, it is the same with vision. People had huge difficulties expressing what vision is, how to apply it, how to create it and how to make it.”

Dr Konovalov had a demanding experience articulating the nature of vision but succeeded with an insightful book that has become a pragmatic business tool for managers and leaders all across the world.

In conclusion, Dr Konovalov shares his advice for all budding leaders; he says, “We are greater than we think. We all have visionary traits. And my advice is simple. Don’t allow anyone to silence your vision.”

2021 THROWBACK

JULY

ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

Augmenting The Gender Spectrum At The Workplace *- Brianna Da Cruz*

JULY 2021



1. Gender-Neutral Language

Lera Boroditsky, a professor of Cognitive Science at UCSD, writes, “Even what might be deemed frivolous aspects of language can have far-reaching subconscious effects on how we see the world.” Before addressing a person as he or she, always be sure to ask them their preferred pronoun so that everyone is at ease. Employees should also be given the ability to self-identify on HR platforms and systems.

“The gender-neutral ‘Mx’ can be used as a title for individuals who do not identify as a particular gender,” according to Merriam-Webster.

2. Gender Expression

Office dress codes shouldn’t restrain individuals from expressing their authentic gender. There is a need to modify dress code statements to avoid bolstering any gender stereotypes. A great example of a gender-neutral dress code is when CEO Mary Barra held the position of Vice President of Global Human Resources; she replaced their 10-page dress code with two words: ‘Dress Appropriately.’ The move empowered employees and positively impacted the company, strengthening their stance on inclusivity.

3. Sensitivity Training

It is vital to implement comprehensive sensitivity and anti-harassment training—from senior management to junior employees. Try creating a culture of inclusivity where all employees become allies and advocates for non-binary inclusion, both within the office and outside the world. These initiatives can be a part of the pre-existing diversity training or may be implemented separately to spread awareness about non-binary individuals. Inviting non-binary community advocates or representatives to address management and employees is a great option. GLAAD is an excellent

organization with great tools to help train and educate employees to understand LGBTQ employees’ issues better.

A non-binary employee, Filar suggested, “Make significant, repeated training and education a part of working and offer trans employees and freelancers a clear grievance process that won’t backfire on them for using it.”

4. Company Documentation

Most documentation is precise when it comes to gender. For nonbinary individuals, this puts them in a very uncomfortable position that does not correspond to their authentic gender. Look through company documentation, and if they haven’t been changed yet, this would be a crucial step for empowering non-binary individuals in the company. As part of the documentation, take a look at places that actively exclude (or exclude by omission) LGBTQ employees, including health policies, and plan to make adjustments.

5. Bathroom And Locker Rooms

One of the most critical discussions in non-binary inclusion centres around binary washrooms. Recently, the expectation that trans employees should have access to bathrooms that correspond with their presentation regardless of the transition stage is increasingly expected. However, for non-binary individuals, gendered bathrooms are still problematic. An excellent option for overcoming this hurdle is switching to gender-neutral washrooms.

In Conclusion:

As Pat Wadors, Chief People Officer Procore at LinkedIn, said, “When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become a wiser, more inclusive, and better organization.”

Companies have come a long way since labelling gender as male or female. However, there has been a growing recognition for people who fall outside traditional gender roles; these include non-binary genders. ‘Non-binary’ is an umbrella term for people who do not consider themselves either male or female but fall under the category of gender-fluid or another gender entirely. The estimated proportion of gender-diverse individuals varies between 0.1 and 2% of the population.

The trend of putting up pronouns on social media served as an excellent way for many individuals to come out and own up to themselves. With several celebrities such as Demi Lovato identifying herself as they/them has got the conversation started to support and find more inclusive ways for them to show up at work without hiding their true selves.

A survey published by Beyond the Binary in March 2017 revealed that only 1% of the 225 non-binary people surveyed felt ‘completely protected’ by current equality policies at work, and 42% had a negative experience related to their gender identity in the workplace. Despite the growing awareness of non-binary genders — 50% of millennials believe gender is a spectrum according to a 2015 Fusion poll — however, it’s still common for openly non-binary people to feel uncomfortable at work. How can companies work towards changing this conundrum? Listed below are several areas where companies can look into to make a difference:

The Man With The Extraordinary Vision

JULY 2021

Gui Perdrux is a Coliving Expert, Community Building Consultant and Author on the subjects of coliving, community and connection. Gui currently stirs the coliving industry by being the Director of Co-Liv, the global association of coliving professionals, which represents and empowers coliving players through events, membership services and educational content. Gui is also the founder of Art of Co, an educational platform dedicated to creating transformative coliving experiences. It is his passion for human dynamics that lead him to constantly ask the question of how to create better frameworks for human flourishing, which constantly drives him to accomplish more every day.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes



Gui Perdrux is of French descent but was born and raised in Germany, next to Frankfurt. Gui recalled, “I grew up in a small town of 30,000 people.”

His life-altering moment happened when he was relatively young. Talking about the incident, he says, “When I was 14, I went to Peru and South America for an exchange program. And, that really shaped me in many ways, especially because there was a huge cultural difference between Latin American culture, which is very open and friendly and German culture, which is usually pretty close, especially in the area where I was born. And since then, I knew I wanted to leave Germany as soon as I finished high school.”

After completing high school, Gui shifted to France and continued his education at Sciences Po, and also earned a Bachelor’s Degree at the University of Southern California. His first job was at a startup, in a marketing role based in London. He then worked at several other startups before co-founding an innovation/co-working space in Paris.

Shortly after, Gui had a breakdown that changed the course of his life for the better. He quit his job and decided to go to Barcelona for a one-month personal growth program. Unfortunately, he did not have the financial means to go for it, so confided in his friend who was accompanying him. His friend encouraged and motivated him to do it, and Gui was convinced. When they got to the place, they realized that several others also faced a similar predicament and did not have any accommodation. So in approximately two weeks, they gathered 15 people who wanted to live together, collected the payments, and found a big apartment that could accommodate all of them comfortably. They named the place a lifestyle engineering house.

That was the first Co-living space that Gui created. This incident greatly impacted Gui since it was the first time he succeeded in an entrepreneurial project. It also gave him a chance to acquire more knowledge and wisdom regarding personal understanding and self-discovery. This experience made him want to create more of these spaces across the globe.

Gui then gradually moved into the Co-living sector. When discussing what drew him to become a nomad, he said, “The Nomad culture comes from a friend of mine, who was also one of the Co-Founders of my first Co-living space. He is an independent person with no restrictions on location. He is a nomad, and I truly wanted to experience that level of freedom.” that led him on this path.

Gui reminisces fondly; he says, “In the first two years of Co-living, I didn’t do it for profit; it was a fun project. And personally, it was me having a great life and living to the fullest.”

According to him, the concept of Co-living is when there are more than two people who do not belong to the same family and share a place with common amenities. He goes on to further explain, he says, “I think there are different forms of Co-living for example, student housing and senior housing can also be included in this category. And different markets as well, when you look at Europe, the Co-living offerings are very different than in India. The experience in the latter is flexible, offering ease and affordability. While in Europe, it caters to a mid size income population that is going through a phase in their life where they want to stay in a Co-living space for about 12 to 18 months.”

Co-living as a concept goes beyond just a fun experience. Gui explains, “it creates interaction with people that you usually would not interact with that means there will be more instances where people will get uncomfortable and triggered. And the question is how to get over them. So it is going to create experiences and memories, but also challenges.”

He further says, “for instance, if I meet somebody in the bar, then I may see them again maybe once, and then I might text them. And we will probably see each other once a month. And that’s it. However, if I live with somebody for about four months, I will see them every day. So the amount of interaction and the amount of alignment that gets created is much more substantial. So it puts you in new situations that you haven’t been in before and teaches you how to deal with people you wouldn’t deal with usually, and teaches you to be more empathetic.”

To explain the concept of Co-living to the masses, Gui is currently working on his new book, The Art Of Co-living, which will be published soon. Talking about the book, he said, “It’s two years of research and talking to more than 200 organizations around how to create great Co-living spaces. And to me great means spaces that are meaningful to people, and that enhance lives.”

The book has different categories ranging from how to create Co-living spaces to business models. However, the book’s primary emphasis is on building communities, finding the right residents, creating a culture within the space, giving residents autonomy, and developing independent communities.

As a master of ambiguity, Gui’s advice to the entrepreneurs entering uncharted waters is, “The number one question you should be asking yourself is why do you want to do that? What is the change that you want to bring into the world? And then explore, talk to people and figure out your alignment with the opportunity that you seek.”

“In the first two years of Co-living, I didn’t do it for profit; it was a fun project. And personally, it was me having a great life and living to the fullest.”



2021 THROWBACK

AUGUST



ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION



Four Easy Brain Exercises To Try To Increase Your Productivity - Siya Mehta

AUGUST 2021



understand tasks and respond efficiently). Both these areas of intelligence are especially active in the workplace. Employees can therefore benefit from better and faster problem-solving abilities and an overall reduction in wastage of time. Moreover, chess also improves planning skills as well. These skills translate strongly in the workplace since multitasking and multiple plans have to be made to accommodate all areas of life and succeed at them. By preplanning and avoiding last minute chaos, employees can relax more and experience an increase in productivity. Facilities to play are available everywhere, from portable mini chess boards on Amazon to virtual chess platforms such as chess.com.

4. Playing Word Games

Playing any word games have numerous benefits for the brain. English games often have a wide range of variety, from cracking clues and brainteasers to scrabble. These games are often challenging and stimulating, requiring a high amount of concentration from players. Therefore playing word games can increase attention span, help concentrate better and increase speed even during simple tasks such as reading emails. Moreover, the games improve cognitive skills as well. This can help in identifying and solving problems faster and better. Word games such as scrabble can be played online or can be bought on Amazon. Other virtual problems such as MindGames.com provide games such as hangman, word search and vocabulary tests.

In Conclusion:

Exercising your brain is a fool-proof way to increase productivity in the workplace. Not only does it give short term benefits, by keeping the brain active and fit, the probability of getting clinical anxiety, alzheimers and burnout reduces as well.

While there is a deliberate awareness on the importance of physical wellbeing, the brain as a muscle is often overlooked by most professionals. Considering that most of our jobs demand more cerebral input than physical one, it is of utmost importance to exercise the brain to keep it at its fittest!

Here are 4 simple techniques anyone can follow to flex their brain muscles and boost the treasured productivity:

1. Playing Puzzles

Jigsaw puzzles are not just for children. Putting the mind to work and refreshing it by doing jigsaw puzzles can provide numerous benefits. Research has proved that jigsaw puzzles help develop cognitive skills, improve short-term memory and are a stress reliever. When solving a jigsaw puzzle, individuals make use of the left and the right side of the brain, enabling a thorough workout for the brain. Jigsaw puzzles are available in all sizes and can easily be kept in workplaces as well.

A portable mini jigsaw puzzle with the theme of iconic paintings such as The Starry Night is available on Amazon.

2. Using The Non-Dominant Hand

One of the simplest suggestions that deliver guaranteed results is using

the non-dominant hand for workplace activities such as drinking beverages or taking down simple notes to strengthen neural connections in the brain. This means that overall brain function increases and multitasking abilities grow as well. It further exercises opposite sides of the brain and helps develop the cortex, which is the outermost layer of the brain and is responsible for processing and controlling critical information. When asked about working out the brain using the non-dominant hand, Dr P. Murali Doraiswamy from Duke University said, "It is like having more cell towers in your brain to send messages along. The more cell towers you have, the fewer missed calls." The increase in brain connections brings more ideas and innovations. Using your non-dominant hand also increases creativity since the brain is exposed to unusual movements and decisions. This creativity can drive innovation and can create an overall sense of being motivated.

3. Playing Chess

Playing chess is one of the most famous and enjoyable activities to instantly pump the brain. It has been proved that chess increases intelligence and comes in two forms: fluid intelligence (ability to consider new problems and solve them) and processing speed (ability to rapidly

Turning Obstacles Into Opportunities

AUGUST 2021



Agnelorajesh Athaide is an Author, Social Entrepreneur, Educationist and Business Mentor who believes in learning, earning, and returning. He is the Chairman of St. Angelos Global Group of Companies. He is a First-Generation Entrepreneur and works globally in the sectors of technology and education, concept-based real estate development, hospitality, food and restaurants, architectural solutions and e-commerce.

“The quantum of your success depends on the quantum of people who believe in you and support you. It’s all about people and I am grateful to have a supportive family.”

Agnelorajesh Athaide was born in an economically challenged household; he says, “I am grateful for my childhood. It transformed me into the person I am today because I decided to change the situation and use it to my advantage.” His father was a Maharashtrian Roman Catholic, while his mother was from Tamil Nadu. They had an intercaste marriage and were both on their own since they got married. They lived on rentals while his father worked for a multinational company as an accounts clerk, and his mother gave tuitions to make ends meet.

An incident in his childhood significantly shaped the person he is today. His mother had a 180sqft house allotted to them by the Housing Board in 1971. However, they shifted to that house only in 1982. The rent of the house was INR 9 per month, and since they had recently moved in, it had not been paid from 1971 to 1982. To pay the outstanding rent, his mother had to sell her two gold bangles and mangalsutra, an auspicious chain that the groom puts around the bride’s neck on the wedding day.

This incident took place before young Athaide and brought tears to his eyes. The situation compelled the young boy to mature in a day. His mother saw his pain and said, “Rajesh in life, either a situation will control you or you will control the situation. Always opt to control the situation.”

Athaide added, “That was a game-changer in my life. After that, there was no looking back. I cultivated a habit of controlling every situation and converting every adversity into an opportunity.”

He recalled, “My parents are my biggest blessings. They supported me with an unlimited belief that I would rise to great heights. My mother has always been my driving force. She was a fearless lady who instilled confidence in all of us. I look up to her for the way she led her life, for us. Her confidence and her control over fear of loss were commendable. I’m grateful that all of this rubbed off onto me.”

After the incident, Athaide developed a growth mindset that he says is an essential tool to success. He started working towards his goal of attaining

financial freedom. He did an array of jobs, starting from working at a bindi factory at the young age of thirteen to working as an office assistant in a pharmaceutical company while simultaneously attending college.

During his final year of college, he bought a computer and started doing data processing jobs at home. He began teaching computer classes with a clear vision, ultimately transforming it into a profitable company, St. Angelos Computer Education, that has now successfully trained more than 4.5 lakh students over the course of 25 years.

Athaide says, “I am extremely proud of the work St. Angelos Computer Education has done for lakhs of students. We brought computer education within the reach of the common man and empowered him to grow financially and leverage global opportunities. It gave wings to the middle class and the lower middle class segments and brought tremendous growth potential to the future of the students.”

With an impeccable knack for business, after his first victory, he ventured into Real Estate in 2005, followed by restaurants in 2009 and hospitality in 2012. A year later, Athaide expanded his Real Estate Development Project across multiple cities of India, with their sales team set up in Dubai, Singapore, Malaysia, the USA, amongst others.

Talking about his passion, he says, “While developing Real Estate Projects, I ensured that all the basic amenities were provided. In my childhood home, the road outside was higher than the flooring in my house, which caused great difficulty during the monsoons with water gushing into our house. To avoid such hassles, I made it a point to make my projects the tallest villas in India. I engaged the services of Susanne Khan, a renowned Indian Interior Designer, to design my villas, and use the best materials available to make sure that each buyer received incredible value for their money.”

In 2017, Athaide started the Global Indian Realty Summit in association with Network 18, a Mukesh Ambani enterprise. This soon became a valuable resource for the real estate industry

in India as many stalwarts of the country participated in contributing their knowledge and experiences to the advantage of the Indian audience.

He kept growing his business empire till the lockdown hit India, and there was a lull in business. Athaide recollected, “It became a period of introspection, I started reprocessing every decision I had taken. The greatest fear was the impact the past decisions could have on the current scenario.”

With his decades of experience and expertise, he turned the situation around; he continued, “I tweaked all my past choices to adapt to the new conditions. I also realised that remote working, use of technology, technology-supported businesses would take a giant leap. I immediately ventured into multiple new industries, all supported by technology.” Since then, he has ventured into several industries such as E-Commerce, Online Educational Platforms and Architecture.

Athaide has a unique skill of turning obstacles into opportunities; talking about his secret to success, he says, “I have been working since the age of 13. That has given me a lot of experience, exposure and thousands of meaningful relationships. And this is my main capital. Human connectivity is what I love. So all my businesses are connected to the direct gratification of my consumer.”

In conclusion, he says, “The quantum of your success depends on the quantum of people who believe in you and support you. It’s all about people and I am grateful to have a supportive family.”



2021 THROWBACK

SEPTEMBER



Sustainable Companies - What They Are Doing To Go Green - Sherlyn Gomes

SEPTEMBER 2021



best companies that sell green products in the fashion sector globally.

LPP's Eco-Aware program aims to ensure 25% of its products are entirely produced through sustainable means by the end of 2021, which is a massive feat for any brand in the retail sector. These products use recycled fibres and organic materials and are actively highlighted in stores, enabling consumers to make eco-friendly purchases.

Most of their stores include donation boxes to drop off unwanted clothing along with any unsold goods to charitable causes. In doing so, the brand encourages sustainable practices within their consumers and gets rid of their unsold clothing without any waste ending up in landfills. LPP's visible effort and clear transparency across all brands mark LPP as one of the top environmentally responsible companies.

4. WWF

According to Hays Journal, WWF's 'Living Planet Centre' workspace was awarded by the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM). It includes a central, tall room with trees that reduced CO2 emissions by 25 percent, and the centre produces 50 percent of its water by collecting rain and recycling used water. Other green initiatives include their electricity production via solar panels and water pumps that contribute to 20 percent of their electricity needs.

WWF also has an environmental purchasing policy wherein suppliers are expected to pursue environmentally-friendly policies within their objectives. In addition to this, the company promotes an internal sustainable travel policy, which imposes restrictions on how far and often staff are allowed to travel.

In conclusion, as Robert Swan, Renowned Author, said, "The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

With climate disasters apparent in every part of the globe today, from the devastating Australian wildfires to the flooding in China, the issues have taken centre stage. The number of climate-related disasters has tripled in the last 30 years and are estimated to go higher.

Some companies have emerged as warriors to develop innovative and impactful solutions that can alleviate sustainability issues worldwide. These pioneers are leading the revolution to carbon neutrality and inspire other companies to follow their innovative approaches.

Here are the top 4 companies in 2021:

1. Skanska

The company provides building and construction materials around the world and is located in Stockholm. Skanska focuses on sustainable practices within the organization and emphasizes green building design leading the world to carbon neutrality one building at a time.

In its sustainability report, Skanska identifies the explicit goals of the company and its target to achieve net-zero status by 2045, not just within the company's facilities but throughout its value and supply chains. Most remarkably, it was the first company to meet ISO 14000 standards across all locations. This standard aimed to reduce industrial waste and environmental impact, making Skanska a forerunner in

corporate responsibility. Skanska also encourages everyone to cycle more, which can be seen in the UK's Supply Chain Sustainability School to educate and promote construction suppliers throughout the industry. While numerous companies are actively involved, Skanska was a founding member.

2. Tony's Chocolonely

The company was awarded the winner of the Sustainable Brand Index in 2019. The Dutch company focuses on making the cocoa industry fair trade and free from slave work. In a statement, they said, "calculate the true social cost of their chocolate bar, including all negative social impact and impact on the environment, like child labour or CO2-emissions."

While this is praise-worthy, Tony's Chocolonely is also doing its part to protect and conserve the environment. According to Rank a Brand, they do not consume palm oil. They have implemented several measures to reduce their carbon emissions, such as measuring the climate impact of its activities and collaborating with Justdiggit. This non-profit organization focuses on restoring landscapes and 'regreening' drylands in Africa to impact the climate positively. It is also an excellent idea for tie-ups as sustainability initiatives for companies.

3. LPP

LPP is a Polish retail giant that owns Mohito, Reserved, Sinsay, House, and Cropp. Its sustainability initiatives have given the company the status of one of the

Leadership Lessons From Baldoni

SEPTEMBER 2021



John Baldoni is a globally recognized Leadership Educator, certified Master Corporate Executive Coach, and Author of 15 books that have been translated into ten languages. His thought leadership is reflected in his writing and his choice of media: columns, videos and books. Baldoni is also the host of LinkedIn Live's GRACE under pressure interview series, a platform that has enabled him to interview 100+ global business, academic and thought leaders and doers. His books include Grace Notes: Leading in an Upside-Down World, GRACE: A Leader's Guide to a Better Us, MOXIE: The Secret to Bold and Gutsy Leadership, Lead with Purpose, Lead Your Boss and The Leader's Pocket Guide.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes

John Baldoni was raised in a small town in Ohio, Perrysburg. His father was a physician, and his mother was a community volunteer who then became mayor of their small town. As a child, he studied at a Jesuit institution; wherein the theme of their education revolved around serving one another. Here, Baldoni was first introduced to his passion for serving others and helping them become empowered leaders. He then went to university at Georgetown and decided to travel to London thereafter, where he pursued his aspirations to become a filmmaker.

After Film School, Baldoni migrated to Los Angeles to make his fame and fortune as a filmmaker, which unfortunately did not pan out. He began his career in a fifteenth floor office with a view of a private golf

course. Baldoni got involved in marketing communications and unknowingly discovered his passion for writing and leadership coaching during that time. He soon gave up the comfort of his high paying job to start his own business in a beachfront rental spare bedroom more than three decades ago.

He started working as a speechwriter and helped with leadership presentations and speeches. Baldoni said, "I slowly migrated from writing for others to writing for myself. It was an outgrowth of my work as a speech writer and I felt I had something to say and I could teach others."

In time, Baldoni established a career as a highly sought after Communications Consultant and Leadership Coach, where he had the privilege of working with senior leaders in every industry from pharmaceutical to real estate, packaged goods to automobiles, and finance to healthcare.

Baldoni's mission statement is, "I help women and men learn to live and lead with greater purpose and more grace." Grace is a big theme in all his speeches, and he has written extensively on the topic. Baldoni has two books on the subject; Grace Notes: Leading in an Upside-Down World and GRACE: A Leader's Guide to a Better Us. GRACE mixes stories of everyday heroes with interviews of noted thought leaders. The results are practical insights into generosity, respect, compassion, and the energy and actions to deliver on these virtues.

Grace Notes is his latest book that deals with themes of fear, dislocation, and how leaders need to exert empathy and commitment to others during uncertainty, especially during times such as the pandemic. Baldoni says, "I'm very proud of it, and it is a personal book for me. While the book begins in a dark place with the closing down of society, it ends on a high note as we see how leaders have risen and brought people together for the common good."

Speaking on leadership during the pandemic, he says, "Well, bottom line leadership is about doing what the organization needs you to do. And when times are good, that's a pretty easy job, but when times are tough, you have to decide what's right and wrong. That

always isn't obvious; it's about choosing two good options or choosing between two bad actions, like closing a facility or laying people off. So leaders have to do what's right for the organization. They have to put people first. It's about resiliency."

He added, "I think leaders have done a pretty good job of that in the past year or so. I think many of the leaders I work with are stronger than they have been in the past because they've been tested. This is a pretty challenging time, and I don't think we're going to see this kind of a thing for a good long while. Certainly not the rest of my lifetime, but I'm pretty optimistic about the state of leadership."

Baldoni has used his downtime during the peak of the pandemic to deepen his passion for music. He says, "I learned to play piano as a child. But abandoned it for many years and went back to it a few years ago. But during the pandemic, I've had plenty of time to practice."

He continued, "I'm seeking to integrate music into my leadership work. Music speaks to us on a different plane. It evokes an emotional response and it can be more profound than words. And as a result it challenges us to think and reflect. And the way I use it is I integrate music into my presentation. So I will pose a question to a group and then I will play the piano so they can listen to the music as they reflect."

His unique work style has garnered much praise; in 2021, the International Federation of Learning and Development named him a World-Class Mentor and added him to its Hall of Fame. In addition, Global Gurus ranked John a Top 20 global leadership expert, a list he has been on since 2007. In 2018, Inc.com named Baldoni a Top 100 speaker and Trust Across America honoured him with its Lifetime Achievement Award for Trust.

In conclusion, Baldoni revealed his mantra, "Be seen, heard, and there. Be seen means let people know you are there. Be heard, state the message and stay tuned. Also, as part of hearing, we must listen, listen, listen; good leaders listen more than they speak. And the final thing is to be there, which means be present, be available, be accessible and again, be willing to listen and be willing to make tough choices."

"I'm seeking to integrate music into my leadership work. Music speaks to us on a different plane. It evokes an emotional response and it can be more profound than words. And as a result it challenges us to think and reflect. And the way I use it is I integrate music into my presentation. So I will pose a question to a group and then I will play the piano so they can listen to the music as they reflect."

2021 THROWBACK

OCTOBER

ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

How To Create A Thriving Social Media Presence For Your Start-

-Sherlyn Gomes

OCTOBER 2021



action plan that will take you to your destination.

Here are some questions to get started:

- What types of content do you need to publish on social media?
- What's the frequency of your content?
- What's your plan to promote it?

While devising your content strategy, it's essential to include user-generated content, ranging from good reviews to memes shared about your brand.

3. Create A Unique Strategy For Every Platform

You want to make sure each social media network you are present on serves a purpose. While Instagram can help your brand's visibility and help identify potential customers, you can use LinkedIn to help you get more investment for your business and create stronger partnerships.

For example, IBM uses an entirely different social media strategy for their LinkedIn and their Twitter account. Their LinkedIn has spotlight posts on their employees putting their best foot forward with their inclusion and diversity policies, such as their Spotlight on Charusheela Khandale, Managing Consultant - FSS, IBM. At the same time, they align with 'moment marketing' on Twitter by jumping in on trends and even posting memes with interesting captions. For instance, IBM posted 'Certified #ProudIBMer' on the day Drake's new album Certified Lover Boy was released.

4. Humanize Your Brand

Let your audiences see your personal side; this translates to interacting with your followers often. You can start with responding to comments on posts and making your content as interactive as

possible, use polls or ask questions to get the conversation started in the comment section. Show them who you really are, and your followers will feel more connected to you.

Wendy's Twitter account is an excellent example of this; they reply to every tweet they receive in a fun, humorous manner that connects with their audience and gets the conversation flowing.

5. Provide A Benefit To Your Audience

Ask yourself, 'What's in it for your customers visiting your page?' Show them by giving something away of value - something designed to draw them into your business by building trust or piquing interest. Consider giving away a short trial, a free book or a discount code. For instance, GoPro's YouTube account has several videos showing tips and tutorials using their products to get better pictures and videos. By doing this, they promote their product and also add value to their customers by helping them take better shots and create spectacular edits.

6. Consistently Post At A Comfortable Rate

As cliché as it sounds, posting consistently is one of the best things you can do to jumpstart your social media account. Try starting with once a week, and you can then increase it once you are comfortable. Buffer has researched how often you should post on social media to help with this mind-boggling dilemma, which is of great help!

In Conclusion:

As Susan Cooper, Social Media Influencer, said, "Engage, Enlighten, Encourage and especially just be yourself! Social media is a community effort, everyone is an asset."

As a brand operating in the 21st century, it's a given that you have a social media presence. But is it a thriving social media channel? Or does it just exist with the last post updated in March?

While we see brands like Netflix winning over Twitter, what are they doing differently to put their brand in the limelight?

We have listed five simple steps to create a social media strategy to win over your target audience.

1. Identify Your Target Audience

Be sure whom you want to reach through your social media accounts, whether it's prospective clients, influencers or other businesses. Identify your target audience well, including their likes, preferences and other important variables.

Take time out to look at your audience personas, understand their challenges and what brands they already love via social media, as well as what your competitors are doing. This competitive analysis can help you understand how your social media presence can stand out from the crowd.

2. Create A Content Strategy

Start by creating a content strategy and distribution plan before working on posts for your social media channels. A clear definition of your desired state will allow you to use gap analysis to create a laser-focused

Revolutionising Real Estate Management With Proptech

OCTOBER 2021

Pepe Gutiérrez is the founder of Administrapolis SL, Wesn International SAS and Megafincas Alicante SLP and is considered one of the gurus of Real Estate Management in Spain and across the Spanish-speaking world with a demonstrated history of working and teaching in the real estate industry. Besides university degrees in anthropology and data science, Gutiérrez holds several real estate management related qualifications including the Certified Manager of Community Associations (CMCA) from the global Community Association Institute and the Certified Property Manager (CPM) from the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) in the USA.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes



“I chanced upon my passion for real estate by accident, and as I gradually continued doing my work in this industry, I began to fall in love with the process. I enjoyed it more every day and soon it became my passion and way of life.”

Pepe Gutiérrez was born in a small town in Alicante in Spain, where his father was a policeman by profession. He lived in the city till he was nine years old, surrounded by his extensive family filled with love and laughter. They shared their values with young Gutiérrez that were passed down to them from generations, which he still holds very dear to his heart.

Gutiérrez recalls the incident that significantly shaped his life; he says, “The experience was indelible because it remains etched in my parent’s heart who constantly remind me of the smart, young boy that I was. I was merely two years, still struggling with walking and talking, yet my parents found me at home, with all the tools of my father’s motorcycle, which were inside a drawer with a padlock. Marvelling at this incident, my parents asked me, ‘Pepe how did you open the lock?’ My answer to them was by testing and testing. That was the moment I revealed the set of keys that were in my possession, among which one was that of the lock.” From that day, it was apparent to my parents that it was my destiny to be an entrepreneur.

Growing up, his parent’s had a significant impact on him; they taught him the values of hard work, humility and honesty that were passed on to him by example. He says, “Over the years, I can confirm that these are the values that are obtained at home and not in the street or while working. It is something that stays with us over a lifetime.”

Due to his father’s profession, he had to shift very often and therefore mastered the art to make new friends instantly every time he moved. He moved to El Campello in Alicante, a coastal-tourist town where he made his mark as an entrepreneur during his adolescence.

Intending to be an aviation pilot, Gutiérrez gave up a scholarship to become an engineer. At the end of his mandatory military service at the age of 18, Gutiérrez immediately started working to construct houses. Simultaneously, not losing sight of education, he sacrificed his time off to get a quality education to help him rise in his career.

Gutiérrez explains, “I chanced upon my passion for real estate by accident, and as I gradually continued doing my work in this industry, I began to fall in love with the process. I enjoyed it more every day and soon it became my passion and way of life.”

From his first job in construction, he climbed the ranks with hard work and dedication. In the last 40 years, Gutiérrez has held several roles in the real estate world. He has worked as a consultant, professor, advisor and expert for public, corporate and private organizations.

Acting on his passion, he founded Administrapolis SL in the year 2013. With a vision to fuse the real estate world with technology i.e. proptech, the company creates and adapts technological solutions to obtain maximum optimization and sustainability in everything related to building management. To achieve this, they apply the new concepts of Machine Learning, IoT and Big Data and are very proactive in their approach.

Administrapolis SL is a pioneer in installation and predictive maintenance for the real estate industry in many countries. Talking about the challenges he endured, he says, “Every day in the role of a Property & Community Association Manager, you are subjected to risks that affect people, buildings and the economy at large. In my case, I always ensure that the risk factor is controlled and measured. There are many professional and business risks that every entrepreneur must take if he wants to succeed in his career.”

With Administrapolis SL, Gutiérrez is focusing his efforts on sustainability. Talking about the topic, he adds, “Climate change is another of the greatest challenges that has accelerated the pandemic. The real estate world has turned to the implementation of multiple sustainable strategies and I strongly believe that it has already become a ‘standard’ in the way of being and acting.”

The pandemic is another factor that has accelerated climate change, but he adds, “However, it has also been a great lesson to quickly adapt and learn how to be operational in the face of adversities. The only answer to this dilemma has been technology, which is constantly evolving and improving to better serve the people and improve the customer experience.”

However, this pandemic has also caused Gutiérrez to be separated from his family, who live in another country. Gutiérrez adds in a pleasant tone, “But we make time out of our busy schedules to meet every once a while and enjoy our downtime together as one, happy family. Fortunately, my wife and son work together which I think is a great privilege.”

Given Gutiérrez’s busy schedule, he says his favourite way to unwind at the end of a busy day is to devour a good book that can instantly make him feel well-rested.

As an advisor and expert, Gutiérrez has delivered, talks, lectures and conducted workshops across the world in acclaimed events. A revered figure in the Spanish-speaking world, he is currently a Professor at the Institute of Real Estate Management in Chicago and guides students in the field of real estate and community association management. A prolific author, Gutiérrez has written and published many books on the subject including the globally acclaimed, ‘Los Mejores Administradores de Edificios del Mundo’.

In conclusion, his advice to real estate leaders is, “Train and learn immensely about the emerging technologies and current situation of the real estate market. Act based on market needs after having a clear strategy of the current market and forecasted market needs of the future. And finally plan the necessary timeline and work hard to implement your strategy.”

2021 THROWBACK NOVEMBER



ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION



Tips From Leading Realtors To Wow Your Customers

- Sherlyn Gomes

NOVEMBER 2021

As a real estate agent, your business solely depends on your relationship with your clients. According to NAR statistics, nearly half of all potential buyers rely on recommendations from friends, neighbours, or relatives when choosing their realtor. This imposes the question, what can you do to wow your customers to get referrals?

The secret ingredient is to create an extraordinary experience that will give you an assured referral the next time around. Likewise, customers also expect and demand that their real estate agents deliver personable, responsive and tech-savvy experiences with complete expertise in their market.

Here's how to execute compelling client experiences before, during and long after the deal has closed.

1. Get To Know Your Customers Personally

After informing your clients about the home buying process and reviewing all their checklists, it is imperative to become properly acquainted with them. This will save you a lot of time and effort as the better you know them, the easier it will be to show them properties that they will like. Getting to know your buyers should go beyond identifying appropriate listings for your clients, or it comes off as a superficial attempt to close the sale.

"In my opinion, real estate agents need to remember that their clients are people and not a transaction," says Lorraine Beato, a licensed REALTOR® with Palmer House Properties. "I treat all of my buyers as if they are family members. I build a relationship with them, and I would say that about 90% of my past buyers are now friends."

2. Help Them Network

As a real estate agent, you have an extensive network of known people in the locality and from previous connections, leverage this to your advantage. As a person moving to a



new locality, they will need to find a new gardener, the right plumber, a repair person; the list is endless. Helping a client in this situation will put you in a good light, thereby strengthening your client-realtor relationship.

"Use your knowledge to make yourself the go-to expert. Tell your real estate clients about gyms, country clubs, social groups, Facebook groups they should be a part of, and more. Even better: Introduce them to people you know in the community," said Johnny Isakson, a senator from Georgia with a 40-year career in real estate. This will help you bond with them and create a meaningful relationship that will go beyond the average realtor experience.

3. Create Personalized Buyer-Friendly Guides

Customers will appreciate the extra effort taken to personalize their listings with their checklists ticked off along with the property you listed that matched their criteria. Creating additional informational material for your customers to review back at home will also help eliminate anxiety, as it will give them reading material to go through whenever doubts or queries arise. Your detailed explanations of each property will reinforce that you have the skills and knowledge required to help them through their significant milestone.

"Agents can break down the process for their clients in ways they'll understand,"

says Ashley Oshinsky, Founder of Higher Living Real Estate LLC. "That's why I've created buyer guides that are specific to my customers' needs, as well as checklists, so they have something they can always refer back to."

4. Keep In Touch After The Deal Closes

After the sale goes through, maintain your relationship with the client by sending a thank-you note for their closings and check-ins for home anniversaries, birthdays and special occasions. Several apps can integrate this information and send out wishes, such as APINation that automatically sync contacts with specified MailChimp audiences to initiate email campaigns, such as an agent's monthly newsletter, holiday greetings or home anniversary celebration notes.

"I write cards to my buyers after our first consultation. And once they're in their new home, I write them a congratulatory card as well," says Andrew Sanchez, REALTOR® for Wardley Real Estate. "This lets my buyers know I truly care about them."

In Conclusion:

As Anthony Hitt, CEO of Engel & Völkers said, "To be successful in real estate, you must always and consistently put your clients' best interests first. When you do, your personal needs will be realized beyond your greatest expectations."

The Proptech Revolution

NOVEMBER 2021

Hamza Betraoui is the Managing Director of Land Sterling, a visionary who has come from humble beginnings. He has over 15 years of experience in the real estate industry. He is an active lecturer at the Dubai Real Estate Institute and believes in moulding and sharing his experience with the upcoming professionals. His vision and strategies have helped the company grow from three people in 2009 to over 100 dedicated employees in the UAE, KSA, and UK. Hamza remains true to his vision to modernize the real estate industry by providing the highest standard of service and developing new technologies that would help improve the industry as a whole. He spearheaded some of the best industry software, one of which the UAE's largest banks have purchased to streamline its operations. Other innovations under his leadership include introducing Land Sterling Academy, where young talents are provided with structured training in valuations, building surveying and project management.

Hamza was born and raised in Algeria, North Africa and in the neighbouring country of Tunisia with a tight-knit family. His father was in the military, while his mother was a homemaker with the utmost compassion for her children. Being raised in a complex society, he had to always be aware of what was around him that shaped him to be a vigilant individual. As the second child, he also



felt the need to make sure everyone was okay, a quality he still exercises daily to ensure his employee's wellbeing, especially during the difficult time of the pandemic.

Hamza first discovered his passion for technology when he chanced upon computers at the age of 8. Captivated by the device, he began learning everything he could about computers, from software to hardware. Hamza always had a knack for entrepreneurship; by the age of 12, he had successfully created his own computer, thereby starting his entrepreneurial journey.

To pursue his passion for technology and with the given boom in real estate at the time, he pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Planning & Property Development at Nottingham Trent University. While in college, he continued his quest for entrepreneurship. During his final year, Hamza and his friend identified the students' pain points in dealing with their dissertation and thesis submissions. He says, "Immediately, I saw a market in need of a product. And we started a printing business in our apartment that catered to students giving them a quicker and more affordable option." This soon turned into the first of many successful business ventures to follow undertaken by the brilliant Hamza.

He graduated in 2007 when the UK was experiencing an economic crisis. He had a setback with the first company where before joining, the real estate arm of the firm was diluted and therefore the opportunity was lost.

Hamza then decided to fly to Dubai and join his brother Youcef. While he was there, he observed the shortage of qualified Arabic-speaking professionals. Due to his excellent command of the language and expertise in planning and property management, he was immediately approached by four international property companies, but Hamza decided to join JLL.

While working at JLL, being a curious learner, Hamza observed that most of the processes were still done manually. To combat this lag in operations, he studied and learned about financial modelling. This advanced excel sheet that he developed made it easier for the valuers to create a report, especially for complex

assignments. In turn, this ignited his curiosity and made him seek answers to this question, 'How do I develop a software that can be used to the same tasks in the shortest span of time?'

This led him to the discovery of Proptech and the vast benefits it offered to the industry. As he advanced in his knowledge and expertise, he started finding new ways to incorporate Proptech for the efficiency of processes. He says, "Proptech does not necessarily mean to remove the traditional method. Instead, it is an innovative way of shortening the distance between point A and point B and creating a higher accuracy rate."

Land Sterling was established in 2009, which gave a voice to these rising technological advances in the industry. Hamza explains, "At Land Sterling, it is essential for us to put the customers first and this became our driving force in developing new technologies to create a better customer experience. Proptech was not only able to shorten the turnaround time of our reports but also helped in creating a more accurate outcome that met and exceeded client requirements."

According to Hamza, the biggest challenge the real estate industry currently faces is liability, which places more emphasis on decision-making. He explains, "As consultants, it has become imperative to have accurate, clear and understandable reports. Because of this, fusing technology with real estate processes has made it easier to achieve high accuracy in a short period of time whilst adhering to the international best practices."

Hamza explains the strategic vision he has for the company using Proptech as a revolutionary tool, "In line with Land Sterling's strategic vision to be future-ready and play a key role in shaping the built environment in UAE & the larger Middle East market, Belsons Technologies has been set up, which will seek to explore, identify and develop innovative methods and turn-key solutions for the real estate industry."

Aside from that, Land Sterling has also entirely digitized their operations and are currently one of the leading companies in the region to go paperless as part of their sustainability plan.

At Land Sterling, it is essential for us to put the customers first and this became our driving force in developing new technologies to create a better customer experience.

The pandemic was another indicator that showed the resilience of the UAE market due to the advancement of technology in the region. He adds, "The pandemic has had a massive impact on the market but with the great support that the UAE government provided, UAE was able to recover in no time. Being pioneers of PropTech, Land Sterling was one step ahead of the needs that the pandemic created."

Due to his innate ability to always stay ahead of the curve and his prowess in the industry, Hamza was listed as one of the top ten real estate personalities in 2020 for the MENA region and also made it to the finalist list in the SME Awards 2021 in the category, 'Business Leader of The Year.' He has also provided much-needed stability for his company and employees during the extremely challenging time of the pandemic. He adds, "Despite the trials of the pandemic, the Executive Board made the right decision to expand the organization to Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Leeds and London, thereby growing it by almost 70% from the previous year."

In conclusion, his advice for budding leaders is, "Always be respectful regardless of who you are dealing with, be truthful in everything you do, have compassion and keep on learning and innovating." And you are sure to excel in the corporate world.

2021 THROWBACK DECEMBER



Create A Happier Workforce By Solving Employee Burnout

- Jessica Albuquerque

DECEMBER 2021

Have you noticed your employees or team members acting sluggish and unproductive at work? Are they forgetful and uninterested in their tasks? Do they lack concentration and seem physically and emotionally exhausted? Then, there is a high chance that they are suffering from the most common occupational hazard—employee burnout.

What exactly is employee burnout and how does it come about?

A worker experiencing burnout suffers from a loss of personal identity and is in a state of both physical and emotional exhaustion. According to the International Classification of Diseases, employee burnout results from chronic workplace stress that has been unsuccessfully managed. Though it is something that is often overlooked, employee burnout is so common that nearly three-fourth, or 73% to be precise, of American employees, are currently experiencing worker burnout.

As a Manager it is of the utmost importance to identify the signs of a burnt-out employee before they reach a potentially worse situation, after all, 23% of burnt-out employees are more likely to visit the emergency room. Here are a few tips to help your employees get through this burnout.

1. Identify The Cause

Having a burnout worker in your team is extremely counterproductive. Studies have found that burnt-out employees are 63% more likely to take a sick day and highly likely to leave their current employers. The first step to helping a burnt-out employee is by pinning down the root cause of the problem. As a manager or employer, it is a must to have an open mind and listen to your employees' grievances. If your employees believe that they are being overworked, take a step back and see how you can reorganise their task list and cut down on unnecessary work.



2. Prioritise Mental Health

The stress caused by burnout pays a heavy toll on the mental health of employees and that is why it is vital to provide your team with mental and emotional support. Jennifer Moss, author of 'The Burnout Epidemic: The Rise of Chronic Stress and How We Can Fix It' says that "You (managers) are not meant to be a mental health expert, but you are meant to know where those mental health experts exist in your organization. You are a conduit." Having an Employee Assistance Program (EPA) provides your workers with an outlet to talk about their problems and find solutions. Another way to improve mental health in your organisation is by promoting work-life balance and incorporating short breaks throughout the day.

3. No Working After Hours

Employees who work from home are often pressured into working longer hours and even completing tasks when they're on vacation or on their days off. This can lead to resentment and substandard work. In fact, this was such an issue that Portugal recently amended their labour laws to ban employers from contacting their staff outside their contracted working hours. It is a must to remember that

your employees have a life outside of work and value their time. Fostering work-life balance reduces stress and thereby the chances of burnout.

4. Lead By Example

Several managers and employers feel the need to portray a perfect version of themselves but being honest and showcasing vulnerability in terms of your emotional and mental health can encourage employees to do the same. Even the most famous and admired entrepreneurs such as Elon Musk have admitted that their lifestyle isn't healthy. A few years ago, Musk stated that "No one should put this many hours into your work. It's not recommended for anyone. You're gonna go a little bonkers if you work 120 hours a week." So don't forget to introspect and check if you yourself are suffering from burnout without realising it. Make use of your vacation days, take breaks to unwind, switch your phone off after work and focus on your mental health.

While employee burnout is becoming increasingly common in most organisations, a good and thoughtful employee who cares for the health and wellbeing of his employees can make all the difference. Ultimately, your business is only as strong as the amazing people who work for you.

Pioneering Agri-Tech Investments For Millennials

DECEMBER 2021



Nneile Nkholise is a mechanical engineering technologist with eight years of experience in the construction and biomedical sectors, having developed biomedical products ranging from bio-implants to prostheses. She Co-Founded iMed Tech, a biotech company specializing in custom-made medical solutions using CAD and CAM techniques. In 2019, she co-founded 3DIMO, a venture-backed company that automates livestock data analytics to monitor livestock health. In 2016, she was recognized as Africa's top female innovator by the World Economic Forum. She was awarded the South African Youth of the Year by the Office of the Presidency in 2017. In 2018, she was recognized in the 100 top young Africans by the Africa Youth Council and awarded Industrialist of the Year in Southern Africa at the All Africa Business Leaders Awards.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes

Nneile Nkholise was born in Lesotho and grew up in a small farming town called Thaba Nchu in South Africa, making her appreciate the art of farming and agriculture. She says, "I had the most glorious childhood, growing up surrounded by my mother's love and the love

"This world has been borrowed and given to us by the kids of the house of tomorrow; let's make it a better place they can call home."

of many of her friends who over the years lent themselves to being my mentors and played a pivotal role in helping shape my path in life."

Her mother is an instrumental part of her success; talking about the value she instilled in her, she says, "My mother was very resourceful, she always had a plan for almost everything. She also had a knack for sales and possessed the inherent ability to sell poison to a rat and have it asking for more. She taught me so much about building product value and the art of selling a product that everyone is selling but charging almost twice the amount for it and still having everyone buying it."

Growing up, her mother would never give her money when she just asked for it. She says, "She would always demand that I share with her a plan of what I need the money for and how the funds would contribute to my education and things I'm passionate about. Getting a cent from her to buy a sweet was impossible, but getting a dollar from her to buy a book was easy." This skill greatly aided her while establishing her companies in the future.

Given her love for learning instilled by her mother, she went on to earn a Bachelor of Physics at the University of Witwatersrand. She later enrolled herself to study Mechanical Engineering at the Central University of Technology. She added, "Where I later dropped out following my accidental fall into entrepreneurship."

Nkholise's first formal job was in 2010, where she worked as a mechanical engineering trainee at a water treatment company, BloemWater, in South Africa. She says, "They always say your first employer is your god with a small 'g', and I can truly affirm that because my first job taught me about building interpersonal

relationships and having empathy." Nkholise worked in an environment where she was the only female working with older men, out of which many had never had formal education beyond secondary school and had never experienced working with a woman the same age as their daughters.

She added, "Beyond my job, I had a more significant role of helping my colleagues build a better appreciation for women in the workplace and build a positive influence for their daughters at home."

Talking about her career journey, she says, "I've had numerous pivots in my career. I started my career working in the water engineering sector, later pivoted to working in the construction sector - during the time when I was working in the construction sector I also served in various leadership positions within South African Olympic Sporting Committee and University Sport and led a South African team to two world student games as Deputy Chef De Mission."

In 2015, after holding various leadership positions, she decided to deep-dive into the world of entrepreneurship. That same year, she co-founded iMed Tech, a biotech company specializing in designing customized medical solutions, ranging from manufacturing medical prostheses, breast prostheses, and bio-implants. "By launching iMed Tech, I wanted to confirm a theory that women have the power and potential to run companies in the medical technology sector. And not just ordinary companies, but companies that will become multinationals," she added.

The company achieved various accolades, and due to her brilliant leadership, Nkholise made it to the Forbes 30 under 30 List in 2018. Given her zest for establishing companies, in 2019, she launched 3DIMO that eventually started as a sports tech company that built sports injury sensing devices. They could be sown into athletes' garments to compute stress loads (for instance, from contact) on specific joints and alert the athlete's medical team when the stress load on the athlete's joints exceeded the allowable stress that the athlete can carry at particular joints.

However, when COVID-19 hit, the sports industry entirely shut down. In the

aftermath, the company faced numerous challenges because the organization had multiple development works in the process coupled with pilot tests that they intended to run.

However, despite the setback, the pandemic served as a turning point in Nkholise's career. She explains, "When COVID hit in 2020; I went back home and spent a lot of my time working at farms, helping out on a full time basis. That experience helped me think differently about the challenges that cattle farmers were facing and the opportunities in the sector, which in previous years I had overlooked."

She added, "So I decided to pull the plug on working in sport and led a drastic iteration of our product focus, market focus and also customer focus into agriculture."

3DIMO is currently enabling 6,542 cattle farmers in the US and South Africa to create traceable biometric identification of their cattle using a phone camera image of the cow's nose, which is as unique as a human fingerprint. This helps in tracking animal movement across the value chain.

Nkholise explains, "Of the 250 thousand cattle that we have created IDs for; we have been able to select the top 0.00005% of superior production bulls. We have been giving people an opportunity to partially owning these superior bulls by purchasing a fraction of shares of the bull on our investment marketplace and earning returns from the sale of bull semen. The semen is sold worldwide, but mainly in Africa, to increase beef production quality and reduce production costs using Artificial Insemination."

Due to her pioneering work in the industry, in 2021, during the Journées de la Femme Digitale, she was awarded the Margaret Entrepreneur Africa Prize, a distinction that rewards women entrepreneurs in Africa and Europe whose projects and innovations respond to social challenges.

In conclusion, her advice to budding social entrepreneurs is, "This world has been borrowed to us by the kids of the house of tomorrow; let's make it a better place they can call home."

The Region's Largest Community Management Excites Practitioners & Industry Veterans

The 3-day IRECMS Dubai 2021 event concludes with a glamorous awards ceremony

Dubai: Now in its 4th Edition, IRECMS is a global platform that aims to lift the benchmark for Community Management and associated industries around the world. IRECMS is the only event of its type to have been supported by seven prestigious industry bodies- Community Associations Institute (USA), CAI - (Middle East), CAI (South Africa), Strata Community Association (Australia), Middle East Facility Management Association (UAE), National Association of Community Managers (Spain) and Japan Property Management Association (Japan).

The 3-day event commenced on 7th Dec 2021 with Masterclasses conducted in collaboration with Community Associations Institute Middle East (CAIME). The 4 sessions that covered the spectrum of Community Management- Operations, Finance, Technology and Customer Service- were packed with attendees from the USA, Australia, Spain, Uruguay, Colombia, Bahrain, Panama and Germany besides the UAE. The conference, scheduled on 8th Dec 2021 at the luxurious JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai, had a footfall of over 300+ attendees and 35+ international speakers from 10 countries.

A spectacular gala awards evening was

organised on 9th Dec 2021 at JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai wherein 38 winners were revealed across 18 categories. Some companies such as Emaar Community Management, Luxury Owners Association Management Services, Kaizen Asset Management Services, Zenesis Corp, Farnek took home trophies in multiple categories. A complete list of category-wise winners is available at www.irecms.com/dubai

Important industry leaders were also recognised at the awards which included- Mr. Tom Skiba (Global Leadership in Community Management), Mr. Pepe Gutierrez (Global Guru of Community Management), Mr. Jamal Lootah (Visionary Leader in Facilities Management), Mr. Mohanad Alwadiya (Visionary Leader in Property Management) and Mr. Jeevan D'Mello (Visionary Leader in Community Management).

What distinguishes IRECMS Awards is that the organisers do not accept sponsorships for the awards gala event to avoid any conflict of interest which ensures that the most deserving companies win purely on merit through a transparent and autonomous process with an independent, international jury.



A PLAN 3 MEDIA EVENT

The dates for IRECMS Dubai 2022 have already been announced and companies can start registering their interest on www.irecms.com/dubai.

This event was organized by the UAE's leading event management company- Plan3Media Event Management www.plan3media.com

For more information, please contact: Harsha Agrawal (Event Director) on harsha@plan3media.com

There's a great advantage here, bringing people from the industry, from different parts of the world under one roof. It's an event not to be missed by any community manager or anyone interested in this industry for sure. I have definitely enjoyed it this year and I look forward to 2022.

Dana Awad

Executive Director - Owners' Association and IFM, Provis





There is no platform similar to ours at this point. In every way, including the awards, we have made a conscious effort to distinguish ourselves from the rest. For instance, our awards event had no sponsors and was conducted in a completely transparent manner. As organisers, we DID NOT interfere with the decision of the Jury.

Jatin Deepchandani
CEO, Plan3Media Event Management



A FRESH
OUTLOOK

2022

The LGBTQ+ Role Model

Peter Arvai is a Swedish Entrepreneur of Hungarian parentage. He is the Co-Founder and CEO of Prezi, a cloud-based presentation software company. As an entrepreneur, he has previously founded omvard.se and co-founded Prezi along with two co-founders Adam Somlai-Fischer, a designer and Peter 'HP' Halacsy, a computer scientist and university professor; and officially launched it in 2009. Peter was also the first openly gay CEO in Hungary. He turned his coming out in 2015 into a Forbes article to position himself as a gay role model for young LGBTQ+ looking to be entrepreneurs.

Written by Alexis Miller



Peter Arvai is originally from Karlskoga in Sweden, while his parents were of Hungarian descent. He attended Stockholm University in 2001 and graduated with a master in Business Administration. At Stockholm University, Peter participated in the 12 months Vulcanus in Japan programme, established by the Japanese Ministry of Economic, Trade and Industry and the EU.

While there, he studied Japanese and completed a training program at Fuji Xerox in Japan. Peter studied economics in Singapore for an exchange semester as part of his business program. He was one of the first students to attend the newly introduced Master in Media Technology and Engineering program (1999-2005) at the Royal Institute of Technology. After graduating, Peter co-founded the program's alumni group that gave him a jumpstart into the world of entrepreneurship.

Peter says, "Since University I've been interested in how to combine storytelling with technology in a way that will help people make better decisions. Before Prezi, I co-founded omvard.se, a company that aggregates data on treatment outcomes for hospital patients. I also developed the world's first mobile newsreader so people could follow TED talks from their mobile devices."

Soon Peter was onto his next project, along with his co-founders, the trio recognized a problem with traditional presentations – they convey the data in a dry, hum-drum manner. Peter explained, "My Co-Founder Adam Somlai-Fischer was a renowned media artist, in addition to being an architect. He found slide-based presentations limiting for his art, so he designed an open, zoomable canvas to showcase his work. My other co-founder Peter Halácsy is a computer scientist and revolutionized the code, and I brought the product and user experience mindset."

Prezi was officially launched in 2009; the following year, with sheer determination, Peter set up a meeting with Chris Anderson, the creator of TED Talks, to secure funding. The organization had previously never invested in another company. But with the ambitious speech of the three founders that changed, they received \$1.5 million in investment from

TED and Sunstone Capital in Copenhagen.

After that, there was no looking back; Prezi achieved several firsts and soon had over 100 million users. Their company was backed by research conducted by Harvard that showed Prezi was more engaging and persuasive than traditional presentations that gave the platform leverage.

However, his success does not end there; Peter has achieved tremendous feats as an LGBTQ+ leader and advocate – and continues to work hard for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace.

LGBT rights were still a rarity when Peter was a kid in Sweden. He explained, "I didn't have any true role models. I wanted to start a business, but it didn't seem like that was something you could easily mix with being publicly homosexual. But, during my undergraduate years, Sweden underwent a major transformation, and I felt supported in being out gay. Because I had witnessed that shift in my lifetime, it gave me the guts to be Hungary's first openly gay CEO."

Peter went on to explain his move: "I think it's an important way of indicating the type of culture you're setting with the company and, whether it's a sexuality or not, leaders can be open or closeted with their personal lives. It's really worthwhile to be open and to share who you are with people if you're wanting to develop authentic relationships, candid conversations, and creativity."

In 2010, Prezi became the first-ever company to march in the Budapest Pride Parade that was soon followed by some of the biggest corporations in the world. Peter described the event saying, "As I entered the march there were these big fences so that you could hermetically seal off the marchers. You had an empty spot in between and then you had sort of the extreme right on the other side. I would be lying if I didn't say that was a really scary march and in some ways it also made it clear to me how difficult it must be in that environment to be openly gay, to just receive so much hatred for who you are."

After the pioneering move, Prezi has continued to work hard to cultivate an open, diverse and inclusive work environment. His company Prezi has "coded diversity in from the beginning", said Peter. "Being inclusive is not just the

"Peter has achieved a tremendous feat as an LGBTQ+ leader and advocate – and continues to work hard for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals in the workplace."

morally right thing to do but it has a lot of benefits. You think more creatively, you see things from varied perspectives."

To take this notion ahead, in 2013, Peter and the team at Prezi co-founded the NGO 'WeAreOpen' with Google and ESPELL. The NGO was set up with a clear intention of promoting and helping organizations understand and experience the benefits of openness at the workplace. Since its launch, more than 1000 companies have publicly joined WeAreOpen. As a result, this created a wave of openness with several well respected public figures sharing videos and stories on transparency; a quality society should value.

Talking about the NGO, Peter said, "I am really grateful that teenagers growing up today struggling with accepting themselves for being gay, can see diverse role models who they can relate to." He wants to show young LGBTQ+ individuals that it's possible to be openly gay and have a successful career in technology.

In conclusion, his advice for budding leaders is, "The core here is to get to know yourself. Once you know who you are, then you know what's important to you. And often, this entails being able to connect the dots from where you're coming from and how your talents, interests and expertise can be useful for the world. When all of these pieces come together and create something that excites you, your purpose will be clear. For me, this understanding, combined with the insight I gained about how the world and our decision-making is suffering from poor communication, provided a clear picture of what can be purposeful and meaningful."

The Social Impact Entrepreneur Revolutionizing Business

Shiza Shahid is an activist, entrepreneur, investor, technologist and world-renowned impact leader. She is the founding CEO of the Malala Fund with Nobel Prize winner Malala Yousafzai, which focuses on creating access to high-quality education for all children worldwide. Due to her achievements, Shiza was named one of TIME's '30 Under 30 People Changing the World,' Forbes' '30 Under 30 - Social Entrepreneurs,' and a Tribeca Institute Disruptive Innovator. She has also been featured in numerous publications, including Al Jazeera, Forbes, Fast Company, Elle, Glamour, Town and Country, The Edit, CNN, ABC, MSNBC, and others.

Written by Sherlyn Gomes



Growing up in Islamabad, Shiza's mother had a master plan for her daughters that did not include the kitchen. "My mother never wanted me to cook," she adds. "She had spent most of her life cooking, not by choice but because she was born into a patriarchal family. So she wanted my sister and I to have a choice and not be held back by household chores."

Due to her mother's encouragement and teachings, Shiza grew up into an empowered young woman and began

her life of activism quite early on. Talking about her first job, she said, "I volunteered with a nonprofit and would carry medical supplies into a women's prison in Pakistan. I must have been 12 years old; it was the first time I realized as a young person that I could make a difference, and felt like that was my path in life."

To make an impact, Shiza applied for a scholarship to Stanford University and then moved to California at 18. Still, she never stopped reading about Pakistan in the news, particularly the issues faced by its women. Violence in the region had dramatically increased since her childhood.

Shiza watched a New York Times documentary about Malala at that time, a brave 11-year-old girl who had been secretly blogging her day-to-day struggle to get an education in Pakistan for the BBC. Touched by the misery of her nation and her access to elite education, Shiza contacted Malala, asking if she could be of any help to her and the girls in the region. Shiza then organized a summer study camp in Islamabad for Malala and 26 young girls to empower them to be impactful activists and entrepreneurs.

However, in 2012, Malala was hunted down and shot in the face by a member of the Taliban. Shiza, who was working as an analyst at McKinsey & Co. in Dubai at the time, immediately flew to the hospital in London where Malala was being treated. Shiza recalled, "In the first few days after the shooting, nobody was sure if Malala would survive. But she did. And when she became physically stable, she committed herself to push forward her cause."

Shiza accompanied her every step of the way and moved into a leadership position, and managed the media, who had a growing global interest in Malala and her story. Realizing the potential of Malala's story to encourage education for girls, Malala's family and Shiza had the idea to establish a fund.

The Fund was officially launched in October of 2013 and operated in countries where girls are likely to be denied the opportunity to attend school. The girl child may miss out on formal education due to discrimination, safety concerns, or need to work to help relieve

their household financial pressures. The organization currently operates in Afghanistan, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey and has grown consistently every year. They have even helped girls study during the pandemic, which was a significant feat for the organization.

Once the organization was successfully set up, Shiza moved on to her next project - Our Place, the kitchen essentials that her mother strongly opposed during her childhood days. In 2019, Shiza and her two co-founders launched the direct-to-consumer kitchenware company Our Place intending to address the lack of cookware options for multiethnic American kitchens and change the perceptions of standard cookware.

Talking about its inception, she says, "We started Our Place because as immigrants we found our Place in America by cooking and sharing food—having our friends come over and sharing our culture with them. We believe that there is something compelling about how home cooking connects us." Shiza continued, "You come into my home and my kitchen, and you know who my grandmother was, and that's the power of home cooking. When all else falls away, we still cook what our mothers cooked for us and that their mothers cooked for them. Home cooking is this Place where culture, identity, love and belonging live. So we wanted to create a brand that celebrated that. A brand that created products and experiences that allowed us to connect over home cooking and that celebrated the multiethnic American kitchen."

To combat the multiple pans an average American owns in their kitchen; the company came up with a new invention, The Always Pan. Explaining the product, she says, "If you walk into any cookware store, they're all selling large, bulky, expensive, difficult-to-use cookware sets. There's a frying pan, saucepan, skillet, nonstick pan, saucier, rice cooker, and we thought, can't we make it simpler and more streamlined? It took around two painstaking years of poring over the design, sampling, and testing to make sure we went forward with something that would make cooking easier for our family and us and lower the barrier to enter the kitchen. The Always Pan is deep

"Our Place is a carbon-neutral brand that donates to causes like the Immigrant Defenders Network, providing legal representation to immigrants at risk of deportation, as well as the Equal Justice Initiative."

enough to make sauces, shallow enough to flip an egg; it's got modular inserts like a stainless steel steamer basket and a spatula rest. It's not just a pan; it's a cookware system."

However, that's not all, Shiza has left no stones unturned with her organization. Our Place is a carbon-neutral brand that donates to causes like the Immigrant Defenders Network, providing legal representation to immigrants at risk of deportation, as well as the Equal Justice Initiative. The organization has also donated over 250,000 meals to Feeding America to help fight hunger. Shiza says, "It's really about the choices you make within your business, within your supply chain, within your culture, within the partners, you select, within the way you centre your brand around inclusion and representation."

Currently, 80% of their products are sourced from women-owned collectives and factories. Our Place's packaging is free of plastics, fully biodegradable, compostable, and recyclable. She says, "We are a team of primarily women and people of colour. And as we scale by virtue of the business itself, we're doing more good in the world."

In conclusion, she says, "I think some of the worst career advice I received was, 'Find your one passion'. I believe our passions evolve over time and finding your one passion can feel like an overwhelming burden. Instead, I ask myself, 'What is the best way I can be contributing at this moment?'"

Neurodiversity: Untapped Talent Waiting To Grow Your Company

- Jessica Albuquerque

Over the past few decades, the workforce has been constantly evolving. With the gradual shift from a predominantly male office place to a gender-inclusive and then racially diverse workspace. Companies have learnt that creating a diverse internal organisation has had a major positive impact on the way that they function and are perceived by the public. But unfortunately, in spite of all these major gains, people who fall under the neurodiverse spectrum still face numerous hurdles when it comes to employment.

What is Neurodiversity?

Coined in the year 1998 by sociologist Judy Singer, the term Neurodiversity refers to the concept that there is a variation in the way the human brain functions in many, which compels people to think, emote and interact with the world in a unique manner that might not be the norm. Individuals who are dyslexic, autistic, epileptic, bipolar or diagnosed with dyscalculia, ADHD, Tourette Syndrome, DCD all come under the umbrella of neurodivergent.

Though neurodivergent people make up nearly 15–20% of our population, a report conducted in 2020 showcased that only 7% of companies world over have a neurodiversity plan in place. So, it is no surprise that the unemployment rate for neurodivergent adults is as high as 30-40%. Since most neurodiverse people struggle to conform to the standard behavioural practices that makes one a 'perfect' employee, more often than not, recruiters tend to dismiss them because they struggle with navigating the interview process. But given a chance, along with a supportive environment and necessary tools, hiring a neurodivergent candidate can greatly improve your organisation.

How does Neurodiversity benefit your workplace?

1. Unique Perspective



José Velasco, head of the Autism at Work program at multinational software corporation SAP for North America once said, "If everybody thinks the same way, we're likely to miss opportunities to bring creative solutions to the market." And that is one of the foremost benefits of hiring a neurodiverse employee. They are brimming with potential that is waiting to be tapped and that is why major MNCs such as SAP, Microsoft, Ford, Dell Technologies, Deloitte, IBM, JP Morgan Chase & Co have started inclusive hiring programs to induct a broader definition of talent into their workforce

2. Company Loyalty

In comparison to neurotypical employees, several neurodiverse hiring programs have retention rates of more than 90%, a figure that is fairly higher than the average retention rates. In addition to that, according to a survey conducted by Harvard Business Review, most neurodiverse employees showcase higher morale and are loyal to their employers. This is mainly due to the fact that finding a supportive and inclusive work environment is difficult and hence neurodivergent employees are more committed to their companies and jobs.

3. Connect With A Wider Audience

According to Neil Barnett, the Director of inclusive hiring and accessibility at Microsoft, "Weaving talent with disabilities into the

fabric of the company creates better processes, products and services for everyone." This is because the personal experiences of neurodiverse employees allow them to provide solutions to numerous problems that other neurodiverse customers face on a daily basis. This thereby furthers innovation at your company and opens up the doors to a much larger audience of potential customers.

Some of the greatest innovators and businessmen in the world, such as Albert Einstein, Alan Turing, and Henry Ford to name a few, have been individuals who fall under the neurodiverse spectrum. Richard Branson, the Founder of the Virgin Group, has always celebrated being neurodiverse. "My dyslexia has shaped Virgin right from the very beginning and imagination has been the key to many of our successes," he says. Branson also credits his dyslexia for his strong imagination, "It's always helped me to have big dreams and to keep looking forward."

Neurodiverse employees have the potential to shine just as bright, if not brighter, than neurotypical employees. With their logical mindset and atypical approach to problem-solving, they make some of the best employees and leaders. Society as we know it wouldn't be the same without their immense contributions. So, perhaps it is time for your organisation to take that first step towards exploring this pool of remarkable neurodiverse people.

Transform Your Bad Day At The Office With These Easy Solutions

- Jessica Albuquerque



We all have those days where things just get from bad to worse. Whether it's incorrect reports, a backlog of work or a communication mishap with your team members, you're bound to hit a few rough patches at work every now and then. Unfortunately, these bad days can have a major impact on your mental health, especially if they start occurring frequently. Here are a few ways to make your bad workday a whole lot better!

1. Take A Break

If your bad day at work is caused due to a clash between employees or difficulty with an external figure, try removing yourself from the situation to cool down and collect your thoughts. Studies have shown that taking a brief break from work can vastly improve your focus, which will help you allow logic to dictate your further course of action. A five-minute break in the coffee room works but if you're lucky enough to have an office that is surrounded by nature, research shows that just 10 minutes of greenery is enough to make you feel less stressed and lower your blood pressure. So the next time you

feel an argument brewing just take a quick breather because the last thing you want to do is to say something in the heat of the moment that you will regret later.

2. Focus On The Solution

The worst thing you can do when you're having a bad day is stress about things you cannot rectify, instead, try focusing on what you can do to fix the situation you're in. As author, life coach and business strategist Tony Robbins once said, "Identify your problems but give your power and energy to solutions." Once you pinpoint the root cause of the issue you can actively work towards resolving it and ensure that it doesn't happen again. The sense of purpose that comes along with being a solution-oriented employee will automatically make you visualize the future instead of lamenting about the past, thereby making you less stressed.

3. Stand Up For Yourself

If your bad work days seem to be more frequent than your good days and are often caused due to

the actions of another coworker, it is important to open up to your superior and express the difficulties you're facing. Research has shown that repressing your emotions, especially negative feelings, can actually intensify the despondency that you're feeling. The only way to ensure that you don't keep having the same problem over and over again, especially if it is no fault of yours, is to stand up for yourself. When your boss realizes that you— a valued and hard-working employee— is struggling, they will step in and help improve the work atmosphere.

4. Leave Work at Work

A great tip to ensure that you start tomorrow off on a good note is to resolve your conflicts and issues on the day they arise themselves. Try to wrap up your day on a clean slate so that you don't have to carry the burden of work once you leave the office. If you're currently working from home, leaving work at work can be a little more difficult for you, especially when you have reminders of work all over your house. According to certain reports, nearly a third of all work from home employees feel they can't switch off from work during their personal time. In order to avoid this and achieve a work-life balance, try switching off your work devices after office hours and work in a designated space in your house so that you can disassociate from your job once you're done for the day.

All said and done, bad days are bound to happen every now and then, the only thing that truly matters is how you handle it. And as the brilliant entrepreneur, Steve Jobs, once said, "I'm convinced that about half of what separates the successful entrepreneurs from the non-successful ones is pure perseverance." So, don't let your bad days get you down, but instead, stand tall and push ahead to a better day.

The Mogul Making Garbage Great Again

Tom Szaky is the Founder and CEO of TerraCycle, a global leader in collecting and repurposing complex waste streams. Tom and his organization have received hundreds of social, environmental and business awards and recognition from various organizations, including the United Nations, Fortune Magazine, World Economic Forum, Schwab Foundation and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He is also the author of four books, *Revolution in a Bottle* (2009), *Outsmart Waste* (2014), *Make Garbage Great* (2015) and *The Future of Packaging* (2018). Tom has created, produced and starred in TerraCycle's reality show, 'Human Resources', which has aired on Pivot and is syndicated in more than 20 foreign markets on Amazon and iTunes.

Written by Justin Roberts



Tom was born in Hungary, an only child to his parents working as doctors. When Tom was four, he and his family were forced to leave their home in Hungary after the Chernobyl disaster. In 1987, Tom immigrated to Canada, where he grew up in Toronto.

Tom says, "Growing up in Canada and around the strong conservationist movement sparked my interest in environmentalism." He became captivated with the concept of recycling after seeing the 'astounding' things people threw in the trash. He adds, "The first television set I ever saw was being thrown in the garbage." This experience proved formative as he credits it with

helping him understand that waste was a 'modern idea.'

He attended college at Princeton University, majoring in psychology and economics. As a freshman at Princeton University, Tom took several friends to Montreal for fall break. While there, he stayed with friends feeding kitchen scraps to red worms and using the resulting fertilizer to feed some of their indoor plants. The results were excellent, and the idea for TerraCycle was born: to help eliminate waste by making quality fertilizer.

Talking about the company's genesis, he says, "In order to enter a business plan competition at my university, I created the model for TerraCycle. I realized that

using organic waste which potentially has zero or even negative costs as a raw material to develop products could be a profitable and responsible business model." He continued, "I convinced my school's cafeteria service to give me their waste. Four months later, I decided to drop out to dedicate myself full time to TerraCycle."

To follow his passion, Tom needed initial funding; he emptied his savings accounts, borrowed money, and maxed out his credit cards to fulfil his dream to create a colossal worm poop conversion unit. Just when he was ready to give up, Tom met Suman Sinha, an angel investor who gave the young entrepreneur a cheque and became TerraCycle's first investor. With the money, Tom was able to rent his first office space at 20 Nassau St. in Princeton, NJ that eventually led him to become a global garbage mogul.

After the initial hurdles, the challenge then shifted to getting major retailers to take a chance on an unknown product; Tom says, "I had no retail history, no client base; no one had ever heard of TerraCycle. I knew that trying to build slowly, garden centre at a time, would never work. I mean, I had to eat. So I went right to the top, to The Home Depot and Walmart, the world's largest retailers."

With keen determination, he kept approaching retailers, and TerraCycle Plant Food was soon listed in Walmart and The Home Depot in Canada. As the company started expanding, TerraCycle moved to a much larger building in Trenton. The new office space allowed graffiti to be freely painted on its walls, thereby becoming a mecca for urban artists worldwide. TerraCycle also teamed up with local artists to throw its annual graffiti jam. Since then, TerraCycle's U.S. office has been repainted with brand new urban art every few weeks, showcasing a work culture that is open and expressive.

Talking about his company, he says, "The goal of TerraCycle has always been to eliminate the idea of waste, which we do in three ways:

1. We develop ways to make things that are non-recyclable nationally recyclable. Examples include cigarette butts, dirty diapers and chewing gum.

2. We integrate unique recycled materials into high-end products, like turning ocean plastic into shampoo bottles.
3. We create platforms that move disposable products into durable products without sacrificing the economics and convenience that makes disposable products desirable."

In 2006, the brand was growing steadily, and TerraCycle Plant Foods were widely available in the U.S. for the first time, with both The Home Depot and Walmart carrying the products nationally. In July,

"In 2013 TerraCycle expanded to Australia and New Zealand, marking over 20 countries of operation. In 2019, the company unveiled Loop, a circular shopping system delivering the world's favourite brands' products to your doorstep in durable, refillable packaging, moving away from single-use plastic."

Tom and TerraCycle were featured on the cover of Inc. Magazine as the #1 CEO in America under 30 as part of their coveted 30 under 30 Awards.

In 2007, the organization had nine different product offerings, including concentrated versions of its worm poop fertilizer and a biodegradable Seed Starter and Potting Mix. Tom added, "The drastic change was prompted in large part by opportunity. The environmental and fiscal implications for expanding our trash collections and products were massive. We realized that fertilizer was

only a tiny fraction of where we could have the impact, and we had to go for something bigger."

In August 2007, TerraCycle launched their Drink Pouch Brigade, with founding sponsor Honest Tea. The programme was designed to collect and repurpose used drink pouches. Neither company knew what to expect, so 100 open slots were authorized. In less than 24 hours, they were filled! Recollecting the event, he says, "We started running [collection] programs for Honest Tea, CLIF BAR and Stonyfield Farm. Within a year, we worked with Kraft Foods brands like Capri Sun and Nabisco, with Frito-Lay and Mars. It was clear that our new model was ripe with opportunity."

In 2013 TerraCycle expanded to Australia and New Zealand, marking over 20 countries of operation. In 2019, the company unveiled Loop, a circular shopping system delivering the world's favourite brands' products to your doorstep in durable, refillable packaging, moving away from single-use plastic. Loop provides anything from Herbal Essences shampoo to Häagen-Dazs ice cream, Tropicana orange juice, and Milka Biscuits — all in reusable packaging. After using the products, customers put the empty containers in a Loop tote on their doorstep. A delivery service then picked up the containers, cleaned and refilled them, and shipped them to consumers again, which was an instant hit!

When the pandemic hit in 2020, TerraCycle kept innovating and found new ways to eliminate the waste generated by COVID-19. They recycled all types of PPE (personal protective equipment) for businesses and homes and drove the first large-scale PPE recycling initiative for disposable masks. Loop expanded to the continental U.S. and the U.K. and announced vital partnerships to bring reusable packaging to quick-serve restaurants and beauty products. The company is currently operating in 21 countries with great success and an intention to make sustainability and circular economy the norm.

In conclusion, Tom's advice for budding leaders is, "The challenging part is in the beginning; it's a leap of faith. But I think the most important thing is to just do it."

How To Retain Your Employees Through The Great Resignation

..... **Jessica Albuquerque**



Successful companies such as Apple, Tesla, Facebook, Google, and Virgin Atlantic to name a few, are often known for their hard-working CEOs, but when you take a closer look at these stellar businesses, you soon realize that it isn't a one-man show but a culmination of the collective efforts of numerous team members. It is the assiduous workers who operate behind the scenes that make these companies special, and that is exactly why good leaders value high-performing employees. In fact, Sir Richard Branson, Founder of The Virgin Group, goes as far as to say that, "Clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients."

Retaining talented employees never seemed to be a problem for most companies, but over the past year, the ongoing global pandemic has triggered a new movement known as 'The Great Resignation'. Coined by Professor Anthony Klotz of Mays Business School at Texas A&M University, the term refers to the mass voluntary resignation that began in early 2021. According to a survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, since April 2021, nearly 20 million employees have quit their jobs, leaving numerous companies in desperate need of skilled new talent.

The sudden rise in employee turnover has had a significant impact on businesses. According to a recent report, productivity costs that arise from losing a valuable

employee costs U.S. companies a whopping \$1.8 trillion dollars each year. And even when companies find a replacement immediately, The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) estimates that it costs the business six to nine months of the employee's salary to make up recruiting and training costs.

In order to avoid this mass exodus from occurring at your business, it is important to make a few constructive changes to keep up with today's evolving business environment. Here are a few tips to help you retain your talented employees.

1. Growth Opportunities

High performing employees tend to be highly ambitious and are constantly looking to learn, grow and evolve. As a leader, it is up to you to weed up these employees and provide them with the proper guidance to unlock their potential. When you provide employees with career growth opportunities and the ability to see a future within the company, studies show that it pushes them to provide better results and thereby enhances their performance at work. In cases where businesses have a lack of growth options and an increase in remuneration, research shows that most driven employees are influenced to look for new opportunities and change their jobs.

2. Rewards

Studies have shown that lack of recognition from employers is the most common cause of resignations. The best way to combat this is by showing

your team how much you value their work. "Employees are a company's greatest asset – they're your competitive advantage. You want to attract and retain the best; provide them with encouragement, stimulus and make them feel that they are an integral part of the company's mission," says Anne M. Mulcahy, former CEO and Chairwoman of Xerox Corporation. Research shows that employees who receive praise and recognition have higher self-esteem and confidence, and are eager to innovate and take on new challenges.

3. Flexible Work Environment

With numerous employees still working from home, it's no surprise that a large number of them enjoy the flexibility that comes with it. According to a recent survey conducted amongst employees in the U.S. and the UK, more than a third believe their work-life balance was better during the worst of the pandemic. With commuting time slashed to zero, employees now have the opportunity to spend more time with their families and loved ones and even explore and develop new skill sets. A recent Zapier poll also showcased that 95% of U.S. knowledge workers want to work remotely, and 74% would be willing to quit a job to do so. The report also goes to show that full-time remote workers spend more time each workday doing meaningful work in comparison to their in-office counterparts. Flexible working hours or a hybrid work environment isn't necessarily a bad thing, if done right, it can improve productivity and your employees' work-life balance.

In Conclusion:

Diligent and productive employees are the bridge between success and mediocrity in the world of business. As an employer and leader, keep an open ear to the wants and needs of your employees. After all, a happy employee leads to more productivity and a better business.

Crafting The Perfect Brand Story

..... **Jessica Albuquerque**



your brand truly believes in. Once you identify your brand's values and mission, whether it's sustainable creation or pushing the limit through technological innovation, make sure that these things translate into your brand story. When you root the truth into your brand story, it is far more likely to have a stronger impact on consumers. Take Coco-Cola for example, a much-beloved beverage manufacturer across the globe that has beat out all its competitors over the last 129 years. Why? Because they're not just selling a carbonated sugary soda but memories of celebrations, fun and friendship that come with it.

3. Stay Consistent

Your brand story isn't just something that's featured in a one-off campaign and then forgotten about. It is something that will be uniquely connected to your company for the rest of its lifespan. When a customer puts their trust in your brand due to your brand story, it is important to maintain the values associated with your business. Every interaction that you have with your customer, from marketing to retailing and customer service needs to reflect the values that your brand story narrates. According to a study done by FierceRetail, 90% of shoppers expect their experience to be consistent with a brand and 47% of shoppers report frustration with brand inconsistencies. This as a result can reduce sales and reduce brand loyalty, thereby hampering your company's growth.

As author and entrepreneur Seth Godin likes to say, "Marketing is no longer about the stuff you make but about the stories you tell." Your brand story doesn't have to influence change or make the world a better place, all it has to do is help your audience understand why your company is worth their time and attention. If you use the powerful tool of storytelling correctly, it can truly help your company grow leaps and bounds.

Catchy taglines, thought-provoking slogans, attractive models in campaigns— these are just a few staples in the world of marketing. Unfortunately, modern consumers are tired of being told what they need in order to achieve the perfect lifestyle. In an era where conscious consumerism is gaining rapid popularity, people only stay loyal to brands that they can connect with. This is where your brand story comes into play.

A compelling brand story can make or break your business amongst competitors. It can transform your company from a cold entity to a warm and engaging business by evoking emotions and crafting a lasting bond between you and your customer. Take Tesla for example— while it might be a luxury car, their brand story positions their customers as early adopters of eco-friendly, innovative technology instead of owners of just another luxury car in the market. This sense of satisfaction, combined with a great product, is what creates such fervent brand loyalty.

Creating a great brand story that runs true to your company can be frustrating, in fact, many companies do it wrong. So here are 3 different tips to help you create a captivating brand story.

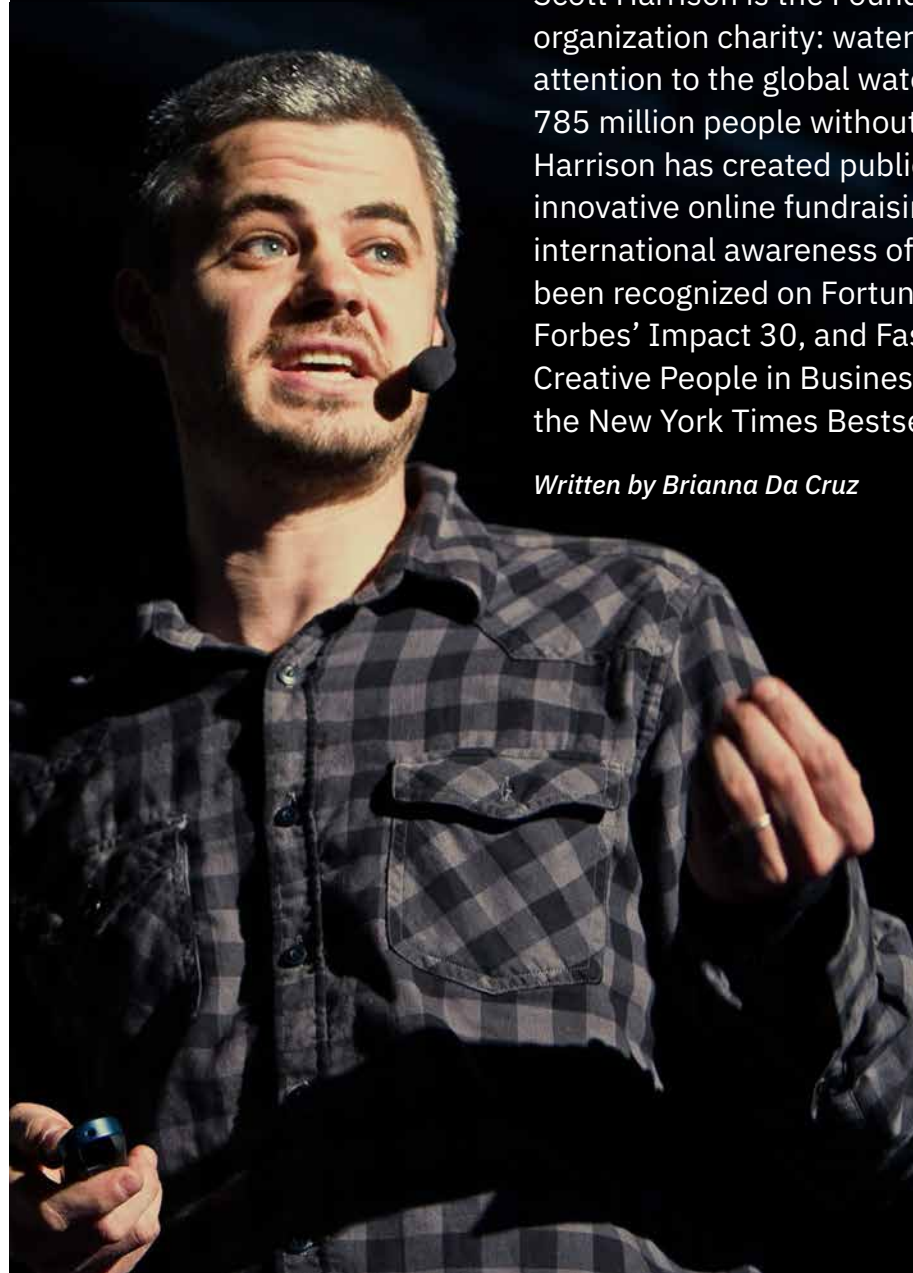
1. Identify Your Brand Values And Mission

In order to bring your brand story to life, you first need to identify what your brand stands for. Your brand values, mission and goals are not just a reflection of the products that you sell and services you offer, but the way you run your organization as well. In fact, it is this outside perception that has a large part to play in shaping your brand story, simply because your story isn't just a narration but what the public believes to be true. Your company's mission doesn't have to be pages long, American media organization TED's mission statement for example is summed up in exactly two words— Spread Ideas. The best way to identify your company's brand values is by asking yourself why you started your business and what impact you wish to leave behind.

2. Create An Authentic Emotional Connection

Thanks to the internet, social media and targeted ads, customers are constantly bombarded with marketing ploys that are easy to see through. So it is important to ensure that the story you're telling is something that

The Man Providing Access To Clean Drinking Water



Scott Harrison is the Founder of the non-profit organization charity: water. Turning his full attention to the global water crisis and the world's 785 million people without clean water to drink, Harrison has created public installations and innovative online fundraising platforms to spread international awareness of the issue. Harrison has been recognized on Fortune magazine's 40 Under 40, Forbes' Impact 30, and Fast Company's 100 Most Creative People in Business. He is also the author of the New York Times Bestselling book *Thirst*.

Written by Brianna Da Cruz

Scott Harrison was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, an only child in a 'very conservative catholic family.' His father was into business while his mother was a writer for a local paper.

When Harrison was just 4, his mother fell victim to a carbon dioxide leak and, though she survived, it made her ultra-sensitive to chemicals. Harrison explained her misery, "She lived in a bathroom in our house that had to be scrubbed down with a special soap 20 times and slept on a cot that had been washed in baking soda 20 times. There was tin foil covering the doors. In addition, she had to wear a charcoal mask on her face, a barrier against toxins to monitor the air and filter the air that she breathed."

Harrison continued, "I was a caregiver, helping to do the cooking, the cleaning." When he graduated from high school, Harrison decided to move to New York City, eager to rebel against societal norms — "Okay, now it's my turn!" he recalls thinking.

From ages 18 to 28, Harrison lived his 'decade of clubs,' working as a promoter for over 40 venues at the time. "We bring the beautiful people; we bring the clients who can spend a thousand dollars on a bottle of champagne or \$500 on a bottle of vodka. We were mercenaries — we would get a percentage of all the sales that happened that night but with no loyalty to the venue, so the minute the venue cooled down, we would take our set to the hottest club," explained Harrison.

During that dark period, Harrison recalled, "I had just become a selfish sycophant. Hedonist. I had betrayed the spirituality and the morality of my childhood, smoked two packs of cigarettes [a day] for 10 years. I had a gambling problem. I had a pornography problem. I had a drinking problem."

That all changed when at 28 years old, he was partying in Uruguay when he went through an existential crisis. "I had gone on a trip to Punta Del Este and realized on that trip, I had most of the things I thought would make me happy, and they hadn't," Harrison said. "Even though I drove a B.M.W. and had a nice apartment in New York City, my life was a mess." At that moment, Harrison made a promise to himself: He vowed to come back and change his life.

In 2004, he returned to New York City and started applying to volunteer at humanitarian groups, including the United Nations and the Peace Corps. "I'm denied basically by all the organizations because no one knows how a nightclub promoter would be useful to their important, serious adult work," said Harrison.

Eventually, he was accepted by Mercy Ships, a non-profit organization of floating hospitals that brought medical help to those in need. Harrison paid \$500 a month to volunteer. For his first trip, he lived off of the coast of Liberia on a converted cruise liner and took pictures

of the work the non-profit was doing, including helping people with tumours and cancers.

When he returned to New York City, he exhibited his work at a gallery in Chelsea with 109 photos. The exhibition raised a whopping \$96,000; he gave all of the money to Mercy Ships and then returned for a second tour.

On that trip, Harrison learned about the significant impact of having clean water and many people's lack of access to it. According to a report from the World Health Organization and UNICEF, approximately 3 in 10 people globally don't have safe drinking water at home.

According to the WHO, the lack of access to sanitation results in the death of 361,000 children under the age of 5 every year. This also resulted in the transmission of cholera, dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis A. Harrison was struck by their misery and recognized his ability to make a difference. "I felt like I was helping by telling the story," says Harrison.

In June 2006, Harrison returned to New York City with an issue he was deeply committed to, but unfortunately, he had no money. "I was running around telling everybody I wanted to see a world where everybody drank clean water regardless of where they are born," said Harrison.

With his sheer persistence and after garnering help from various people, he officially launched Charity: water on September 7, 2006, on Harrison's 31st birthday. He threw a party at a nightclub in Manhattan two days later and had everyone donate \$20 cash at the door. He raised \$15,000 and donated 100 per cent of the funds to a refugee camp in Northern Uganda to fund the repair of three broken wells and the construction of three new wells.

His organization, Charity: water, is solution agnostic and funds eight different water projects worldwide. He explains, "Sometimes a 40-foot deep hand-dug well is the right solution; sometimes, our partners need to drill up to 1,000 feet to find clean water. In some environments, rainwater harvesting is the best solution for protecting mountain springs and using gravity flow and

pipes to connect communities. In some instances, biosand filters are appropriate, and in others, high tech filters employ the latest in Carbon, U.V. and U.F. filtration. Our implementing partners test water at different locations and measure them against local water quality standards."

But despite his early success, the non-profit almost went bankrupt in 2008. He had more than \$800,000 in the bank to build wells, but he was running out of money to pay overheads and make payroll. His friends recommended borrowing cash from his well-building fund to pay his operations expenses, but he refused. "I remember being so outraged at that idea," said Harrison. "I was going to shut the organization down and say that the 100 per cent model didn't work."

"And at that moment, a stranger walked into our office at 150 Varick Street at that time, sat with me for two hours, and then wrote a million dollar check to overhead," recalled Harrison. "We went from almost bankrupt to 13 months of funding on the overhead side."

His organization has helped various nations, but one compelling story of Rachel Beckwith remains the most touching. She had heard Harrison speak a few months before turning nine and told her mother her intention to raise \$300 for Charity: water to celebrate her birthday. She managed to raise \$220. However, just a few weeks later, in July 2011, Beckwith tragically passed away in a car accident. Her story spread like wildfire, and strangers started donating to Beckwith's campaign. 31,997 donations were made to her campaign, raising almost \$1.3 million. The funds were used to provide clean water to 37,770 individuals in the memory of the young Rachel Beckwith.

In conclusion, Harrison says, "I think one of the most important things is being able to tell your personal story in a way that engages people, and then the story of your organization. Many people want to know what is driving the entrepreneur forward and learn more about his or her character before they invest. Using photos and videos to 'show' people rather than tell them is increasingly important in a world of glowing screens and shortened attention spans."

The Tesla Of The Hosiery Industry

Sara Blakely is the CEO and Founder of SPANX, an American intimate apparel company. She has revolutionized the industry with just \$5,000 and a ‘lucky’ red backpack and turned it into a global brand known for inventing more innovative, comfortable solutions. Blakely was featured on the cover of Forbes Magazine as the youngest self-made female billionaire and was included in TIME Magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in the world. She is also a Guinness World Record holder for having the world’s highest tea party on top of a hot air balloon. Blakely has invested millions of dollars in elevating women, and in 2013, she signed the Giving Pledge, promising to donate half her wealth to philanthropic causes.

Written by Kyle Goldberg

Sara Blakely was born in a beach town in Florida, Clearwater. Since a young kid, Blakely had always displayed entrepreneurial skills. Every Halloween, she would create a haunted house in her neighbourhood and charge her



neighbours to visit it.

These qualities could be attributed to her father, who worked as a trial attorney and was also Blakely’s inspiration. She credits her success to him, who always encouraged his kids to fail. Blakely says, “We’d sit around the dinner table and he’d ask, ‘What did you guys fail at this week?’ If we had nothing to tell him, he’d be disappointed. He knew that many people become paralyzed by the fear of failure. My father wanted us to try everything and feel free to push the envelope. His attitude taught me to define failure as not trying something I want to do instead of not achieving the right outcome.”

She recalled, “For as long as I can remember, I always wanted to follow in my father’s footsteps and become a trial attorney.” She debated in high school and continued in college, majoring in Legal Communications.

However, when Blakely took the LSAT, she did not clear it. Devastated, she decided to try again and signed up for an LSAT prep course; she studied rigorously and retook the test. To her bad luck, she got a score of one point worse this time around.

Blakely recalled, “In my mind, the universe was telling me to drive to Disney World and audition for the role of Goofy. That’s literally how I responded to my defeat. But Disney World only auditioned people for character roles once in a while, so in the meantime I got a job at Epcot.”

When the day of the auditions finally arrived, Blakely did not land the role as she was “too short to wear the costume.” They decided to make her a chipmunk instead, which Blakely refused.

She explained, “The way Disney worked was that you had to stay where you were initially employed for a period of time before you were allowed to transfer positions.” To climb the ladder, Blakely continued her role as an Epcot escort to help customers get on the Disney rides. Eventually, she gave in and returned home to live with her mother.

Still confused with the direction of her career, Blakely got a job selling fax machines door-to-door at a local company. “It was the kind of place that

“Blakely has grown Spanx into a shapewear juggernaut that’s estimated to do more than \$400 million in business each year.”

would hire anyone with a pulse,” Blakely said. “On my first day, they handed me a phone book and said, ‘Here are your four zip codes. Now get out there and sell.’ There was no list of accounts that were likely to buy from me. I had to 100 percent drum up my own leads.”

During that period, she would wake up early and start cold-calling from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. “Most doors were slammed in my face. I saw my business card ripped up at least once a week, and I even had a few police escorts out of buildings,” Blakely recalled.

However, despite her string of failures in the job, Blakely never gave into wallowing in her misery, and soon she grew immune to the word ‘no.’ At times, she even found it amusing.

“During my fax-selling stint, I would spend much of my free time trying to figure out what I really wanted out of life and what my strengths were,” she recalled. “I knew I was good at selling and that I eventually wanted to be self-employed. I thought, instead of fax machines, I’d love to sell something that I created and actually care about.”

That all changed when one day, she stumbled upon a great idea, “In the hopes of looking better in my fitted white pants, I cut the feet out of a pair of pantyhose and substituted them for my underwear,” she said. “This allowed me to benefit from the slimming effects of the pantyhose’s ‘control top’ while allowing my feet to go bare in my cute sandals. The moment I saw how good my butt looked, I was like, ‘Thank you, God, this is my opportunity!’”

And soon Spanx was born, a unique type of intimate body shapewear: comfortable

and transparent under clothing with no lines showing. However, it wasn’t an easy task to establish the brand. Blakely says, “I had to take my idea, so I took my lucky red backpack with me on every step of the journey, and I went and met with three different law firms that I had looked up online. I presented my idea to them, you could see me trying to explain to the men how I’m gonna change the world, and make women’s butts better, and that this is gonna be an idea that everyone would love.” She continued, “But all of the attorneys that I met with, they wanted between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to patent my idea. Well, I only had \$5,000 total, in my savings, to do this idea. So I decided to write my own patent.”

Fortunately for Blakely, she soon had the support of a mill owner who had previously rejected her offer; she recalled the incident, “He said, Sara, I have decided to help make your crazy idea.” And when I asked him why he had a change of heart, he said, “I have two daughters who thought your idea was absolutely brilliant.”

She soon received her patent; and decided to market the product in red, which was never done in the hosiery industry. Blakely also customized every size to fit different body types to make it more comfortable, and soon, Spanx became a hit.

Blakely has grown Spanx into a shapewear juggernaut that’s estimated to do more than \$400 million in business each year. The company was profitable from day one, generating \$4 million the first year and \$10 million the second year.

Today, the brand’s products are available in major chains ranging from Target to Neiman Marcus. Spanx has remained a private company, with Blakely owning 100 per cent of the business. She maintains that she has never taken any outside investment beyond the \$5,000 in savings she initially spent to get Spanx off the ground.

In conclusion, her advice at the start of 2022 is to have one word as an overarching goal for the year. It doesn’t matter if it is: rest, self-care, travel, productivity, success. Have a theme for your year and try to stick to it.



Because we are
not the only one,
**We have decided
to be the best!**



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