



Issue 46

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WorkStyle by design

A bimonthly e-newsletter brought to you by **merrymentality**

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Welcome

Welcome to June's issue of **WorkStyle by design**

I knew the trip to Bhutan would be good, but didn't realise how good! The people; the physical environment; the spirit; and even the food, all surprised me with their sense of effortlessness yet also being well grounded in the 21st century. Bhutan seems to have missed the often difficult years between moving from being a medieval feudal society to a democracy in less than 50 years! For readers who want to see photos click [here](#).

On the way to the Himalaya, we stopped in again at www.elephantstay.com for 2 days. Elephant Stay is only 90 minutes from the magnificent new Bangkok airport and really is a must for any animal lover. This time there were so many baby elephants that the nursery was full so there were two, quite naughty, baby elephants running around causing havoc until their mothers trumpeted for them to return and behave! I also saw mature elephants painting - yes, you read that correctly: painting. Elephant art sells regularly at auction in New York of all places!

Thus this issue of **WorkStyle by design** is focussed on *where to next?* With this in mind the **merrymentality** spotlight is shining in New Zealand. Richard Lodge lives in the Wairarapa, north-east of Wellington, and shares with us his plan for his future (which includes transitioning into his own coaching business!)

To find out where to next for Bhutan, Richard, myself, and yourself, read on. With warmest regards

Belinda, India and the **merrymentality** team.



WorkStyle Tip - Gwen Stefani's secret

Last month I was a guest at our local Women in the Workplace Luncheon. Our guest speaker was the editor of *Women's Health* magazine here in Australia, Felicity Percival. Felicity shared her 6 Work/Life Balance 'Lightbulb' moments with us, and one really stood out.

Felicity shared how, when interviewing Gwen Stefani (as you do!), Gwen told her the secret of how she balances her life... she uses the Wheel of Life. Well, **merrymentality** has been using the Wheel of Life with clients for years now, so we can all feel good knowing we are in celebrity company!

The icing on the cake was that Felicity added in the tip to **place the Wheel of Life (or Coaching Mandala) on your fridge, so you see it every day.**

For your very own Coaching Mandala click [here](#).

merrymentality inspires leaders and emerging leaders to have increased sustainable energy.

Our unique approach of discovering and designing your WorkStyle creates an ascending spiral of continuous choice and sustainable energy.

work+lifestyle=WorkStyle®

Professional Coaching and Speaking



Richard practising his WorkStyle at the legendary Cardrona Hotel.

'The shift was from work to a greater balance between work and my personal life... It's so easy to write, but I found it very hard to initiate. I planned and made incremental steps.'

Spotlight On... Richard Lodge

I'm Richard Lodge and I work for a New Zealand Government ministry, being responsible for six managers and 65 staff. Our work is operational and non discretionary, whereby we process and administer claims, meeting various performance criteria. I have a network of colleagues through the various directorates of the Ministry and in other ministries and departments. I also work informally as an internal coach with 6 to 10 managers and colleagues.

How would you define your WorkStyle?

My WorkStyle these days centres on work-life balance. I naturally strategise and contingency plan, and have a very mediating approach in dealing with staff and managers, both upwards and downwards. At work I focus on people and their development, which enables them to meet their objectives. I enjoy quietly influencing things and seeing results. I commute by train for 3 hours daily and I use this time as a cut-off point for work – it is my time. My current PCSI (Personal Coaching Styles Inventory) is around a mix of the mediating and strategizing styles.

How did you discover your WorkStyle?

Five years ago my focus was work and meeting those responsibilities. Typically I worked 10 to 12 hours every day and often used chunks of weekends to sort things, because then there were no interruptions. I was stressed and had to manage bone tiredness and poor sleep patterns with the assistance of my GP. My people management, was not as effective as it could have been because of my own state. I went to an intensive leadership course for senior managers in government and did a battery of tests which were analysed. I discussed mine with a guru from the UK. All things pointed to my work-focused WorkStyle. I needed space to develop it. I exited that job at the end of 2005 and took many months out to think about my future, while spending time with friends and renovating houses. I took on my current operational role which has proved to be a very good skills match and suits my temperament and personality. I kept reflecting. I trained in the Lominger Competencies and also met some coaches. After further research I enrolled in foundational coach training. Coaching felt just right. I graduated and am now started on my advanced coaching studies.

Has it changed over the last few years? Why?

My change in WorkStyle over the last few years has been one of a shifting of focus and an expansion of skills. The shift was from work to a greater balance between work and my personal life and to a further focus on myself in relation to extended family, friends, and activities out of work. It's so easy to write, but I found it very hard to initiate. I planned and made incremental steps. The coach training offered some tools that have helped. This year I had many ideas and needed to pull everything together. Enter Belinda and mentor coaching. I now have a five year work-lifestyle plan that knits together all aspects of my life, and what I want to do and where I want to be. I also have a plan for sustainable fitness and some weight loss that is about lifestyle change and development. I plan to move from the government sector into my own coaching business over the next few years.

What has been your biggest shift?

The realisation that I wanted more enjoyment and satisfaction from life on a daily basis and that to achieve this I needed to change what I was doing and how I was doing it. Like many baby boomers in NZ I still expect to working at 70; but on my own terms and hours. To do this I needed to reduce my input into work and its people; my sport and its people; my other membership organisations and their people; and put time and effort into myself. I needed a plan.

What one WorkStyle practice has had the most impact? Why?

Listening - Coaching! My exposure to coaching so far has brought together many elements of what I have done in my different roles over my 40 years of working life, from teaching to executive manager. Listening is core.

What are, or have been, the biggest issues for you around WorkStyle?

My big issue has always been the balance between my work and my personal life. I often put so much effort into work that I was running on empty, both physically and mentally. When I got home I needed the weekends to recover enough to face the following week.

What tips would you give others to improve their WorkStyle?

Put real effort into finding what really suits you in your WorkStyle. At times people have told me that they really love their job. They are the lucky ones. I have loved elements of my roles but not to the extent that I could say I loved my job. This is changing. Be honest and assertive with yourself. Plan and commit to achieve the work-life balance you aspire to.

Creating a Paradigm Shift at work

24 employees walk into a room, there they meet two facilitators (both wearing pink) with loads of toys, DVD clips, music, coloured textas/pens, pipe cleaners and even Bhutanese cymbals. Is this is joke? No, it's the two-day Coaching Clinic... and its FUN!

During our 16 hours together, we learn the five-step coaching conversation model and the four key coaching skills; we look at filters and neutral language; and we take time to explore the paradigm shift(s) needed to change workplace culture.

So, what is a Paradigm Shift?

- Think of smoking cigarettes. For decades smoking was depicted as 'cool' and 'sophisticated' but by the end of last century our thinking had changed. Now smoking is seen as 'dirty' and 'unhealthy' and smokers are relegated to back doorways and lanes, out of sight.
- Think of 'made in Japan'. In the 60s this meant poor quality, but by the 90s it stood for innovation, creativity, quality and reliability.

A shift is the internal change that creates MOVEMENT *from* one distinct position *to* another

How do we move from a *command and control* leadership style so popular with the baby boomers to a more *collaborative and inclusive* leadership style sought by generations X and Y? Or put more succinctly:

Q: How do we move from *telling to asking*?

A: We focus on making personal paradigm shifts

from **focusing on weakness**

to **focusing on strengths**

- instead of seeing what is not there
- instead of hearing what ISN'T
- instead of a fear of consequences

- look for what is working
- listen out for what IS
- create a safe space for risk taking

You may even want to, like many of the WorkCover NSW, participants, move:

from **solving all the problems**

to **helping others to solve/prevent problems**

This takes the pressure off you as the manager/leader and empowers your staff/team to take ownership of the problem. Feed a man a fish or give him a fishing rod? Imagine how much more time you could have if you were not interrupted by staff/colleagues and team members wanting YOU to solve their problems, let alone the increased sustainable energy you would have if you knew your team were empowered and engaged.

The Coaching Clinic is a proven workshop in supporting participants to make these personal paradigm shifts, which in turn enable the organisation to meet the new demands of Generations X and Y. If you are a baby boomer like Richard (see page 2) you may be experiencing challenges in managing the younger generations. If you are a Gen X manager, you may be experiencing challenges in managing your older staff!

To find out more, or like WorkCover NSW, to have the Coaching Clinic in your organisation, please contact Belinda at belinda@merrymortality.com.au or download it from the website.



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Patience - learned S L O W L Y

merrymentality clients, friends and **WorkStyle by design** readers will know that I went to the same girls school for my entire primary and secondary education. It was during these 12 years that I forged some very tight and long-term friendships. My fairy goddaughter is the daughter of one of my gal pals (what I call these girls, now women, from school); as is the woman who taught me to take my birthday off. Her name is Kelly Clemenger and if you haven't read the story of how I learned to take my birthday off, you can read it in **WorkStyle by design** issue 3, back in May 2001. Apart from being business women, Kelly and I were the BIGGEST Sherbet fans in our teeny bopper years.

However after 35+ years as gal pals, things changed when I separated from my ex-husband. My life changed dramatically and around this time Kelly was having her children, later in life, so that in itself was a challenge for her.

At one stage it was nearly two years since we had contact and during that time I had to speak with both my own coach and even a grief counsellor, as I was feeling a deep sense of loss - both for my marriage and for this long-term friendship.

Patience has never been one of my strong suits but I'm learning (thank goodness). As I got through the grief, I had to trust that whatever was going on between Kelly and I (or more correctly, what was NOT going on between us) would pass, and trust that our friendship would endure.

Patience has worked. For my recent birthday I received an SMS text message from Kelly, then a phone call, and next month we are hoping to catch up in person!

Birthday Blueprint

It's that time of year again at merrymentality.... Birthday time. On 21 July merrymentality will be 9 years old. Hip hip hooray!

It was also my birthday in June and, as always, I took the day off to celebrate. Actually my birthday fell on the weekend, so I took the Monday off in lieu.

birthdays are the perfect day to:

- acknowledge achievement
- celebrate success
- complete a Birthday Blueprint

The Birthday Blueprint is a simple, but very important document that allows you to reflect on where you were this time last year, how far you have come, and plan for the coming year. Allow 40 minutes to read, ponder and fill it in. Allow another 40 minutes within the following week to review and refine what you have written.

Thank you to Susie Sadler (see **WorkStyle by design** issue 40) for her Birthday Blueprint enthusiasm.

[Download your Birthday Blueprint here.](#)