

Each issue of our E-Newzine covers a topical conversational theme with tools, tips and ideas to improve your conversational leadership...

“Connectivity is everything - the fabric of reality, the texture of human relations, key to our personal and collective flourishing,” Ashok Gangadean, Director Global Dialogue Institute

Connective moments matter - they're what gives us the 'satisfy' experience in things like a good meeting, good conversation, a good team, a good leader, good culture or a good job...

## A Word on this Issue...

In this issue we look at the idea of *Connectivity in Conversations*. It's not brain science (ok, well it is, actually) but what we mean is connecting comes naturally to all of us, though connecting *better* is something we all need to work on. Emotion-driven connectivity is the hidden agenda in conversations – though it's not all that hidden come to think of it, if you really pay attention to what's happening. We delve into the emotional brain circuitry that enables us to empathise and form emotional links that translate into *connective* conversations. We also review Daniel Goleman's book on *Social Intelligence...* Bill Cropper, Director – The Change Forum

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## Connectivity Counts...

Connectivity. It's the urge we all feel to belong, be liked, needed, respected, supported, understood and in-sync with people around us. It's a badge of our basic humanity and a telling indicator of leadership success, resonant relationships and healthy team cultures.

Connecting is a precondition for almost everything else that happens in any interaction you have. It helps in a number of practical ways. For example:

- ◆ Knowing what makes people tick emotionally is essential to work out how to deal with them. If we can read how people feel, we can predict how they might react. This enables us to modify messages or behaviour so we can 'get through' to them better
- ◆ Reading where people are coming from feelings-wise is at the bottom of good team relationships, getting along well with others and it's good for customer service too.
- ◆ It's important if you want to get your own way. To influence someone, I have to create a connection with them first so they'll trust what I have to say and pay attention
- ◆ It also insulates us from toxic emotions, counters the effects of stress by calming bodily reactions and it's a more constructive way to handle hostility and aggression than head-on arguments

Reading what others feel is part of our 'social intelligence' guidance system. We take our emotional cues and make up our emotional minds based on how others feel. Making time for connective moments also matters for health and well-being. It has a calming effect on both us and the other person – and it's restoring and healing. In a word, it's good for us!

## Connective Moments – we all crave them...

**Connective Moments...**

- Reduces stress hormones like cortisol
- Emits hormones (eg oxytocin) that promote trust, bonding & contact
- Stimulates dopamine that enhances attention & pleasure & ...
- Serotonin that reduces fear & worry
- The effect? Healing, consoling, restoring

From a study by Daniel Goleman's Harvard Business School

Connective moments matter. We all crave times when we feel really close, wired-in and hooked up to another person.

In many ways, it's what makes up the meaning in life for most of us – and we remember them. For example, there's a saying that goes: "People may not remember exactly what you did or said, but they always remember how it felt."

- ◆ Brain-wise, connective moments are when our limbic system tunes into and resonates with someone else's. A connective moment can be 10 seconds, 10 minutes or hours but the effect is the same. We feel good – energised, lively, close and connected.

...continued >>>

Connective Moments - we all crave them...

- ◆ They're moments when we're highly empathetic. We're switched on to other people's thoughts and feelings as well as to our own. The more attentive we can make ourselves in the moment, the more attuned our limbic radar becomes.
- ◆ 'Attunement' – being on the same feeling wavelength as someone else – is self-confirming and emotionally comforting. Lack of it can be emotionally stunting.

Edward Hallowell from Harvard Medical School says connective moments are “*human moments*”. He points out such moments don't “*have to be emotionally draining or personally revealing. A 5-minute conversation can be a perfectly meaningful human moment.*” He says such moments have “*two prerequisites: people's physical presence and their emotional and intellectual attention... you have to set aside what you're doing and focus on the person you're with. Usually when you do that, the other person will feel the energy and respond in kind.*”

Research also shows making time for connective moments is calming for both of us and can be a great stress reliever. Connectivity, as McKee, Boyatzis & Johnston point out in *Becoming a Resonant Leader* “*has a constructive effect on neurological functioning, well-being, physical health and personal relationships and counters the physiological and psychological harm done by stress.*” [p. 38]. It:

- ◆ reduces levels of stress hormones such as epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol.
- ◆ produces hormones like oxytocin and vasopressin which promote trust and bonding
- ◆ stimulates important neurotransmitters such as dopamine – an attention and pleasure enhancer, and serotonin that reduces fear and worry.

We're often not present enough to register connective moments and they all too easily slip past our awareness amidst daily pressures, distractions and busyness. They can come up anytime and more often than not we probably miss them in the day-to-day bustle. Added to that, emotional states like self-absorption, anger, contempt and harsh disapproval dial-up disconnection, dull our radar and dissipate connectivity. When we're hyper-critical or too judgemental of someone else, we close ourselves off to what they're feeling.

Absence of connectivity makes us more vulnerable to catching toxic emotions – both our own and others – and the chemicals our brain releases during a connective moment are restoring and healing. As Hallowell concludes: “*The absence of the human moment in an organization can wreak havoc. Good people leave. Those who remain are unhappy.*”

Edward Hallowell's article “*The Human Moment at Work*” in Harvard Business Review Jan-Feb 1999 is a good read

## Connective leadership – creating emotional capital



There's growing recognition that emotional intelligence is at the heart of good teams, good work and good leadership. Good relationships are based on how well leaders can make positive emotional connections with others – tuning-in to the feelings of people around them and creating emotionally positive climates.

It's emotional capital – the ability to connect with others – that matters most and really makes the difference in so many leadership arenas...

That people are more likely to work better together and do better work when they feel connected to each other and to their leaders is really a 'no-brainer', yet many otherwise intelligent managers still resist the idea that emotional connectivity matters for good work!

Emotions are the currency of leadership. They're the backdrop to everything leaders do. Leadership success isn't just built on technical know-how, smart strategy, sound project or financial management, your restructuring track-record or how hard, decisive and driven you are – it's built on emotional capital.

Staff keep an emotional bank balance on their leaders. The debit column is disconnection – being dissonant, disapproving or distant, that leads to emotional depreciation and demotivates. The credit column is connectivity – being authentic, appreciative and approachable, that builds positive relations and promotes more productive performance.

Lack of connectivity costs yet rarely gets noticed on the bottom-line balance sheet.

## Connective Conversations

The main way leaders exercise connectivity is through conversations. They're at the core of what leaders do. And at the heart of all conversations are feelings.

Through connective conversations, leaders:

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Leader connectivity is crucial for healthy work cultures

The way we talk to each other, how we come across to others, how much respect, rapport and positive regard there is marks the culture of a workplace...

- ◇ set the tone and create cultures that support 'good work'.
- ◇ build a sense of harmony, unity and belongingness
- ◇ create a common purpose, vision and agreed ways of doing things
- ◇ relate to others respectfully, get in tune and shape supportive emotional climates
- ◇ demonstrate great leadership, build team spirit, trust and positive 'can-do' workplaces
- ◇ build better team and work relationships, engage others, help people think together, make connections and create rapport.

While connective conversations are crucial, they don't happen nearly enough in many workplaces. We don't connect deeply with each other. Things are kept *'polite'*. True needs and feelings are rarely revealed and hard issues are avoided.

When conversations are emotionally off-colour and lack connection, coordination breaks down, mistakes multiply, productivity plummets and your team is likely to be suffering too! They leave people emotionally exhausted, despondent, distrustful or just plain frustrated.

The most common cause of disconnection can be traced to low levels of listening and reluctance to acknowledge or share feelings and thoughts tied to a sense of feeling unsafe – in other words, to a lack of empathy. The trouble is much of the time, conversations are critical, judgemental and positional rather than supportive, connective and appreciative.

In cultures characterised by defensiveness and disconnection, dilemmas, divisions and difficulties duly follow. But if enough people begin to practise EI and connectivity in their conversations, whole cultures begin to change...

Advances in neuroscience remind us there's a lot of super complex brain physics behind how we behave and what we say and do in the conversational interactions we have...

## The Particle Physics of Conversations...



Most of us don't stop to think about how complex the brain circuitry for engaging in connective conversations really is. *"Any conversation demands that the brain makes extraordinarily complex calculations,"* says Daniel Goleman in his book *Social Intelligence*. What neuroscientists have uncovered about the subtle wiring of the brain in the last 10 years or so is, well – mind-boggling (excuse the pun!)

Literally without thinking about it – because it involves our emotional circuitry below the level of the conscious brain – our minds link-in to, meld with and adjust to each other's frequencies, making legions of critical connections and adjustments as we interact. We now know, for instance, that:

- ◇ Specialised brain cells known as 'mirror neurons' make us do just that – mirror back actions, facial expressions or emotion we see in someone else. When someone laughs, we laugh. When someone shows deep distress, we sense it too. Our social skills depend on these 'do-as-others-do' neurons that also explain a lot about empathy and how we catch emotions off other people.
- ◇ Spindle cells lock onto another person's chemical emissions. Like an emotional guidance system, they feed us back information about these trace elements. So we read the emotional state of another person not just through facial expressions, body signals and tone of voice but also through chemical tracers. *That's cool!*
- ◇ We even have a facility in the emotional realm of our brain that tells us whether we like someone or not, whether to trust them or whether they're a likely friend or foe.

We aren't conscious of it, but this circuitry also transmits messages about our emotional states to others at the same time. We connect not through our rational faculties first but through our feelings sensors with the help of mirrors and spindles.

At this particle level, social interactions also re-shape our brain. We know other particles in this inner-universe too – the 'amygdala' an almond-shaped knot of neurons mid-brain that triggers chemicals for fight, flight, fear and freeze; the 'hippocampus' that stores emotional memories as chemical action-triggers and the role our abundant store of brain chemicals play in terms of setting off physical reactions and emotional behaviour patterns.

Discoveries like this remind us there's a lot of brain physics behind what we do and say in conversations. At an unconscious level, we're in constant chemical dialogue with others without knowing it. *And that's the particle physics of connective conversations in play...*

Reading where people are coming from feeling-wise is at the bottom of good team relationships, getting along well, building friendships and supporting people...

## Empathy – Connectivity in Action



Empathy makes connectivity possible. Connecting is empathy in action. It's not just a sentimental fiction, it's a real brain function. We're hard-wired to read feelings.

- ◇ Spindle cells and mirror neurons are designed to detect subtle emotional signals others emit.
- ◇ They're part of our limbic system that acts like an emotional radar – constantly scanning the human terrain, picking up emotional 'blips' that help us tune in to others and get on the same wavelength.
- ◇ Neuroscientists call this 'limbic resonance'. It explains how we feel sad or glad when someone else does. Taking in facial expressions, body language, chemical emissions or tone of voice, we get an immediate, automatic sense of what other people feel.

In more everyday terms, empathy is reading what others feel even if they don't or won't tell you. It's picking up where someone's coming from feelings-wise (even if I don't agree). Why exercise to fine-tune our limbic radars? Empathy serves us well in several ways:

- ◇ When we're empathetic, we're receptive to other feelings, as well as to our own. The more attentive we make ourselves in the moment, the more attuned our radar gets
- ◇ Empathy enables us to handle feelings with skill, sensitivity, harmony and humour.
- ◇ Leaders lacking empathy (or rather, choosing not to tune in to their radar) often act in ways that antagonise, upset and grate with people.
- ◇ With empathy, we can say what's appropriate to match feelings and moods of others

Flipping the coin, emotional states such as self-absorption, anger, contempt and harsh disapproval dull our radar and dissipate empathy. When we're hyper-critical or too judgemental of someone else, we disconnect ourselves from what they're feeling.

## 'I'm just no good at reading feelings...'



It's a complaint that comes up frequently in our EI clinics. Of course telling yourself you're no good at something is a sure way to guarantee you stay that way.

I often reply: "*What? Weren't you in the queue when God was handing out limbic systems?*" No empathy there! It's true a small percentage of us got handed a faulty one, but we did all get one, it's just that we don't know how to work it or refuse to use it.

As Susan Scott says in *Fierce Conversations*: "*Our radar works perfectly. It's the operator who is in question.*"

Saying we can't read feelings often has to do with a fear we might get it wrong if we try, get sucked into someone's else's feelings vortex or simply that we can't be bothered reading the signals our radar sends us. Our rational brain says be suspicious of the intuitions emitted by our e-radar so we discount or discard them. Research shows we can improve our reading accuracy by exercising our limbic radars. For example:

- ◇ Imagine what it's like for the other person and put your feelings aside for now
- ◇ Face-gaze: try to read what's going on for the other person. What feeling-words flash into your head? That's your radar reading and it's probably right.
- ◇ Stop worrying about doing a wrong radar reading: 50% of the time, you'll be right and you connect with the other person; 30% of the time you're still right but the other person is masking their feelings. The other 20%, they'll correct you, tell you what they really feel and probably appreciate you tried to connect with them anyway.
- ◇ Use eyes. It's said they're the mirror to the soul. We don't know about that but you can pick up a lot of what's going for people through their eyes. This isn't a focused, analytical stare, it's a soft look that allows barriers between them and you to drop.
- ◇ Face-read every chance you get – at the airport, in the street, the office, at the station. Just look at them with curiosity and register what you think they're feeling.

The more we practise tuning into our radar and reading feelings, the better we get at it.

What matters is not how much empathy we have right now... It's whether we know *how* to have empathy - whether we can access empathy when we want to do so...

Well before we even know what we're looking at and way before our thinking brain decides, our OFC via the spindle cells connection, has already made up our mind for us and told us whether to like or not!

## Doing Limbic Tangos at the Likingness Centre...



Their eyes met fleetingly. Alluring, inviting exchange of glances as they inclined towards each other with urgent anticipation, feather quiet, fluttering hearts a-whisper. They leaned in closer, detecting the exotic, subtle fragrance exuded by each other as she purred: *"I think our orbito-frontal cortexes have just made contact..."*

That's my rendition of how a romantic encounter between two neuroscientists might play out. The language of love and brain-science don't exactly make a comfortable fit.

Back to love a minute. There's an old saying it 'enters through the eyes'. So many ancient aphorisms are accurate. Our orbito-frontal cortex (OFC) is thickly connected to our eyes. It's a key brain part for emotions-matching and empathy. As Goleman says *"when two people's eyes meet, they have interlinked their orbito-frontal areas"* (*Social Intelligence* pp 63-64) which may not go down so well to say in a romantic encounter, no matter how brain-correct it may be.

- ◆ Connect, collide, conflict? The OFC decides whether contact is going to be like, love, loathe or leave. It's powerful because it connects 3 major brain parts – the cortex for thinking, the amygdala for threat assessment and the brain stem for automatic action.
- ◆ The OFC is our 'likingness watchdog'. It tells us whether we find another person agreeable or not. The more it lights up with activity, the more warmth we feel toward someone else as it assesses, through spindle cells congregating there, aroma which is linked with liking or disliking.

*"The ability to empathise," according to Goleman, "stems from mirror neurons that read another person's face and voice for emotion and continually attune us to how someone else feels as we speak with them. This circuitry sends out a steady stream of bulletins – 'he's getting a bit upset by that last remark, etc.' By keeping us posted on how the other person has just responded, the amygdala keeps us in synch... This circuitry also attunes our own biology to the dominant range of feelings of the person we are with, so that our emotional states tend to converge. (The New Leaders p. 60)*

*Limbic resonance* is what neuro-scientists call this kind of attunement, where we brain-link and our emotional states begin to resonate with each other. You can see this in action if you watch closely. They incline toward each other. They nod more vigorously. Tension goes out of their bodies. They may even begin to mirror each other's body posture, hand gestures, facial expressions or tone. There's an aura of relaxed attentiveness as listening without interrupting goes up. As Goleman says: *"Any time we have a genuine connection with someone where we've felt 'on the same wavelength', it signals that we've just experienced such an interlocking of brains."* It's a limbic tango at the 'likingness centre'...

## It's lonely at the top – it's also emotionally isolating

Now you might be forgiven for thinking that higher level managers should have a higher level of EI and better understanding of themselves than we lesser mortals. But on average, CEO's tend to have lower, if not the lowest scores, as reported by Bradberry and Greaves in *"Heartless Bosses"* – an article in *The Harvard Business Review*.

- ◆ In another study, 1200 senior execs rated themselves for EI and were also rated by others. Results were again surprising.
- ◆ What wasn't perhaps so surprising is that senior managers had a high-opinion of their self-awareness and emotional competence. Senior level managers consistently rated themselves higher than others.
- ◆ This was not reflected in their actual instrumented EI score nor in the ratings given by others below them. They scored low. Well at least they have self-belief on their side.
- ◆ The results showed higher-level managers are more likely to have an inflated view of their EI competencies and less congruence with the perceptions of others who work with them often and know them well, than lower-level managers.



The researchers postulate as managers move higher up, there are fewer opportunities to get feedback from others and people are less inclined to give feedback to higher-ups in general from which they might learn. Because of this, senior managers may have less opportunity to check their self-perception with others...

...continued >>>

If a leader's level of emotional intelligence is such a big factor in success, it leads you to wonder: do people at the top of the ladder have more EI than those on the lower rungs?

See "It's lonely at the top: Executives' EI self (mis)perceptions" Fabio Sala 2001 at [www.eiconsortium.org/reports/its\\_lonely\\_at\\_the\\_top\\_executives\\_ei\\_mis\\_perceptions.html](http://www.eiconsortium.org/reports/its_lonely_at_the_top_executives_ei_mis_perceptions.html)

It's lonely at the top...

Daniel Goleman says his book *Social Intelligence* is a companion to his earlier *Emotional Intelligence*, though with a shift in focus from individual EI competencies to the collective capacities we all display when we connect...

Another reason may be senior managers have less time for really leading and connecting well with others and perhaps lose the edge on their emotional intelligence and connectivity skills. Looks like it's not only lonely at the top – it's also emotionally stultifying too.

## Social or Emotional Intelligence – same or different?

Whether there's such a clear distinction as Daniel Goleman makes out between *emotional* and *social* intelligence, I'm not so sure, since *social awareness* is one of the 4 EI Dimensions he defined in the first place.

Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences theory goes back a way and he regarded interpersonal, *between-people* intelligence (aka Social Intelligence) separate from but complimentary to intra-personal intelligence (Emotional Intelligence). Following this track:



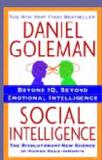
- ◆ Emotional intelligence is about individual inner-capacities in us to understand our own emotions, manage to regulate them and have empathetic connections with others.
- ◆ Social intelligence projects outward. It's what transpires as we connect with others.
- ◆ For example: empathy is an individual ability; rapport arises between people as they interact but relies on empathy.

On the other hand, Salovey and Mayer, forerunners of Goleman in EI research and still leading players in the field, saw emotional intelligence as a “subset of social intelligence” (1990), while educationists use the term SEL – Social and Emotional Learning. So take your pick. Heck, what does it matter? Reading *Social Intelligence* gives you a huge Hinduistic-like impression that everything is connected up to everything else anyway.

### Book Review:

Recommended reading - for those interested in the brain-basis behind emotional and social intelligence...

Recommended reading



*Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*

Daniel Goleman, Random House London 2006

## The Sociable Brain: Wired to Connect

Daniel Goleman's major purpose, he tells us in the introduction to *Social Intelligence*, “is to lift the curtain” on this emerging new science. “The most fundamental revelation of this new discipline”, he goes on to explain, is that “we are wired to connect.”

I recall vividly the point in the book that really grabbed my attention. It was on page 13: “When someone dumps their toxic feelings on us – explodes in anger or threats, shows disgust or contempt – they activate in us circuitry for those very same distressing emotions.” This hit home for me. I had a moment of panic. My brain's emotional response patterns aren't just controlled or shaped by me – other people's brains have a hand in it too (excuse the mixed metaphor – that sounds yuk).

I suddenly saw my brain wandering the streets randomly picking up sinister suggestions from other brains, my neural pathways being curbed and guttered in ways I didn't really want at all. Far more than we're consciously aware, our daily encounters with spouses, bosses, parents, partners, strangers and the TV, shape our brains at a cellular and even genetic level – for good or ill. I don't want to end up acting like Snooki on Jersey Shores. No wonder I'm a mess. *How are you feeling?*

Goleman describes in dazzling detail and with a fair bit of metaphorical flair, what happens to our brains when we connect with others. There's conversational rumbas, high roads and low roads, facial sculpting, social allergies, love as a drug (shades of Bryan Ferry) moral prods, empathy-warping and meme wars. On the other hand, if you're looking for practical personal strategies and tools to succour social intelligence, Goleman's books generally don't cut it. Readers of his earlier books will know what I mean.

Still, he takes us on a brain-journey that shows how connecting with others moulds our biology, our experiences and makes us human. He gives us brain-chemistry insights into the cascades of hormones behind everyday encounters like first kisses, sexual attraction, happy moments and sad ones, parenting and psychopathic behaviours (not that they always go together), compassion, care-giving, stress, the toxicity of insults, the paeans of praise, the surprising accuracy of first impressions and how we detect lies.

Perhaps not as immediately earth-moving for some as his earlier, 1995 best-seller, I found this a great read to update myself on the more recent neuroscience discoveries that have >>>



## The Sociable Brain: Wired to Connect...

In *Social Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman uses the analogy of the high road and the low road to depict the two major circuits of our brain. The rational circuit is the high road; the low road is our emotional circuitry...

It looks as though a normal brain processes lots of diverse information by switching on and off - what we might call *selective connectivity*...

Reported in "Brain 'hyperconnectivity' linked to depression" by Sharon Jayson USA TODAY

transpired since Goleman wrote his first book, which is exactly what he intended it to do. Sure, there's some parched patches where things get a bit dry, dreary and clinical but there's lots of neuro-scientific nuggets to mine in this book, which kept my interest and may come in handy on trivial pursuit nights.

Not that I think this book is trivial – it's monumental in its magnitude and may stand as Goleman's most comprehensive, if not his best, work to date. It's a latter-day EI Bible of sorts. He powerfully and passionately pleads the case for how emotional and social attunement, more caring, connectivity and compassion might just be the evolutionary step society needs to take to evolve to the next level, harness our natural altruism and escape our destructive urges...

## Do you take the High road or the Low road?

We all know that bonny Scottish ditty. But actually, brain-wise, the road is already chosen for us. We all take the low one first – whether the pathway is Scotland or somewhere more neuronal.

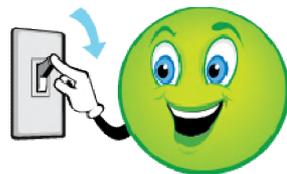
In *Social Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman uses the analogy of the *high road* and the *low road* to depict the two major circuits of our brain. The rational circuit is the high road; the low road is our emotional circuitry, regulated by our blindingly fast amygdala. As Goleman explains: *"The amygdala extracts emotional meaning from a non-verbal message, whether it be a scowl, a sudden change of posture, or a shift in tone or voice – microseconds before we yet know what we are looking at."*



Our social interactions, connectivity, indeed our entire life, are governed by the subtle and complex interplay of these two roads. *"The low road can be seen as 'wet', dripping with emotion, and the high road as relatively 'dry', coolly rational."* Goleman goes on. *"The low road traffics in raw feelings, the high in considered understanding of what's going on. The low road lets us immediately feel with someone else; the high road can think about what we feel. Ordinarily, they mesh seamlessly."* (pp.15-17)

You can see the high road and low road in play if you pay attention to what happens in any conversation. The high road provides the thinking component of the conversation – rationality, words and meanings. The low road, as Goleman says, *"runs beneath the words, holding the interaction together through an immediately felt connection. The sense of connection hinges less on what's said than on the more direct and intimate, unspoken emotional link... facial expressions, gestures, gaze and the like. At that subtle level we carry on a constant silent chatter, a kind of thinking aloud that offers a between-the-lines narrative, letting the other person know how we feel from moment to moment and so adjust accordingly."* (p.33)

## Knowing When to Switch-On... and Off



I'm continually fascinated by the way our everyday sayings about how our brain works seems to be confirmed by brain studies. For example, we often say things like: *"I'm not switched on to that right now"* or *"I just tuned out – or in"* and recent UCLA research into brain connectivity suggests that to function effectively our brain does indeed need to be able to switch-on *and* also switch-off.

Studies of brain connections in 120 individuals diagnosed with depression ranging in age from 21-80 showed all had hyperactive brain activity. In other words, they had brains that once switched on, couldn't easily switch-off again.

*"All the depressed patients showed increased connectivity,"* says UCLA psychiatry professor, Andrew Leuchter. *"We know from brain science studying normal individuals,"* Leuchter continues *"that the connections are turning off and on all the time. If you take a snapshot of a depressed person's brain, you're going to find the connections turned on at any given time."*

This sits with similar 2010 findings in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science* where Yvette Sheline, director of the *Center for Depression, Stress and Neuro-imaging* at Washington University School of Medicine, found depressed people had increased connectivity to one specific brain region. *"What our research shows is that the depressed brain appears to be less versatile,"* concludes UCLA's Leuchter. *"It's connecting all the regions all the time and is not able to shut down those connections in a normal way."* >>>

## Knowing When to Switch-On... and Off

Emotions are at the bottom of top performance. People can't focus and do good work if they're distracted by strong negative emotions. It's at the 'feelings' level where many performance and productivity problems lie...

### Personal Mastery:

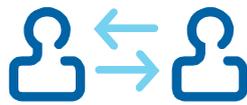


**Leading with Emotional Intelligence** runs regularly

in Brisbane and other regional locations. If you want to attend, contact us for details or go to our website for scheduled dates, brochure and registration

One participant's account of what she did after attending Personal Mastery: Leading with Emotional Intelligence

Like any cautious researcher, Leuchter is quick to say he can't say whether this kind of hyper-connectivity causes depression symptoms like anxiety, poor concentration, memory and sleep disturbance. Still, I bet if my brain isn't able to switch off, and gives me too much to think about or concentrate on at once, that might surely make me anxious and keep me awake at night. I'd feel, well – *depressed*, I guess. Next time. I'll appreciate it more when I tune out for a second – I'm "*just giving my brain a rest*"!



## Connectivity comes first...

Connectivity is a basic precondition for the roles leaders are expected to take on. Without it, leaders can't persuade, influence, inspire, motivate or co-ordinate. There's no way around it – unless you resort to coercion and control that is. If you want people to take committed action and put in a superior performance, you have to connect with their feelings first.

Emotionally intelligent leaders are aware how their own emotions affect culture, team climate and performance. First, they make themselves approachable, then they:

- ◆ Respond to other people's feelings with sensitivity, authenticity, respect and care.
- ◆ Read what's going on for people emotionally so they can manage to motivate them.
- ◆ Resonate with the moods and emotions of their teams, then act in ways that are emotionally effective – that bring out the best in others.
- ◆ Stay connected with others' feelings. They keep one eye on the relationship – even when faced with difficult situations where hard messages have to be delivered.
- ◆ Use empathy and compassion to build, maintain and strengthen relationships

Connectivity is just one of the *7 Practices of EI Leaders* we look at in our 2-day clinic on *Personal Mastery: Leading with Emotional Intelligence*. This highly-regarded, coaching-intensive clinic has loads of tools and lots of hands-on opportunities to apply the 7 EI practices to energise your leadership, connect with feelings and work with them constructively to bring out the best in you and those you lead,

In its 8<sup>th</sup> year, this clinic has evolved into one of the most powerful and practical tool-based events you can do to master things that matter for leading with emotional intelligence. It comes with a comprehensive, recently fully-updated 3rd edition self-coaching Guide.

And for busy leaders who don't have time for our full 2-day coaching clinic but still want to get across critical EI concepts and capabilities, our 1-day fast-track seminar *The Emotionally Intelligent Leader* introduces core tools to get started on adopting the 7 Practices with a self-coaching guide to support ongoing learning back at work.

## Achieving the Unthinkable

It's not always possible to stay in contact with all the participants who attend our coaching clinics. So it's always heartening to hear from people about how they're putting practices they pick up at our clinics into action back at work. A while back, I received this email from someone who attended one of our *Emotional Intelligence* clinics. We can publish her story but not her name. So let's call her Sophie.



"Hi Bill, I just wanted to share with you some events that occurred since I attended your workshop on *Leading with Emotional Intelligence* and took on board your tools and strategies. When I first took over my role as manager, I had 5 very unhappy staff whose productivity was low and standard of work even lower. Sick leave was the only thing that they really excelled at and they'd had 5 managers in two years so things were never very stable for them.

After implementing some of your tools such as contribution mapping, leading with feelings and leading with purpose (just to name a few) and of course working closely with this team, I am now very proud to say that this one-time team of disgruntled staff are now achieving the unthinkable. They are working as a team, have an appreciation of each other and have learnt to look at the big picture.

My director came through yesterday and was impressed with the high standard my team have achieved. She said it was due to my management. I believe I certainly influenced them but they did it themselves – and I couldn't have done this without the knowledge I got from your workshop and by referring to your excellent self-coaching guide often. Thanks so much and I look forward to attending more of your seminars."

Yes and No! Depends on what studies you read. But the real issue may be that women *want* to talk more often than men and in more depth - they *want* to connect...

## War of the Words – *do Women talk more than Men?*

It's something men have long suspected and women mostly always deny. I'm a bloke so I'll keep my answer short – *Yes and No! Depends on what studies you read...*



In *The Female Brain*, Louann Brizendine maintains women really do talk more than men – almost three times as much – an average 20,000 words a day compared to the measly 7,000 men speak. They also, she says, speak more rapidly, devote more brainpower to chit-chat and actually get a buzz out of hearing their own voices.

Brizendine puts female talkativeness down to Innate differences between male and female brains. Women are more naturally talkative than men because they have more brain cells devoted to talking, more advanced language centres and it also triggers a flood of brain chemicals that gives them a major rush and gets them high.

But before we blokes snuggle into smugness about women being chatterboxes, it seems Brizendine's brashness set off a chain reaction amongst mostly male academics who took umbrage with her figures and conclusions. For instance:

- ◇ Leaping in first, aptly named psychologist Campbell Leaper of University of California reviewed research into the topic back to the 1960s and found a slight trend toward men being more talkative than women.
- ◇ A 2007 study in *Science* says men and woman use pretty much the same number of words daily. James Pennebaker, psychology chair at University of Texas says he's collected data for years that contradict this finding of women being the chattier gender.
- ◇ When it comes to '*the war of the words*', Pennebaker said he'd used mobile recorders to collect chatter patterns of 396 university students and on average, it was women but only by a nose at 16,215 words and men at 15,669.

Why do academics insist on using samples of uni students believing they're representative of the broader rest of us? I'd assume you first have to test whether uni students use more words per day than the average person in the street? Apart from professional pontificators who *talk to live and live to talk* – politicians, consultants, authors, actors, academics, lawyers etc – what about the ordinary rest of us? Second, he attached recording devices to students for a week. What did he tell them? If they knew it was a word competition surely this might have prejudiced the behaviour and results just a teensy bit?

The real issue here may be that women *want* to talk more often than men and in more depth – they want to connect. They also want to talk about things like relationships that men are not all that wired into. In fact, both Pennebaker and Leaper point out that they found larger differences in talkativeness depending on the topic being talked about.

- ◇ Women tend to talk more about other people, whereas men are apt to hold forth on more concrete subjects. No surprise here.
- ◇ Blokes will talk all day about footy n' fishing, their cars' performance or gizmos and gadgets. Women are wired to talk friends, feelings, relationship and connections.

Are women more loquacious and men more laconic? Anecdotally, I'd say yes... But before we men rush in to blame them, stop and think for a minute. (Women readers will know how hard that is for men!)

As Brizendine points out, the centres for language and hearing in women are 10% bigger, which gives girls an edge in listening and conversing – and the circuits for social and verbal connection are typically more hard-wired in girls than guys, so there's a tendency for women to both talk and *to listen* a lot more (p.62) – which explains why women talk and men don't listen I guess.

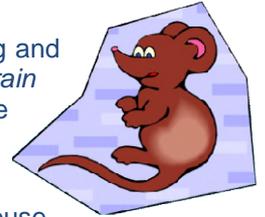
It looks like talking is truly a female addiction. As Brizendine says: "*Connecting through talking activates the pleasure centre in a girl's brain. We're not talking about a small amount of pleasure. This is huge. It's a major dopamine and oxytocin rush, which is the biggest, fattest neurological reward you can get outside of an orgasm*" (p.64)

This may also explain why men tend to talk more during courting – we're all over this one at a primal level when we're looking to get laid. Talking is part of the ritual of courtship. *I'd better stop talking now before I get into more trouble with my female readers....*

Researchers across the globe are for the first time mapping the basic wiring of the brain - we've moved from taking still photos of brain parts to something more akin to movies of the dynamics of brain connectivity...

## Brain Mapping – of mice and men...

Apologies to novelist John Steinbeck but I was Googling brain-mapping and first up came across The Allen Institute for Brain Science's *Mouse Brain Connectivity Atlas*. I was intrigued by the title and concerned for the mice.



Launched in 2011, it's helping scientists (maybe mice too) understand neural circuits governing behaviour by mapping neural pathways in mouse brains. Not being one I wouldn't really know, but this sounds like good news for mice! Being a naturally curious person, I wondered if there was a *Rat Brain Atlas* too and whether rodent therapy would catch on. Probably in California? Then I was reminded of Robyn Williams' joke in the movie *Hook* and thought maybe there's a *Lawyer's Brain Atlas*, since to steal Robyn's punch-line, "there's some things even rats won't do."

Apparently they'll be using transgenic mice, which I assume involves specimens who are cross-dressers but again, I'm not sure what mice think about trans-gendering (though rats may be into it and certainly some lawyers and judges are) so I gave up on mice and moved onto men. OK, women then, if you insist, since it doesn't take much time to map what's on a man's mind anyway!

That's when I found we've moved from taking still photos of parts of the brain to something more akin to movies of the dynamics of brain connectivity. Researchers across the globe are for the first time mapping the basic wiring of the brain – all the complicated cross-connections between the estimated hundred-billion neurons, forming over a hundred trillion connections that help us to reason, remember and register emotions. My emotion about figures like these was over-awed. It's an awful lot of noughts.

These connections and the circuits they create transmit and encode information that forms the foundation of diverse brain functions. For example, how we see and interpret things results from the interplay of electrochemical impulses in the brain's circuitry, which can perform complex gymnastics such as recalling an experience, applying it to a situation we face now and taking action all in mere milliseconds. Mice and cheese come to mind...

Research teams such as those at the Human Connectome Project and the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle (see men and mice *are* working together) are starting to chart the brain's major connections using enhanced magnetic-resonance scans. The field is so new no one even had a name for it until 1995 when neuroscientist Olaf Sporns called the brain's tangled web of neurons and synapses, the "*connectome*".

It will take years but the hope is that a map of the brain's physical wiring eventually will reveal answers as to what causes neurological diseases and disorders like schizophrenia, which may be linked to the breakdown of neural connections in this complex network. I imagine for the ordinary rest of us, it might give us a clue as to what's going in there!

Already, researchers are getting hints that the brain's electrical impulses get relayed via a series of central hubs on route to more-specialised locations, a bit like airline route flights through hubs. Gee, I hope we don't experience any long delays or fog. Taking the lead in all this is the *Human Connectome* Project, which will soon begin scans of 1,200 healthy young adults – that's men and women not mice.

Going full circle on my brain-map journey, I find mention that the mice-people at the Allen Institute for Brain Science are also finishing off a *Human Brain Atlas* offering the first interactive guide to our brain as a follow-up to the release of its mouse brain map. It seems brain-mapping is truly *of mice and men* – ok *wo-men*. *Anyone for cross-dressing?*

Boys and girls behave differently. You don't need lots of elaborate research to see this is the case - just simple observation will do it.



## Neurons for Nurturing – toys for boys?

Louann Brizendine in her book *The Female Brain* relates an amusing story about a mother who studiously gave her little 3-year old girl unisex toys, and even over-compensated by banning dollies and giving her boy-toys instead – in this instance, a bright red fire engine.

The mum "walked into her daughter's room one afternoon to find her cuddling the truck in a baby blanket, rocking it back and forth saying: 'Don't worry little truckie, everything will be alright.'" As Brizendine points out, the impulses of males and females aren't initially moulded by environment. "Girls arrive already wired as girls, and boys arrive already wired as boys" and girls happen to have much stronger impulses for nurturing.

Techno-connectivity is transforming how we connect with colleagues, handle work-stress, pressure, and is reconfiguring family responsibilities, relationships and our approach to personal and recreation time...

Is technological over-connectivity in danger of killing off human connectivity? Are we connected to, or enslaved by, this kind of technology?

More on this topic in our free FactFile 50: Techno-connectivity Boon and Bane - available online for download from [www.thechangeforum.com](http://www.thechangeforum.com)

See "Extreme Jobs: The Dangerous Allure of 70-Hour Workweeks" Sylvia Hewlett & Carolyn Buck-Luce in Harvard Business Review Dec 01, 2006

Not everyone may be aware that The Change Forum is an approved Queensland Health provider for leadership, coaching and culture change services...

## When Over-connected means Under-connected...



Work today is so 24/7 it's not funny. ICT devices that enable much-prized techno-connectivity (ipads, laptops, mobile phones) mean we're connected to our workplace like never before. It's advertised glamorously by makers of these devices: care-free young execs, tropical cocktail in one hand, mobile in the other, loll around palm-fringed beaches with laptop nearby on towel, next to chic people who look like they've definitely spend too long in a tanning salon.

But is that the reality for most workers? Many work longer hours. Work follows us home courtesy of techno-connectivity, no matter what time of the week. The 24/7 workplace operates round the clock, never sleeps and expects its people to always be available...

- ◆ Managers, staff, teams are always connected to it. We're never really off-duty and always on-call. They're increasingly unable to physically or mentally get away from their jobs and 24/7 responsibilities impact health, personal, social and recreational life.
- ◆ Staff are drenched in data, valuable to the business but the downside is information over-load: being overwhelmed by vast amounts of information (much of it of dubious value) that cannot possibly be absorbed or acted on.
- ◆ Techno-connectivity benefits corporations and aids in doing jobs but it also creates more workplace stress, overworking, feeling overloaded and a loss of human connection time with family, friends and even work colleagues.
- ◆ Work-stress is up, so are workloads. Time to make human connections is down. That includes face-time with customers. Email, video-conferencing, face-book are not real face-time and social media addiction (I call it *face-book aphasia*) is an emerging issue

In *Extreme Jobs: Dangerous Allure of the 70-Hour Workweek*, Hewlett and Luce say 44% of high-earning professionals feel the pace of their job is extreme. Marilyn Gardner writing in *The Christian Science Monitor* (Dec 4, 2006) maintains we're promoting work cultures that depict extreme-jobbers as heroes, which militates many to work more than 70 hours per week. *It looks like being at work has become the new work-life balance.*

The 'digitalising' of workplaces and broader society, is changing the human experience in radical ways with far-reaching ramifications for people, business operation, social health and perhaps even the neuronal networks for how we connect and socialise brain-wise.

Like The Borg in Star-Trek, are we being absorbed as components into the corporate technological machine? Is the human element in danger of getting lost? How can organisation leaders striving to maintain a performance edge not lose sight of the significance of social relationships, human connectivity and qualities like caring, compassion and emotional nurturing and support?

## The Change Forum – approved Q-Health provider



For around 9 years now we've been working with Queensland Health across the State, delivering leadership, team-building, emotional intelligence and conversational coaching clinics in-house to executives, directors, managers, team leaders, clinicians, as well as admin, specialist and operational units.

We've conducted programs in major city and small regional hospitals and worked with many different professional streams in Health – nursing units, health promotion, mental and community health through to special support units like Patient Safety, Information Services, HR, district executive teams and the EMT.

Leadership clinics we've run in-house for Queensland Health range from *Leading with Emotional Intelligence*, *Dealing with Difficult Discussions* and *Leading Change* to working with individual groups and units on workplace improvement, culture change and various team development areas like respect-building, team design, dealing with difficult team moments and facilitating team-planning and strategy days.

As well as in-house, thousands of Health directors, managers, team leaders, educators and staff have attended our suite of public leadership forums and coaching clinics and we're happy to report that their feedback has been, in the main, overwhelmingly positive.

How well leaders work with emotions not only has a direct effect on results and performance. EI skills like perseverance, resilience, self-confidence, self-motivation, empathy and social intelligence are also critical to work and life success

There are several practices that can make leaders and teams more connective. Most important is listening without criticism, with judgement filters switched off

## Connectivity – climbing the Career ladder...

There's virtually nothing leaders do at work that doesn't hark back to emotions in some way. "As leaders move up in an organisation, up to 90% of their success lies in Emotional Intelligence" says Daniel Goleman, summing up endless research into leader success factors.



- ◆ As you climb the leadership career ladder, more and more of the real results rungs you tread on require emotional skills like self-awareness, self-management, empathy and connectivity...
- ◆ Rungs that break underfoot are when leaders can't connect or slip-up on creating resonant relationships. Some say as much as 75% of careers that derail are due to lack of emotional and social intelligence, especially an inability to handle interpersonal problems.
- ◆ EI is the key differentiator between good and outstanding leaders. It's twice as important as any other set of competencies in any job role and the tougher the role, the more EI stands out as the significant success factor.

A leader's ability to connect well with the people they lead – to work out what drives their behaviour and what inspires and energises them to perform at their best – profoundly affects culture, climate and ultimately, job performance. "Our research showed an incontrovertible link between an executive's emotional maturity, exemplified by such capabilities as self-awareness and empathy, and performance" Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee reported in the Harvard Business Review (Dec 2001). "Simply put, the research showed that 'good guys' – that is, emotionally intelligent – finish first."

EI, it seems, is not only an indispensable element in leading a successful business, it's also an indispensable element in climbing the career ladder!

## Practising Connectivity



There are several practices that can make leaders and teams more connective. Most important is listening without criticism, with judgement filters switched off and with the urge to leap in to say what we want to say firmly curtailed. Here's a few others:

- ✘ **Presentness:** Just 'being present' for people in conversations. Making time to spend with staff and enough genuine interest to ask that extra question or comment to show you care (eg. "Tell me more. I've got the time", "I really want to hear", "Is there a way I can help?" or "I was concerned you might feel like that...").
- ✘ **See Value:** Appreciating someone else's efforts; saying what you value in them or their contribution; recognising potential instead of limitations.
- ✘ **Connect:** Taking that extra few seconds to empathise, to acknowledge something the other person thinks or feels (eg. "Seems like you feel/think that...").
- ✘ **Positive Regard:** Unconditionally engage others with positive regard, even if what they say is blaming or accusatory.
- ✘ **Gratitude:** Expressing gratitude in a genuine way inspires cooperation, honesty and trust and motivates people to do better (eg. "I really liked how you did that" or "I really appreciated it when you...").
- ✘ **Adopt a curiosity stance:** Wonder what's going on for them and how you can help rather than blame, criticise or judge.
- ✘ **Forgive harsh words:** They're hijacked by strong emotions. Connect with their concern. Ask yourself: "If someone I respected did that, how would I act?"
- ✘ **Sincerity:** Be genuine about your sentiments and courageous enough to share them. But do it in a way that doesn't offend others.
- ✘ **Contribution:** Instead of stand-back-and-blame, a little bit of admission and humility will boost your connectivity – see how you may have contributed to what's going on.
- ✘ **Joint solution-search:** Don't impose your solutions – that's control. Help others talk through their predicaments and search with them to find solutions. As you do, you're bound to connect.

**Tool Feature...**

Highlighting a tool from our Coaching Clinics to improve leadership self-awareness, connectivity or conversational agility...

“Provided a fantastic platform upon which to build much deeper authentic connections and learn a lot more about myself - and the guide with its array of tools is a valuable resource” Maurice Ware, Queensland Studies Authority

**Personal Mastery: Leading with Emotional Intelligence**

➡ Coming to your region soon...

See our website for [Schedule](#) of dates, locations and [more information](#) on this program

➡ 5 reasons to choose a Change Forum clinic...

1. Solid learning in a safe, small group environment
2. Practical tools & frameworks for back-at-work action

**Connectivity – 2nd of the 7 EI Leaders Practices...**

Leaders who come along to our *Leading with Emotional Intelligence* clinic are looking for practical tools to boost their connectivity. The *7 Practices of EI Leaders* are a framework we use to structure our workshop and the self-coaching Guide that comes with it.

The practices came about from observation, workshopping and discussions over an extensive period, as well as individual coaching work on leadership actions and behaviours that seem to enhance a leader’s ability to leverage emotions to get better outcomes and bring out the best in themselves and the people they lead.

This Tool features an extract of selected questions from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 7 Practices of EI Leaders: *I connect with other’s feelings* – part of a larger EI Leader Inventory we use.

▶ For each statement, circle between 1 = *least typical of you* to 5 = *most typical of you*

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can accurately pick up on and name emotions in others    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can tell if people are being honest about their feelings | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I respond in ways that resonate with other’s sentiments    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I use a range of conversation strategies to connect        | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I stay in tune with how others feel as I speak to them     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can sense what others feel without them saying so        | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I adapt responses to match what I read others feel         | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am respectful and non-judgemental of other’s feelings    | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can read the emotional temperature of others             | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I connect and empathise even if others provoke me          | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I stay connected even during a difficult discussion        | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I make connections at a personal and not just a job level  | 1 2 3 4 5 |

**Far North Feedback from the Field...**

Lately, The Change Forum’s been doing a fair bit of work in our own backyard in Far North Queensland. So we thought we’d focus on some recent feedback from people in the tropics who’ve come along to our *Emotional Intelligence* clinics...

Let’s start with our one-day fast-track seminar **The Emotionally Intelligent Leader**.

Paul Pearson from Centacare Cairns *“enjoyed this seminar very much and gained a better understanding of what EI is – instead of just hearing about it.”* He thought we *“had a very good handle on the subject and good facilitation helped”* He liked the interactive learning and said the guidebook was an excellent resource. *“I’ve already shared the high road/low road, amygdala and neo-cortex learnings”* he added.

Lots of people appreciate our tool-based approach to EI. Sabine Hamilton, a private life-coach and counsellor, *“liked the tool on emotions-mapping and how to work with it”* and Steve Smith from Great Barrier Reef TAFE in Townsville also *“liked the ‘how to’ aspects which helped me understand EI”* and thought the *“workbook was great too”*.

*“I think everyone should do this course”* said Steve, a sentiment shared by a number of other participants. *“The EI Leader is a must for every manager”* said Renae Todd from Dept of Communities. *“The course provided me with great tools and an awareness of how my emotions contribute to all aspects of my life and work environment.”* Kelly Hodgman at The Electricity and Water Ombudsman’s Office agreed: *“This course is fantastic if you want to improve your skills in managing your staff for positive outcomes.”*

We’ve also run our more comprehensive 2-day clinic **Personal Mastery: Leading with Emotional Intelligence** up north and some comments from people who’ve attended include:

*“Leading with EI provided an opportunity to analyse emotions in depth, better prepare for challenging situations and identify ways to assist staff to dig down into emotions, recognise*

➤ 5 reasons to choose a Change Forum clinic...

3. Down-to-earth, hands-on and relevant

4. Comprehensive, easy-to-follow self-coaching guides

5. Serious fun and fantastic facilitation

Bill Cropper delivers key-note talks and fast-track sessions on all kinds of topical themes and can tailor presentations to your group's particular issues, challenges and context

➤ To discuss your next conference or seminar... contact [Bill Cropper](#) at [The Change Forum](#)

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### More Information?

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*what is really going for them and verbalise it", said Heather Lee from Cairns Regional Council. "The interactive activities were a great way to demonstrate the concepts and the guidebook will be a very useful resource to refer back to and refresh my memory."*

Sticking with Cairns Council a minute, Stephen Agius thought the clinic was "an overall excellent presentation presented in a logical order. I learned the difference between thoughts and feelings," said Steve, "how to recognise and try to control reactions to feelings and I walked away with some solid action points".

In Townsville, Sandra Moore, Regional Manager North Queensland Cancer Council, said she "enjoyed both days immensely and took away lots of great ideas and tools to use in moving forward – very informative with good practice sessions." But we thought we'd leave The Cancer Council's Joan Billingsley's comments till last, because in many ways it sums up some of the major themes we've looked at in this issue....

*"A great learning opportunity to discover how the mind does matter and how a chemical process is the creator of feelings and emotions. With this as a base, it is easier to grasp how we can choose our own actions and reactions."*

## Key-note talk or fast-track session? Contact us...



Thinking about your next management conference, planning forum or staff get-together? Bill often delivers tailored **key-note talks** and interactive, fast-track sessions on topical themes such as:

- ◆ Emotional Intelligence and Connective Leadership
- ◆ Handling Toxic Emotions and Managing Stress at Work
- ◆ Dealing with Difficult Discussions and Constructive Conversations
- ◆ Culture Change, Respect-Building and Working Better Together
- ◆ Leading Change, Preparing People for Change, and Challenging Change Resistance

Bill's been a frequent presenter at the Brisbane-based public sector *Leadership Lounge*. You can download key-notes from his presentations on *Building Respectful Workplaces*, *Leading Culture Change* and *Connective Leadership* through our [website](#).

Bill's style is relaxed, down-to-earth, amusing, affirming and engaging. He connects with people and puts them at ease, at the same time as raising curiosity and gently confronting current thinking. Bill's talks reflect recent research and thinking and are supported by topical fact-files and optional takeaway mini-toolkits.

## We can Come to You...

The Change Forum's expertise in organisational change management, leadership learning and team development is drawn from rich and diverse experience over many years working with leaders and teams at all levels on targeted short-term and longer-term, in-depth workplace restructuring, process redesign, culture change and skills development projects in a wide variety of organisations.

With a current focus on conversational and emotionally intelligent leadership, team-building and workplace culture change, The Change Forum uses some themed modular frameworks to help describe and identify key improvement areas for leaders and teams to focus their change efforts. Our [Learning-Centred Leadership Modules](#), [Working Better Together](#) team-building programs, [Change Leadership Forums](#) and [Coaching Clinics](#) offer excellent teambuilding advantages for workgroups and management teams when run **in-house** for your organisation – enhancing shared understanding of tools and techniques, strengthening relationships and increasing 'real-time', back-at-work application of learning. We also provide **personalised, by-the-hour coaching services** for individual managers or teams keen to fast-track their leadership and conversational capabilities.

### The Change Forum

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