



International Society for
Performance Improvement

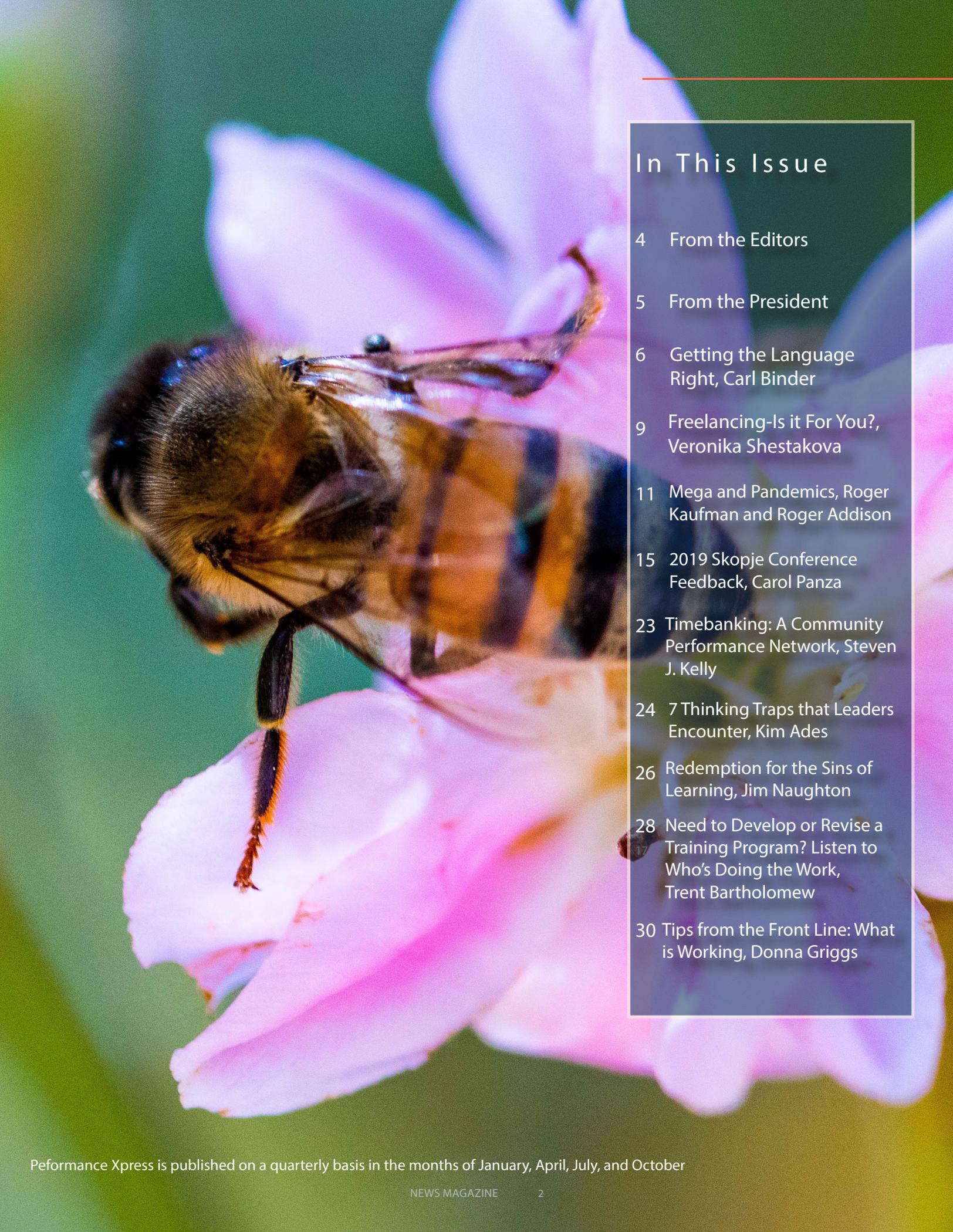


PERFORMANCE
XPRESS

The central image shows a large, hand-painted yellow arrow pointing to the right on a dark, textured asphalt surface. The arrow is the background for the text "PERFORMANCE XPRESS". The word "PERFORMANCE" is in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. The word "XPRESS" is in white, all-caps, sans-serif font, with the "X" being a large, blue, stylized letter that overlaps the "P" and "R" of "XPRESS".

**PERFORMANCE AND
COVID-19**

APRIL 2020
SPRING



In This Issue

- 4 From the Editors
- 5 From the President
- 6 Getting the Language Right, Carl Binder
- 9 Freelancing-Is it For You?, Veronika Shestakova
- 11 Mega and Pandemics, Roger Kaufman and Roger Addison
- 15 2019 Skopje Conference Feedback, Carol Panza
- 23 Timebanking: A Community Performance Network, Steven J. Kelly
- 24 7 Thinking Traps that Leaders Encounter, Kim Ades
- 26 Redemption for the Sins of Learning, Jim Naughton
- 28 Need to Develop or Revise a Training Program? Listen to Who's Doing the Work, Trent Bartholomew
- 30 Tips from the Front Line: What is Working, Donna Griggs



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Spring Flowers, Bees and COVID-19



Sue Czeropski, PhD, CPT



Deborah Hood, PhD

For many, Spring is a favorite time of the year. Flowers are blooming, bees are buzzing, and the fauna who have been slumbering for winter are waking up. Fields of wildflowers sprinkle the landscape, temperatures are heating up, and new life is emerging. and there is a sense of renewal and growth abound.

This Spring, however, is a bit different. Rather than seeing the occasional gardener wearing a face mask to combat pollen allergies, we are now all wearing face masks to combat COVID-19. As we shelter in place and work from home, we are witnessing unprecedented times. As a global community, are having to do almost everything we do differently from how we learn, how we eat and how we connect with each other.

Spring is also a time for new beginnings, and amidst the chaos of all things COVID-19, we are delighted to relaunch Performance Xpress with a whole new look and feel. In this issue of Performance Xpress, you'll find a variety of articles from some great contributors, several of whom have written about our current crisis. We thank them for sharing their wisdom and thoughts with us.

We want to hear from you...give us some feedback on what you think about this first issue! And please consider contributing whether you are a seasoned practitioner, a leader in industry or a student learning about the field. Your shared experiences and shared knowledge is what this publication is all about.

What can you submit? Just as the bees are gathering pollen this time of year to take back to their hives, we need to "gather" knowledge, skills and abilities to become better at what we do. Through your sharing, that "cross-pollination" will happen. Talk about research you are doing, or best practices that are working for you. Share your ideas on how to make our work more effective. Help us grow our toolbox of knowledge by sharing your experiences with the ISPI community.

Thanks for reading and again, send us your feedback and submissions to px@ispi.org. Happy Spring and stay safe!



SPRING WITH ISPI INTO A BRIGHTER FUTURE!

Welcome to the first issue of Performance Express in a new format! We thank editors Sue Czeropski and Debbie Hood, as well as all contributing authors for this edition! As we spring into a brighter future with ISPI, we have much to celebrate! We appreciate our Members (Advocates, Corporate, Academic, Individual), Sponsors, Speakers and Participants in the new Virtual Conference! Thanks to our Conference Committee led by Bill Yeager, Stephanie Johnson and Anthony Felton. We appreciate the work of Past-President Rose Noxon leading up to the new conference format, as well as Elena Suhir, conference planner!



Those who attend the Virtual Conference will enjoy keynote speaker, Dan Negroni, author of *Chasing Relevance*. His message about the Future of Work and next generation leaders in the workplace is very relevant, especially during these challenging times. We have many great speakers in our program! Please look at the ISPI website (www.ispi.org) to see the full program and register to enjoy this opportunity to connect with your professional home and colleagues.

Judy Hale will provide a post-conference Certified Performance Technologist (CPT) workshop on June 5, 2020. By attending this workshop Participants will receive guidance through the CPT application process. Registration for the workshop includes a special discounted offer of the CPT application. To register please go to <https://halecenter.org/event-3805311>. This is an excellent opportunity to receive coaching from Judy and show how you apply your expertise in challenging times.

We would like to thank all of our ISPI Board members who are very dedicated and devote time as a working Board! We appreciate our Volunteers on Committees who contribute time to create a brighter future for our members. In the latest edition special of *Performance Improvement Journal*, Dr. Roger Kaufman reminds us that “our future is bright if we create it and seize it!” This will be our “calling card” as we move forward!

As we look to the future, we must also appreciate the foundation created by our ISPI Thought-Leaders and Past Presidents! Many are offering their expertise so that we can embrace the past as we prepare for new horizons. We would like to thank Roger Addison for reminding us of Guy Wallace’s tribute to Geary Rummler. Guy posted a series of celebratory articles to honor “the Good Doctor” during his birthday month. Please enjoy these articles by visiting <https://hpttreasures.wordpress.com/?s=rummler>.

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PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

PERFORMANCE-
IMPROVEMENTGetting The
Language Right

CARL BINDER, PHD

When I'm training performance consultants I sometimes joke that I behave like "a fifth grade grammar teacher" because I can get very nit-picky about the words people use to describe the elements of performance. Words matter more in some contexts than in others. And when it comes to performance analysis, communicating with stakeholders, reporting findings, and engaging communities of practice, I have learned that consistency and precision in our use of vocabulary can make a big difference.

Use of the term accomplishment is an important example in our field. Like many performance improvement professionals, I was profoundly influenced by the work of Tom Gilbert and his 1978 book *Human Competence*. Among the many game-changing insights in that book was Tom's insistence that we should focus on accomplishments, the valuable products of behavior, when conducting analysis and configuring performance interventions. As he pointed out, behavior is costly, while accomplishments – to the extent they contribute to organizational or societal results – are valuable. Following that insight, our purpose as performance improvement professionals is to enable individuals, teams, processes and whole organizations to produce valuable accomplishments as effectively and efficiently as possible, while at the same time optimizing employee engagement.

“work outputs are the valuable products of behavior, valuable because they contribute to business or societal results ”

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A good way to communicate that insight is to ask if people have ever attended meetings that produced nothing of value. That question usually produces a sort of “Aha!” experience. People say “NOW I know what you mean!” They understand that an entire group can behave for an hour or more and produce nothing of value, except maybe an agreement to meet again. Rather than simply behaving in those meetings, we would like to produce valuable accomplishments such as decisions, agreements, to-do lists, designs, and so on. This is an important insight, which in my view distinguishes between human performance technology (HPT) or human performance improvement (HPI) and other efforts to improve the performance of people in organizations. We anchor our analysis and design to accomplishments rather than focusing primarily on behavior, com-

petencies, etc.

However, as I have watched for several decades how we as a profession use the term accomplishment, it has been troubling that there are many different meanings of the word, and that those differences are not often called out explicitly. I have seen the terms outcome and result used interchangeably with the term accomplishment, and this can be a source of confusion or fuzziness, as well. By accomplishment do we mean a change in organizational or business results? Do we mean a change in behavior? Or do we mean valuable things that people or processes produce? I suspect you, too, have seen the word accomplishment applied to each of these types of outcomes, and more.

Dictionary.com defines an accomplishment (link to <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/accomplishment?s=t>) more as behavior and capability than as a valuable product of behavior. That is confusing. While Gilbert selected a great word for its connotation – an accomplishment certainly sounds valuable – the dictionary definition does not align with the meaning he intended, as the product of behavior rather than behavior itself. It's no wonder people are confused.

The terms outcome and result can mean anything, from a change in behavior to impact on financial or operational metrics. Such ambiguity makes the terms potentially dangerous, if we assume that we know what each other is talking about, but don't actually check to be sure. I have known many clients and performance consultants who habitually defer to those words when we attempt to teach them the difference between behavior and accomplishment. And it is no wonder that communications in their communities of practice don't always lead where participants think they should. People are not clear what they're talking about.

At the Performance Thinking Network, our solution to this problem was to coin our own phrase, work output, and to teach very precisely what we mean by it. We have found that instead of harping on how people talk about accomplishments, and trying to correct them, we can be more successful if we teach our own “new” term and insist on precise use of that term. We say that work outputs are the valuable products of behavior, valuable

because they contribute to business or societal results. We depict these elements of performance using our Performance Chain model (link to <https://www.sixboxes.com/Performance-Chain.html>). We also say that work outputs are things that can be counted and described with nouns. This excludes words like information or support from the domain of work outputs because they are not countable, and cannot be meaningfully used as plural nouns. Instead we want things that can be identified in our analyses, such as reports or solutions, that can be evaluated with respect to their quality, and counted when they meet or do not meet criteria for quality. In this way we have re-labeled what Gilbert called accomplishments as work outputs and prescribed the types of language one should use to describe them.

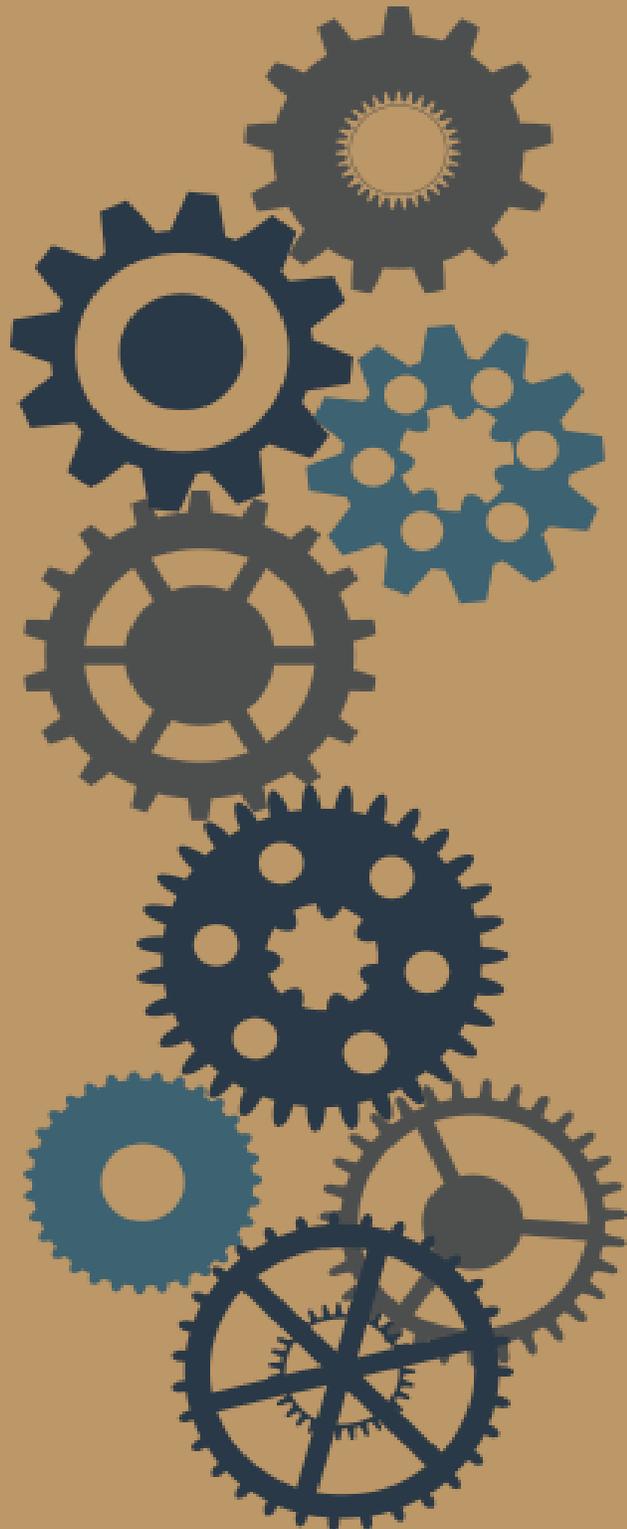
This might seem very uptight or demanding, but we find that it works. Once people have disciplined themselves to identify work outputs as countable nouns that deliver value, we can communicate clearly and unambiguously, support large communities of practice, and conduct sure-footed analysis and design. We find that applying a similar degree of precision using the other words in our models (link to <https://www.sixboxes.com/Six-Boxes-Approach-Overview.html>) creates a foundation for more effective communication about performance and efforts to improve it.

This is perhaps in the same vein as our scholarly criticism (link to https://sixboxes.com/_custom-elements/uploadedResources/WilltheRealSixBoxesShowUp.pdf) of how people have confused the language and layouts of Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model and our Six Boxes Model, and have written various misrepresentations of those models in the literature. Again, these criticisms might seem overbearing to practitioners who just want to get the work done. But if there is one thing I have learned in over 30 years of teaching people about behavior science and performance consulting, it's that language matters, and disciplining ourselves to use it in specific ways can significantly accelerate communication and improve the quality of our analyses and intervention designs.

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Dr. Carl Binder is CEO of The Performance Thinking Network, LLC. He received ISPI's Thomas F. Gilbert Award and Lifetime Member Award. A thought leader, presenter at ISPI conferences since the mid 1980's, and frequent author in ISPI publications, Carl began his career as a doctoral student with B.F. Skinner and entered the field of Performance Improvement in the early 1980's. Mentored by Gilbert, Harless, and other HPT pioneers, Carl has been communicating the essentials of behavior science and performance engineering in plain English for over 40 years. Learn more about his current work at www.SixBoxes.com, sixboxes.tv and www.fluency.org, and contact him at carlbinder@sixboxes.com.



Binder, C. (2013). Will the Real Six Boxes® Model Please Stand Up! (link to https://sixboxes.com/_customelements/uploadedResources/WilltheRealSixBoxesShowUp.pdf) Presentation at the annual meeting of the International Society for Performance Improvement.

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The New Career: Freelancing Freelancing, Is It For You?

Veronika Shestakova, MS, Hale Center

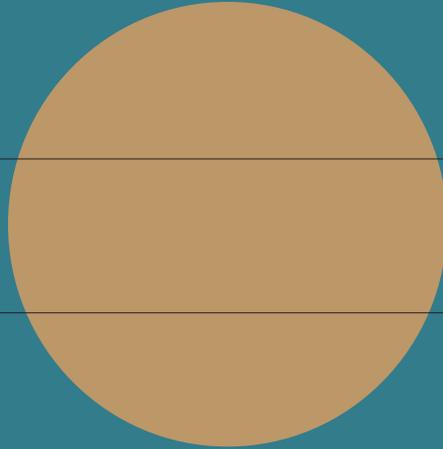
Today, amid a pandemic and a financial crisis, freelancing became a reality for many. Between the week of March 21st and the April 4th, more than 16 million Americans lost their jobs. If you are one of them, or you think that you might lose it in the near future - you have options.

There is an option to start looking for a full-time job. And if you have been working in a corporate setting for your entire life, the stability of a full-time job with benefits seems like a haven. But with the quarantine still in place, and the economy slowing down, the full-time job is more elusive than ever. The current situation shows that the government was not prepared to handle the crisis triggered by the global pandemic. According to JPMorgan Chase, the unemployment rate will hit 20% and the economy will shrink by 40% in the second quarter (from April through June). It's important to note that the nation has not experienced this number of layoffs and economic contraction since the Great Depression. We are unlikely to see any improvement in the economy until the vaccine is found, people can go back to work, and businesses start to function as usual.

Another option is to become a freelancer. Freelancing comes with an inspiring notion of independence and flexibility, but it also comes with risks and costs. If you choose to become a freelancer you need to do that with eyes wide open, ready to handle all the risks so you can attain the benefits. Let's start with the most important and complicated part of freelancing – finances. The correct pricing of your work is crucial. If the price is too high the client will hire a competitor, if the price is too low, you may end up losing money. More importantly, you risk becoming a product, not a resource. When you productize your services, the work goes to the lowest bidder, not the person offering the highest value.

People make a mistake by coming up with an arbitrary number for their work, or by looking at the total revenue rather than the net. When pricing your work, you need to know what your costs are. There are two types of costs: variable and fixed. Variable costs are accrued when performing the work, they change with the proportion of the output. Variable costs include things like gas, toner cartridges, and the like. Fixed costs include expenses that must be paid regardless if you have projects to work on or not. They include health insurance, office space, internet service, and website support. There are also potential overhead costs such as marketing materials, conferences, accounting fees, legal fees, and professional development. After identifying all costs, you add them up to get an understanding of what it takes to live. You also subtract them from your actual or projected revenue, and determine if the net amount is sufficient for you. While pricing the project you also need to identify the amount of time it will take.

When starting, you don't really know your revenue or costs; however, you can calculate your monthly fixed costs (rent or mortgage, utilities, groceries, tuition) based on past amounts. You can use this information to help you set a minimum dollar amount you need to earn on a monthly or quarterly basis. This begins to give you a basis for setting your hourly fee; however, you shouldn't just divide the amount of money you need by the available work hours (40). This assumes you will work 40 hours a week. People who have freelanced for years, assume they will only work 60% of the time and plan on using the remaining time for marketing and professional development.



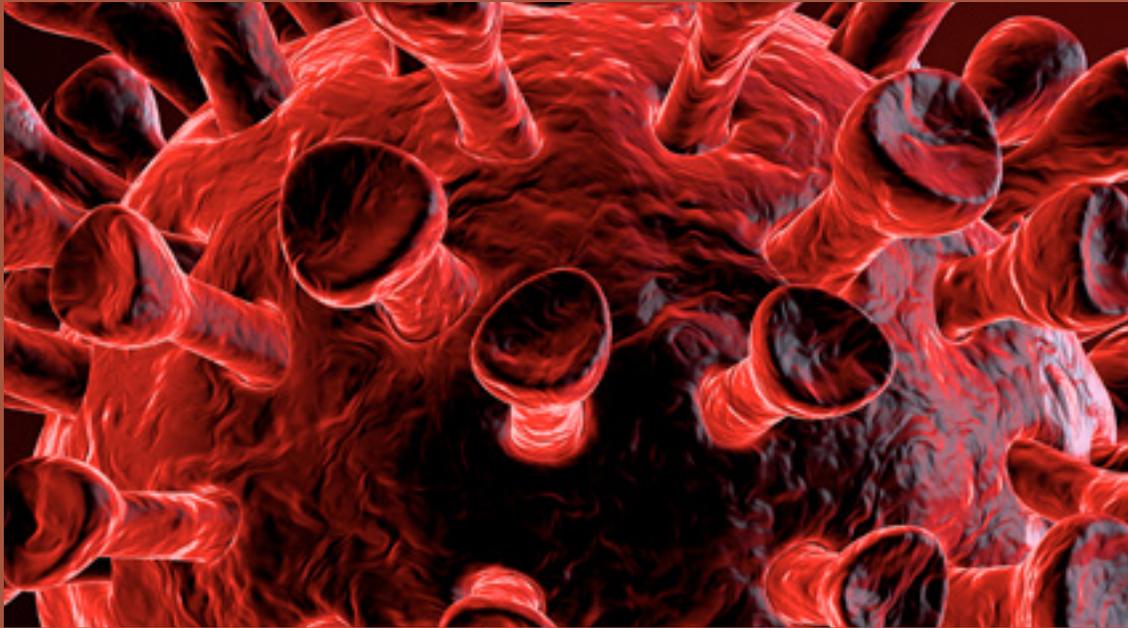
While considering becoming a freelancer, you need to understand that the U.S. workforce policies and safety net were developed in the 20th century when working at one company was the standard. As a result, policies are designed for full-time employees, leaving contractors without benefits. The hiring company does not pay employment taxes, including Social Security/Medicare, and unemployment taxes for contract workers. The law does not guarantee a minimum wage for freelancers. When creating a budget consider setting money aside, up to 40%, for the health insurance, income tax, the self-employment tax of 15.3% (includes Social Security and Medicare). You also want to build your reserves so you can pay your expenses between contracts.

Another important factor to consider is the lack of stability and ambiguity, which are well known to all of us right now, but even more so to the freelancers. Marketing and sales are factors that will grow your business, the finances are what can drag it to the ground. You need to establish your personal brand and identify what is your area of expertise and what skills can you sell to potential clients. You can grow your brand by attending conferences, webinars, and publishing. Time management is key. There is no manager that will hand in projects and create deadlines for you. You need to balance your time between work, marketing, and self-improvement. When getting a new project, freelancers make a mistake of devoting 100% of their time to it, forgetting to reach out to more clients. This is a high-risk situation, because once a project is over, and there is a time gap until the next project, your costs continue to accumulate.

In times of uncertainty, it seems overwhelming to balance your life, and to start your own business. But by understanding the risks, you can prepare to mitigate them and to succeed in your new venture.

Veronika Shestakova, MS in Finance specializes in Risk Management and Investment Management. Veronika worked with companies like Eurex Exchange and HSBC Bank. She has experience with research, statistical analysis, analytics, and modeling, including Machine Learning models. Areas of research include Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Macroeconomic trend analysis. She can be reached at Veronika@HaleCenter.org





MEGA and PANDEMICS

ROGER KAUFMAN

ROGER ADDISON

Survival. Self-Sufficiency. Quality of Life. Those are the basics of Mega Planning (Kaufman, (2006; 2011) and “World” (Addison, Haig, and Kearny (2009). Some have pushed back on asking any organization, public or private, to note or even focus on such “lofty” and “esoteric” considerations suggesting such is beyond their control. Some say it only makes sense to focus on individual performance improvement and leave Mega to others.

And then comes a pandemic and nearly every sensible person—home or at work—has a survival reason to focus on Mega/World. People work at home when possible to achieve social/physical distance as urged by the US Center for Disease Control and the president. Restaurants who are able shift from dine-in to carry out and delivery. People are wearing masks, washing their hands, sanitizing surfaces.... all to try to deliver Mega. To them and theirs. Not so esoteric now, is it?

A focus on adding value to our shared world, no matter your business or home is now in full central focus. And it should be even after the outbreak is harnessed. Survival, self-sufficiency, and quality of life are the drivers for Mega/World. Mega provides additional criteria in an Ideal Vision to use, earnestly, every day in the future (Figure 1).

With the current focus given and demanded by a pandemic, everything we use, do, produce, and deliver should be linked and aligned in a hierarchy of planning and doing (Kaufman, 2018) as shown in Figure 2. A constant focus on Mega/World is not only appropriate in a pandemic but should be a consistent part of professional work. Doing so is both practical and ethical.

This situation and its stark reality should serve as a professional call to action. Instead of just using an Inside-out approach where we make the current operations cheaper-faster-better as it moves toward Mega, we should also add Outside-in leadership (Kaufman, 2020) and ask "what should our organization be measurably adding to our world and society?"

Isn't this pandemic enough to get our attention and commitment?

MEGA: THE IDEAL VISION—*Vital Signs* for Planning and Management

- There will be no losses of life nor elimination or reduction of levels of well-being, survival, self-sufficiency, quality of life, from any source including (but not limited to):
 - war and/or riot and/or terrorism and/or civil unrest
 - unintended human-caused changes to the environment including permanent destruction of the environment and/or rendering it non-renewable
 - murder, rape, or crimes of violence, robbery, or destruction to property
 - substance abuse
 - disease
 - starvation and/or malnutrition
 - destructive behavior (including child, partner, spouse, self, elder, others)
 - accidents, including transportation, home, and business/workplace
 - discrimination based on irrelevant variables including color, race, age, creed, gender, religion, wealth, national origin, or location
- Poverty will not exist, and every woman and man will earn as least as much as it costs them to live unless they are progressing toward being self-sufficient and self-reliant. No adult will be under the care, custody or control of another person, agency, or substance: all adult citizens will be self-sufficient and self-reliant as minimally indicated by their consumption being equal to or less than their production.

© 2012 Roger Kaufman

FIGURE 1 AN IDEAL VISION THAT DEFINES MEGA (KAUFMAN, 2005, 2011).

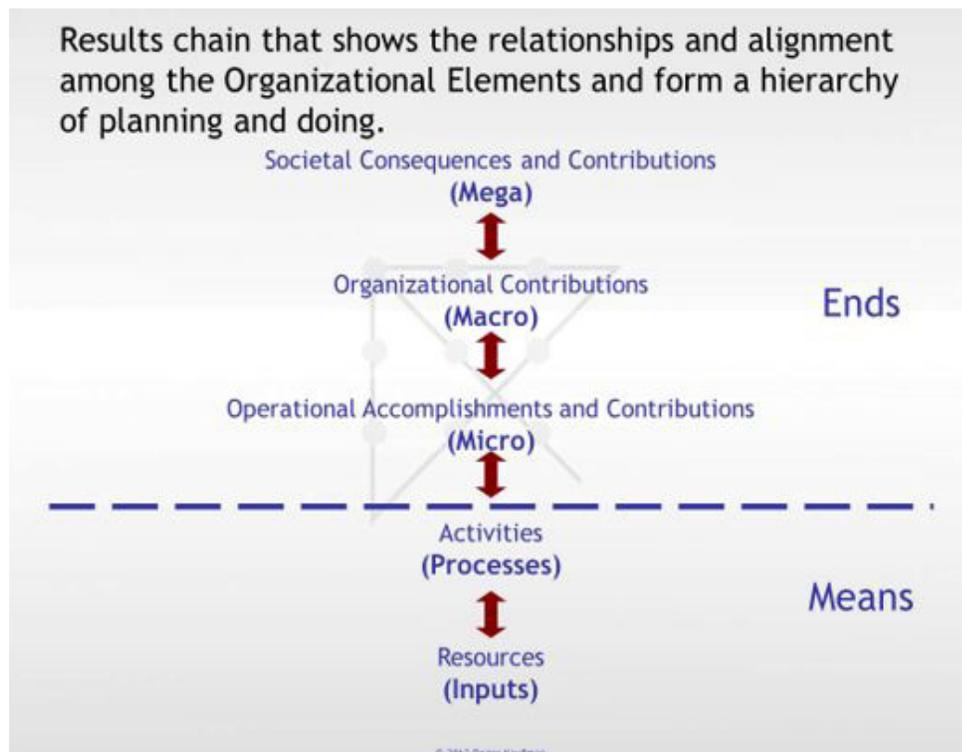


FIGURE 2 A HIERARCHY OF PLANNING AND DOING. BASED ON KAUFMAN, 2018

Roger Kaufman, PhD, CPT is professor emeritus, Florida State University, Senior Fellow at Florida TaxWatch, and has served as Distinguished Research Professor at the Sonora Institute of Technology (Mexico). He received ATD's Distinguished Contribution to Workplace Learning and Performance award. Also, he is a past president, honorary life member and Thomas Gilbert Award winner, all with ISPI, Kaufman has published 41 books and 320+ articles on strategic planning, performance improvement, talent development, leadership, quality management and continual improvement, needs assessment, management, and evaluation. He consults world-wide with public, private and NGO organizations and universities and most recently with the President and Minister of Tourism of Panama, the Civil Service Commissions of Taiwan, the Tze-Chain Foundation of Science and Technology (Taiwan), as well as the Department of Labor, Korean Government. At Florida State he created the Center for Needs Assessment and Planning that did applied research and development. The literature often sites him as "the father of needs assessment." The International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) has created the Roger Kaufman Award that recognizes the continuous achievement of measurable positive societal impact by an individual or organization. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association as well as of the American Educational Research Association. Email: roger@megapanning.com or rkaufman@nettally.com' phone is 850-386-6621, Website: Megapanning.com

Dr. Roger M. Addison is an internationally respected practitioner of Human Performance Technology (HPT) and performance consulting. Currently he is the Director of Human Performance Technology for the International Society For Performance Improvement. Roger was Vice President and Manager at Wells Fargo. His responsibilities included executive coaching and education, change management and partnering with line managers to improve performance. He consults with Fortune 500 organizations to help them align their business needs with bottom line results. Roger has successfully implemented performance improvement initiatives in a number of organizations.

Roger is a frequent speaker at ISPI, the International Federation of Training and Development Organisations (IFTDO), the Association for Talent Development and Business Process Management, Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) conferences. Topics include: performance improvement technology, performance architecture, reengineering, information design, mentoring, consulting, project management, and communication networks.

His professional accomplishments include: Past President and Chair of the Board, IFTDO, Past President of ISPI, Professional Service Award, ISPI, Member of the Year, ISPI Organization of the Year, ISPI Member for Life, ISPI. In 2010, Roger received the Gilbert Distinguished Professional Achievement Award, and in 2012 he received the Rummler Award for the Advancement of Performance Improvement, both from ISPI. His book, Performance Architecture, was selected for the 2010 Award of Excellence. In 2011 the Association for Behavior Analysis International selected Roger as the B. F. Skinner Lecturer. He can be reached at rogeraddison1@mac.com For additional resources and articles visit <https://hpttreasures.wordpress.com> and <https://www.bptrends.com>

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"A constant focus on Mega/World is not only appropriate in a pandemic but should be a consistent part of professional work. Doing so is both practical and ethical."



2019 Skopje Conference Feedback

Carol M. Panza

Skopje was the site of another uniquely valuable ISPI EMEA event! But, don't take my word for it! See what participants had to say.

Introduction

ISPI EMEA conferences are organized with a unique, highly interactive format and are maintained small in size to ensure maximum value to participants. Our 2019 conference in Skopje, N. Macedonia was a great example! We know this because we asked our participants for their thoughts on the value of the 18th ISPI EMEA conference!!! The following report contains a summary of what we heard from participants throughout the conference via verbal comments, during our traditional focus-group style Feedback Session at the end of the event, and by way of email messages we received after the conference. We have also shared a few candid photos, taken over the course of the three days from September 26 – 28, in Skopje. All photos are on the ISPI website at: https://ispi.org/gallery_engagement/ViewAlbum.aspx?album=16608708#



Note that ISPI EMEA has a tradition of taking photos throughout our conferences and making video recordings of conference highlights, with a focus on the comments and reactions of conference participants. So, if you would like a little taste of what it was like to be with us in Skopje, take a moment to watch the 2019 video, which will be posted on the ISPI EMEA website as soon as it's complete.

This year's conference was organized by the 2019 ISPI EMEA Board and Conference Committee, in cooperation with six (6) local partner organizations, very ably coordinated by ISPI EMEA Board Member, Tanja Georgievska, and supported by Patron Sponsor MMHA, the Managers' Mentors, Inc. The conference brought together participants from 12 countries, a truly engaged international gathering of diverse professionals, to explore this year's theme – Innovate and Explore Work Results: Trends and Opportunities Across All Sectors.

The Skopje Conference began in the morning of September 26, with four (4) Pre-conference Workshops. Pre-conference workshops are extended-length sessions (3 hours) designed to provide participants the opportunity to explore a topic in a deeper and more experiential way through a combination of reflection, discussion and hands-on activities. Pre-conference workshops allow attendees to acquire or extend their skills, learn about new trends, innovative ideas and tools, and grow professionally by networking with other professionals in a small group environment. The main conference was formally opened in the late afternoon of September 26, with a session designed to welcome participants to Skopje, and the 18th

ISPI EMEA Conference. In addition to an opportunity to welcome participants and overview the conference, the Opening allowed us to introduce the process and Team Leaders for the Open Assist experience that would run throughout the conference. Also, following the tradition begun in 2015, our 2018 Client, the Culture Administration, City of Gothenburg, Sweden, joined us virtually via Skype to provide some direct, one-year-later feedback, on the value of having been our Open Assist Client. The PowerPoint developed by the Culture Administration to support their feedback, will be posted on the ISPI EMEA website shortly, in the Open Assist area.

Following the introduction to the 2019 Open Assist experience, conference Briefing Session presenters were introduced. Each had 60 seconds to personally "promote" their session. Then, prior to moving to the Opening Reception, Open Assist teams began forming, and all were encouraged to plan for the following morning and their opportunity to meet, hear from, and directly interact with key members of our 2019 Client, Wines of Macedonia (WoM), organization leadership team. The Opening Reception that followed provided a special treat, an extensive wine tasting featuring a selection of wonderful wines produced by WoM member wineries. The casual, fun Opening reception, allowed participants to finalize their team selection, and begin to discuss the questions they would like answered by the client the following morning. As always, the Opening Reception was a great opportunity to meet new people and get reacquainted with old friends.



As anyone familiar with ISPI EMEA conferences knows, our Open Assist experience has become the compelling centerpiece for our annual events, with the intent to provide value to both conference participants and the Open Assist Client. We were fortunate this year to have as our client the very interesting and dynamic Wines of Macedonia (WoM) association, an NGO that has proven itself as a valuable industry representative and marketing resource, not just for member wineries, but for the Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) wine industry overall, and, by extension, to benefit the country's economy. If you would like to learn a bit about 1) the WoM association, and 2) the history and future of the wine making industry in the Republic of N. Macedonia, visit the ISPI EMEA website Open Assist section and click on the 2019 Client button.

The RFP (Request For Proposals) from the WoM association, contained within a Case Overview, was shared in advance of the conference with our five (5) 2019 Open Assist Team Leaders and was included in the conference packets for all participants. WoM was very well represented by its Executive Director and its Coordinator. The WoM association was a particularly relevant client organization, because it is working to benefit not just individual wineries (its member organizations), but to represent the wine industry, in the country, overall. Further, the winemaking industry makes a very significant contribution to the economy of the RNM.

With its hardworking and talented leadership team, Wines of Macedonia was a very forward-looking, customer/market-focused client, which was also dedicated to achieving important sales and market development goals at both the RNM and regional levels. Our 2019 Teams were energized by the WoM challenge and ready to get started!

During the first session of the first full day of the conference (September 27), the Executive Director and the Coordinator for WoM, presented the organization's RFP and took questions from our Open Assist Consulting Teams, in a lively "Bidders Conference" to officially launch the 2019 Open Assist experience. The Skopje conference, therefore, continued the tradition, begun in 2007, of an RFP from an actual client, with real and important improvement opportunities, serving as the core element running throughout the event. The 2019 conference also marked the ninth (9th) time that the actual client participated in-person, rather than being represented by role players or communicating only through a written RFP. Further, as in all ISPI EMEA conferences, beginning with 2013, the client presented an RFP focused on "live"/active opportunities within their organization. Real and active opportunities for the client, allow us to pursue a very important additional goal. That is, the Open Assist experience was certainly designed to benefit conference participants, but now also to provide tangible value to our Open Assist Client, in return for their investment of time, effort and resources.

Day 1 also featured a Keynote presentation by Ivan Skender, Chief Digital Officer, A1 Hrvatska d.o.o. Ivan Skender is an execution-focused and high-energy executive with experience in both commercial and business development roles and a strong track record, characterized by identifying, building and managing products and services cross-regionally and cross-functionally. He focuses on Digital capabilities in business transformation and enabling People and Culture to support organizations in becoming agile.

Ivan's presentation was on the topic, of Building A1 Macedonia as a Digital Company, which, from his perspective, requires digitalizing society, and ensuring connectivity for people, places and things, in order to enable a future that is all about experiences. That is, A1's strategy is all about customers and making their life easier, more enjoyable and more productive. You can access a copy of the PowerPoint that accompanied the keynote presented by Ivan Skender by clicking here.

After the keynote session, three (3) timeslots with three (3) high-value concurrent Briefing Sessions each, to choose from, were available to participants, as well as scheduled Open Assist teamwork time. Then, at the end of the day, a Skopje Treasure Hunt was a fun, participative/hands-on way to explore the city and learn a bit about the local history and culture, in a unique way. At the end, with the treasure located, everyone enjoyed a traditional Macedonian dinner, complete with entertainment from a wonderful troop of dancers performing special, traditional dances in which conference participants were invited to join!

Throughout Day 1 and continuing into the second day of the conference, Open Assist Consulting Teams were hard at work on the proposals they would deliver to the Executive Director and the Coordinator for WoM, as well as representatives of some WoM member organizations, and a key advisor to the association.

The second day of the conference formally began with concurrent Briefing Sessions, followed by a very important ISPI EMEA tradition, the Senior Executive Panel, which was facilitated, with intelligence, style and grace by Margo Murray, a longtime supporter of ISPI EMEA. Margo is a well-known leader, who has won ISPI's highest honors – Outstanding Member, Member for Life, President, and the Geary Rummler Award for Performance Improvement. She is a recognized thought-leader, in the field of performance Improvement and is widely known as the preeminent researcher, designer and evaluator of facilitated mentoring. Margo's company, MMHA, The Mangers' Mentors, Inc. became the very first Patron Sponsor for ISPI EMEA – The Performance System Network, Inc., in early 2018.

As usual, panelists for this year came from diverse backgrounds, Alp Er Tunga Ersoy – General Manager – TAV Macedonia, Vasko Kronevski – CEO – Nextsense (MK), Viktor Mizo – Managing Director – Kostal Macedonia, Angelka Peeva Laurencic – Entrepreneur/Founder/Manager – ImagePR, and Dan Timotin – General Manager – Pivara Skopje AD. A perennial highlight of our conferences, the 2019 panel was incredibly candid and open in discussing trends and opportunities they have already faced and what they see for the future as their organizations seek to innovate and achieve improved results. Note that panelists were challenged to consider not just results achieved or achievable within their own organization, but also, the sector in which their organization operates and, beyond that, for society and our shared world. It is worth mentioning here that during our debrief session, 2019 participants indicated that several of our Senior Executive Panelists contributed so much value that they would have also been excellent Keynotes.

Another interactive, but more informal opportunity to learn and share, was the Lunch and Learn session, during which five (5) presentation/discussion topics were offered simultaneously in 20-minute "rounds." Lunch and Learn sessions are for discussing/sharing approaches, tools, techniques and/or case studies.

The Lunch and Learn was followed by a special additional Keynote. We were fortunate to have Kalin Dimtchev, General Manager, Microsoft Bulgaria and Country Manager Lead for the CEE Multi-Country Region (including 24 countries), contribute a very compelling session, on the topic of Microsoft Cultural Transformation. Kalin has more than 15 years of management experience at both early stage and public companies in various industries. In his previous role as Country Leader for IBM in Bulgaria and Ukraine, he was responsible for country-level business for all IBM brands, including consulting, technology services, hardware and software. Prior to joining IBM, Kalin was a Deputy Executive Director for a regional insurance group, Euroins, responsible for sales and financial performance. Kalin's Keynote session, was identified by participants as one of the most valuable highlighted session, during our conference Debrief.

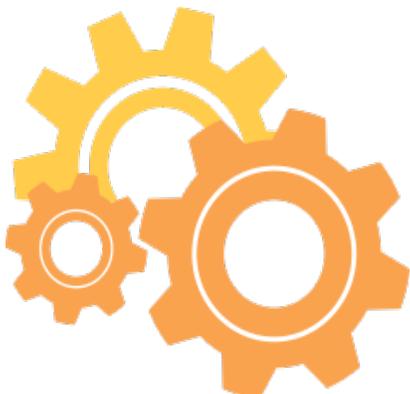
Finally, in the last formal conference session – which everyone looks forward to each year – the hardworking Open Assist Consulting Teams presented their proposals to the client.



The proposals presented by our 2019 teams were, once again, very impressive, each contributing valuable ideas for consideration by our WoM client representatives. As always, after their deliberations, the Client began by providing feedback to all teams, highlighting the strengths of each of the four proposals, before announcing the winning Open Assist Consulting Team, which was awarded a 10% discount for all team members for the next (2020) ISPI EMEA conference, to be held in Tbilisi, Georgia. In addition to sharing specific, constructive, and immediate feedback with all teams, WoM also committed to contributing feedback next year, regarding how they were able to benefit from the Open Assist experience and all of the proposals they received. That is, they promised to follow-up with ISPI EMEA during the 2020 Conference to share progress made and results achieved, using the approaches and tools recommended by our 2019 Open Assist Consulting Teams.

Throughout the Skopje conference, participants and presenters were enthusiastic, engaged and involved. As always, participants represented a cross-section of countries, cultures and backgrounds as well as professionals new to ISPI EMEA and longtime supporters. Special thanks to ISPI EMEA Board members Tanja Georgievska and Maja Joakim for recruiting and Tanja for coordinating our six (6) very supportive local partner organizations - Kariera.mk, AmCham Macedonia, USAID BEP, ImagePR, BAS Institute of Management and Marketing365. Thanks also to Patron Sponsor, MMHA - the Managers' Mentors Inc., the 2019 ISPI EMEA Board and Conference Committee, as well as our great presenters, and, of course, our wonderful participants. As we always say, "Our diverse, knowledgeable, experienced, engaged participants are as important to the value of our conferences as our great presenters."

An important part of all ISPI EMEA conferences and a natural extension of our learning, sharing and high-interaction orientation, is our focus-group style feedback session to close the conference. The Focus Group at the end, one-on-one "interviews" throughout the conference and, unsolicited, but much appreciated email messages during and after the conference, were, as always, the feedback sources for what you will read on the following pages. The feedback gathered, from all sources, has been organized, into three simple and fundamental categories.



GENERAL FEEDBACK (EMAIL)

THE FEEDBACK GATHERED, FROM ALL SOURCES, HAS BEEN ORGANIZED, INTO THREE SIMPLE AND FUNDAMENTAL CATEGORIES.

- WHAT WAS GOOD (GOOD/CONTINUE)
- HOW WE COULD GET BETTER (IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES)
- OTHER COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE (NEW IDEAS)

WE BELIEVE STRONGLY IN FEEDBACK AND ACTIVELY SEEK IT TO SUPPORT OUR ONGOING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS FOR ISPI EMEA CONFERENCES. THE 2019 EVENT (INCLUDING PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS) HOSTED APPROXIMATELY 80 EXECUTIVES AND PROFESSIONALS FROM 12 COUNTRIES. DURING AND AFTER THE CONFERENCE WE RECEIVED UNSOLICITED EMAILED COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS. BELOW IS A SAMPLE OF WHAT WE RECEIVED. ALL OF THE EMAIL MESSAGES WE RECEIVED FELL IN THE "GOOD/CONTINUE" CATEGORY. WE HAVE LABELED EACH WITH AN INDICATION OF WHO CONTRIBUTED THE COMMENT TO PROVIDE SOME CONTEXT.

EMAIL - GOOD/CONTINUE

AS FAR AS I REMEMBER, IN PREVIOUS YEARS ALL TEAM PRESENTATIONS WERE POSTED ON THE WWW.ISPI-EMEA.ORG WEBSITE ALLOWING EVERYONE TO DOWNLOAD THE CLIENT RFP (REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS) AND TEAM PRESENTATIONS (PROPOSALS). ... IN MY WORK, I OFTEN USE ELEMENTS OF TEAM PRESENTATIONS TO TRAIN CONSULTANTS IN MY COUNTRY. I THINK IT WILL ALSO BE GOOD FOR PARTICIPANTS WHO TOOK PART IN THE CONFERENCE THIS YEAR, FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME. – FREQUENT PARTICIPANT AND PRESENTER

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR WONDERFUL AND HARD WORK THAT ENABLED INCREDIBLE SUCCESS FROM ALL OF THE TEAMS! INDEED, MY TEAM EXPERIENCED SO MUCH FUN AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK – ALL OF US WERE OVERWHELMED AND EXTREMELY HAPPY ABOUT THE OPEN ASSIST LEARNING EXPERIENCE!! A HUGE THANK-YOU TO ALL OF THE TEAMS – WHAT A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE OF POWERFUL OPEN-MINDED COLLABORATION! – FIRST-TIME PRESENTER AND PARTICIPANT

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR AN AMAZING FIRST EMEA CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE! THE CONNECTIONS WITH PEOPLE, INSPIRING SPEAKERS, AND THE WELCOMING MACEDONIAN CULTURE, WERE TRULY EXCEPTIONAL! I WAS BEAMING ON MY TRAVELS BACK AND I AM HAPPIER EVERY TIME I REFLECT ON THE CONFERENCE. – FIRST-TIME PRESENTER AND PARTICIPANT

THANKS AGAIN FOR WORKING SO HARD ON ORGANIZING AN AMAZING CONFERENCE. I LOVE ISPI – SECOND-TIME PARTICIPANT

I KNOW THAT I WOULD LOVE TO GET THE POWERPOINT PROPOSAL FILES FOR MY COLLEAGUES' (OTHER OPEN ASSIST TEAMS') EFFORTS. THERE IS MUCH I CAN LEARN FROM WHAT WAS DELIVERED. HOME NOW AND STILL AGLOW FROM YOUR WONDERFUL CONFERENCE. – FREQUENT PARTICIPANT AND PRESENTER

THANK YOU FOR THE INVITATION AND THANKS TO THE ENTIRE ORGANIZING TEAM FOR THE GREAT EVENT. IT WAS A PLEASURE BEING PART OF IT [THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE PANEL] AND BEING ABLE TO SHARE SOME OF MY EXPERIENCES. I AM GLAD THAT THE PARTICIPANTS FOUND IT VALUABLE. – SENIOR EXECUTIVE PANELIST

IT WAS A REAL PLEASURE TO BE WITH YOU IN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS! THANK YOU FOR THIS EXQUISITE OPPORTUNITY. WE RECEIVED EXCELLENT PROPOSALS YESTERDAY AND HOPE THAT WE CAN IMPLEMENT SOME OF THEM VERY SOON! COULD YOU PLEASE SEND US COPIES OF ALL OF THE PRESENTATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION, AT LEAST FOR THE TEAM LEADERS, SO WE CAN SEND THEM THANK-YOU NOTES? – OPEN ASSIST CLIENT REPRESENTATIVE

A FEEDBACK/DEBRIEF SESSION WAS HELD FOR A LARGE INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION (28 PEOPLE) AFTER THEY ARRIVED BACK IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY. THE DESCRIPTOR FOR THE SKOPJE CONFERENCE, THAT THE ORGANIZER OF THE DELEGATION USED TO SUMMARIZE THE GROUP'S REACTION IN ONE WORD, WAS, "AMAZING." ANOTHER DELEGATION SUMMARIZED THEIR GROUP'S REACTION AND FEEDBACK AS, "EXCELLENT."

FOCUSED FEEDBACK – GOOD/CONTINUE, IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND OTHER SUGGESTIONS

OVERALL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK WAS VERY POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. WE WERE GRATEFUL, AS ALWAYS, TO RECEIVE COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS CLEARLY OFFERED TO SUPPORT OUR ONGOING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES. WE HOPE TO REMAIN ON THIS PATH, BUILDING ON PAST SUCCESSSES AND INCORPORATING AND ADAPTING INNOVATIVE NEW IDEAS FROM EACH SUCCESSIVE CONFERENCE.

GOOD CONTINUE

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

OVERALL – CONFERENCE FORMAT AND "CULTURE," PARTICIPANTS AND PRESENTERS, LOCATION AND FACILITIES

THE SMALL SIZE OF THE CONFERENCE ENABLES THE FORMAT TO WORK WELL AND PROVIDE AN ATMOSPHERE THAT FACILITATES AND ACTUALLY ENCOURAGES CONNECTING WITH FELLOW PARTICIPANTS AND ACCESSING PEOPLE WITH VALUABLE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE, WITHOUT BARRIERS.

MACEDONIA, AND, IN PARTICULAR, SKOPJE WAS A WONDERFUL LOCATION FOR A CONFERENCE. IT IS A LOCATION WITH A LONG AND VARIED HISTORY INCLUDING MULTINATIONAL/MULTI-CULTURAL INFLUENCES. THE LIST OF POSITIVES INCLUDES WONDERFUL FOOD, WARM, INTERESTING PEOPLE WITH A WELCOMING CULTURE, MUCH TO SEE AND LEARN ABOUT, AND IT'S A PLACE THAT OFFERS ITS HOSPITALITY TO VISITORS AT A REASONABLE COST.

THE WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES (WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE) AS WELL AS THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS AND THE MIX OF SESSION TYPES, FOSTERED ENGAGEMENT FROM BEGINNING TO END, WITH OPEN-MINDED AND GENEROUS SHARING.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOCAL (MACEDONIAN) PARTICIPANTS, THE CONFERENCE WAS VERY DIFFERENT, AND MUCH BETTER THAN OTHER CONFERENCES HELD IN N. MACEDONIA.

THE EVENING EVENT, WHICH CONSISTED OF AN AMAZING TREASURE HUNT AND DINNER, WAS WONDERFUL. WE HAD A CHANCE TO SEE AND LEARN ABOUT SKOPJE AND THE CULTURE OF N. MACEDONIA, WHILE WORKING IN TEAMS TO FIND THE TREASURE. WHEN WE ARRIVED AT RESTAURANT, WE HAD A GREAT DINNER AND, WE WERE NOT ONLY ENTERTAINED BY A TALENTED GROUP PERFORMING TRADITIONAL DANCES, BUT THEY INVITED US TO JOIN IN!

THOUGH HAVING A GOOD SELECTION OF SESSIONS TO CHOOSE FROM IS GOOD, THE DOWNSIDE IS THAT YOU HAVE TO MAKE HARD CHOICES, BECAUSE YOU CAN'T ATTEND ALL SESSIONS.

THE CONFERENCE HOTEL STAFF PROVIDED VERY GOOD SERVICE AND FOR A REASONABLE COST

OPEN ASSIST EXPERIENCE (ESSENTIAL CENTERPIECE)

THE OPEN ASSIST WAS A REAL HIGHLIGHT OF THE CONFERENCE, WITH A VERY INTERESTING AND CHALLENGING CLIENT/REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP).

ALL OF THE TEAMS AGREED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE LIKED MORE TEAMWORK TIME TO WORK FOR THE OPEN ASSIST. [NOTE THAT TEAMWORK TIME WAS REDUCED A BIT FOR THIS CONFERENCE, BECAUSE WE HAD AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A SECOND AND VERY WELL RECEIVED KEYNOTE FROM MICROSOFT. SO, WE HAD TO ADJUST THE SCHEDULE FOR THE PROGRAM. WE PLAN TO RETURN TO A FORMAT THAT INCLUDES ONLY ONE KEYNOTE.]

THE TEAMS FOUND THAT THE CASE OVERVIEW AND CLIENT-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP MAP WERE VALUABLE RESOURCES, AS THEY WORKED IN THEIR PROPOSALS.

THE OA CLIENT WAS AN ASSOCIATION OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS, CONTRIBUTING SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE EXPORT PERFORMANCE/INCOME AND ULTIMATELY ADDING TO THE ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF N. MACEDONIA, AS WELL AS ACTING AS AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE FOR ITS MEMBERS. REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION'S BOARD, JOINED THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND COORDINATOR FOR THE ASSOCIATION, IN RECEIVING AND EVALUATING TEAM PROPOSALS.] BOTH THE CLIENT REPRESENTATIVES (AS JUST DESCRIBED) AND OPEN ASSIST PARTICIPANT TEAMS, WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE VALUE OF THE OPEN ASSIST EXPERIENCE. [AFTER THE CONFERENCE, THE CLIENT ORGANIZATION EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN REACHING OUT TO OUR 2019 TEAMS TO FOLLOW-UP ON IDEAS/SUGGESTIONS IN THEIR PROPOSALS AND TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL COLLABORATION.]

TWO KEYNOTES AND 5 SENIOR EXECUTIVE PANELISTS (SEP)

THERE WERE TWO KEYNOTES, AS MENTIONED ABOVE, WHO WERE SENIOR EXECUTIVES REPRESENTING TWO VERY DIFFERENT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THOUGH WE TYPICALLY INVITE ONLY ONE KEYNOTE, BECAUSE OF AN UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY, WE DECIDED TO ADD A SECOND KEYNOTE TO OUR 2019 PROGRAM. BOTH KEYNOTES RECEIVED POSITIVE FEEDBACK AND SOME OF OUR FIVE (5) SENIOR EXECUTIVE PANELISTS, REFERRED TO AS "EXCEPTIONAL," WERE FELT TO HAVE BEEN WORTHY OF KEYNOTE ROLES.

ONE OF OUR 2019 KEYNOTES OFFERED TO HELP US PROMOTE FUTURE CONFERENCES TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS AND RECRUIT SENIOR EXECUTIVE PANELISTS FOR OUR 2020 EVENT.

THE SENIOR EXECUTIVES IN OUR 2019 PANEL, REPRESENTED A TRULY DIVERSE SET OF ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH PROVIDED AN ENVIRONMENT THAT PERMITTED THE EXECUTIVES TO GET AS WELL AS CONTRIBUTE IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES.

WE WERE FORTUNATE TO HAVE MARGO MURRAY AS OUR 2019 SEP FACILITATOR. THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT AND ALSO CHALLENGING ROLE, WHICH MARGO HANDLED WITH GREAT SKILL AND STYLE, YIELDING PRAISE FROM BOTH PANELISTS AND CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS. THE PANELISTS AND OUR GREAT FACILITATOR WORKED TOGETHER TO MAKE AN EXCELLENT SESSION.

LUNCH AND LEARN FORMAT

THE LUNCH AND LEARN WAS DESCRIBED AS A GREAT FORMAT, WHICH OFFERED SMALL GROUP, MORE INFORMAL INTERACTION ON A RANGE OF TOPICS, WITH VERY CAPABLE, KNOWLEDGEABLE AND INTERESTING FACILITATORS.

IT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND SHARE AND ACTIVELY DISCUSS TOOLS, APPROACHES AND CASES/PROJECTS.

SUMMARY/FINDINGS:

SIZE – THE CONFERENCE SIZE WAS ONE OF THE HIGHLY VALUED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SKOPJE EVENT. PARTICIPANTS HAVE ONCE AGAIN CONFIRMED THAT OUR CONFERENCE PROVIDED A UNIQUELY VALUABLE, SUPPORTIVE CULTURE, IN WHICH ALL PARTICIPANTS FELT RIGHT AT HOME AND FREE TO CONTRIBUTE IMMEDIATELY.

CONTENT – THERE WAS NO FORMAL EVALUATION FOR CONCURRENT CONFERENCE SESSIONS, ONLY OUR TRADITIONAL FOCUS-GROUP STYLE FEEDBACK SESSION AT THE END, AS WELL AS, AN OPEN INVITATION IN THE OPENING TO ALL CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS, TO FEEL FREE TO ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS TO THE ORGANIZERS, THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE. THE RANGE, RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF ALL SESSIONS AND SESSION TYPES RECEIVED ONLY POSITIVE FEEDBACK, INCLUDING THE CALIBER OF PRESENTERS AND PRESENTATIONS.

PEOPLE – THE SMALL SIZE OF THE CONFERENCE, COMBINED WITH THE GREAT DIVERSITY IN THE KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND OF OUR PARTICIPANTS (INCLUDING PRESENTERS) AND THE OVERALL DESIGN/FORMAT OF THE CONFERENCE, ONCE AGAIN SERVED TO FOSTER A COLLEGIAL ATMOSPHERE, WHICH PARTICIPANTS, EVEN THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION, COMMENTED ON THE OPEN COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONALS, WHERE SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IS THE NORMAL WAY THAT EVERYONE INTERACTS. THAT IS, ISPI EMEA IS KNOWN FOR ITS UNIQUE CULTURE OF LEARNING FROM AND SHARING WITH RESPECTED PEERS.

AGENDA/FORMAT – ALL KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CONFERENCE FORMAT WERE IDENTIFIED SEPARATELY AS VALUABLE, AS WELL AS ALTOGETHER FOR ENABLING AN ENGAGING, HIGHLY PARTICIPATIVE, OPEN AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND SHARING ENVIRONMENT. THERE WAS AGREEMENT AMONG PARTICIPANTS THAT ISPI EMEA 2019 IS A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE LEARNED A LOT AND FELT LIKE PART OF THE ISPI EMEA FAMILY FROM THE VERY START AND EVEN IF THEY HAD NEVER BEFORE ATTENDED AN ISPI EMEA EVENT.

ORGANIZATION – THE OVERALL ORGANIZATION, QUALITY OF THE VENUE, AND ON-SITE OPERATION OF THE CONFERENCE, RECEIVED EXTREMELY POSITIVE COMMENTS.

SKOPJE TREASURE HUNT AND DINNER – OUR "EVENING EVENT," AS ALWAYS, WAS A CHANCE TO SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND GET TO KNOW THEM A LITTLE, WHILE GETTING OUT TO SEE AND LEARN A BIT ABOUT THE VERY SPECIAL CITY OF SKOPJE. PARTICIPANTS HAD FUN, LEARNED ABOUT THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF SKOPJE AND GOT TO KNOW "WORK WITH" OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN A MORE SOCIAL SETTING. DINNER RECEIVED VERY POSITIVE FEEDBACK AND MANY PARTICIPANTS JOINED IN, WHEN INVITED, BY THE SPECIAL DANCE GROUP THAT PERFORMED TRADITIONAL DANCES FOR US.

REAL APPLICATION - THE OPEN ASSIST EXPERIENCE (SIMULATION) BASED ON A REAL CLIENT, HAS BEEN THE COMPELLING CORE ELEMENT OF ALL ISPI EMEA CONFERENCES, SINCE IT WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 2007 AT OUR HEIDELBERG CONFERENCE. PARTICIPANTS, ONCE AGAIN, ENJOYED THE OPEN ASSIST AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH FELLOW PARTICIPANTS ON A TEAM, AS WELL AS THE ABILITY TO INTERACT WITH THE ACTUAL CLIENT, WHICH IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE OPEN ASSIST.

THE OPEN ASSIST ALLOWED PARTICIPANTS TO ACTUALLY WORK TOGETHER ON SOMETHING THAT WAS REAL AND, THEREFORE, INTERESTING AND PRACTICAL. A LIVE RFP ALLOWED FOR A TRUE-TO-LIFE EXPERIENCE, BUT IN A SAFE, RISK-FREE ENVIRONMENT. AS ALWAYS, TEAMS PUT A GREAT DEAL OF ENERGY, KNOWLEDGE, SKILL AND CREATIVITY INTO THE OPEN ASSIST AND REPORTED ENRICHING EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITHIN MULTINATIONAL/MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIDISCIPLINE TEAMS.

THE WINES OF MACEDONIA ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES WERE ABSOLUTELY DELIGHTED WITH THE PROPOSALS THEY RECEIVED AND ASKED FOR TEAM LEADER CONTACT INFORMATION TO ENABLE THE ASSOCIATION TO SEND THANK-YOU NOTES TO THE TEAMS. THE WOM CLIENT WAS ANXIOUS TO RECEIVE COPIES OF ALL PROPOSALS, NOT JUST THE "WINNING" TEAM, AS THEY SAW VALUE IN THEM ALL. WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM WOM NEXT YEAR, WHEN THEY WILL TELL US ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE, ONE-YEAR-LATER!"

IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

CHANGE THE SEQUENCE OF THE FOCUS-GROUP STYLE FEEDBACK SESSION TO SOLICIT IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FIRST. THEN ASK FOR POSITIVE (GOOD/CONTINUE) ITEMS.

MAKE MORE TIME AVAILABLE FOR OA TEAMWORK.

TRY TO MAKE THE SCHEDULE A LITTLE LESS BUSY. THIS SHOULD BE AIDED BY GOING BACK TO OUR ONE KEYNOTE ONLY FORMAT, AS IT WOULD ENABLE AN ADDITIONAL TEAMWORK SLOT IN PLACE OF SESSIONS.

PAY MORE ATTENTION WHEN SCHEDULING CONCURRENT SESSIONS TO AVOID, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE SITUATIONS WHERE SESSIONS COMPETING IN THE SAME TIME SLOT MAKE CHOOSING BETWEEN THEM UNNECESSARILY DIFFICULT.

WORK TO ENSURE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE USE OF TIME BETWEEN ROUNDS FOR THE LUNCH AND LEARN SESSION, TO OPTIMIZE TIME FOR DISCUSSIONS AND MINIMIZE NOISE AND CONFUSION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

SUMMARY/FINDINGS:

TEAMWORK TIME – LIMITED TEAMWORK TIME IS ALWAYS A TOPIC. WE WILL ENSURE THAT THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE (1) KEYNOTE FOR 2020. WE WILL ALSO CONSIDER MOVING SOME OR ALL OF THE OPEN ASSIST "BIDDERS CONFERENCE TO THURSDAY AFTERNOON/EVENING, THEREBY REDUCING THE LENGTH OF THE FIRST SESSION OF FRIDAY MORNING. WE HAVE LONG HAD TWO FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER, "CAN WE MAKE THE CONFERENCE LONGER WITHOUT A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN COST?" AND/OR, "WOULD PARTICIPANTS BE WILLING TO ALLOCATE ADDITIONAL TIME TO ATTENDING OUR CONFERENCE?"

WE WILL ALSO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING ONLY A HALF-DAY OF PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS, IN ORDER TO BEGIN THE CONFERENCE AT 13:00 OR 14:00 AND ALLOW THE ABOVE MENTIONED CHANGES IN THE SCHEDULING OF THE BIDDERS CONFERENCE, THEREBY FREEING UP AN ADDITIONAL TIME THAT CAN BE REALLOCATED ON FRIDAY AND/OR SATURDAY.



In conclusion, we are very happy to share highlights of the feedback obtained from the participants in the 18th ISPI EMEA conference held in Skopje, N. Macedonia, September 26-28, 2019. As always, our participants played an enormous role in the success of the conference. We say this every year, only because it's true! An environment that supports an active role by participants, is the fundamental reason for keeping our conferences small in size. That is, participants don't just sit back and get talked at by presenters that hold themselves apart. Participants are just that. They are professionals that participate actively in sessions and contribute value based on their questions and comments within conference sessions as well as more informally at breaks, meals and the many other networking opportunities. Presenters were very accessible and generous with their time and insights again this year, which is the ISPI EMEA conference "culture."

Finally, as in prior years, it should be noted that even the "improvement" areas we documented, were not negative criticisms as much as opportunities and constructive suggestions. We thank our keynotes, senior executive panelists and wonderful panel facilitator, Margo Murray, our enthusiastic Open Assist client, all briefing session and lunch and learn presenters, a special thanks to Roger Addison (for the Introduction to HPT workshop), our incredible participants and, of course, our great 2019 Local Partner Coordinators/Supporters, Tanja Georgievska and Maja Joakim and all our Local Partners (See logos with links to their websites, in the header to this document) as well as, MMHA, the Managers' Mentors, our dedicated Board and Conference Committee, and all of the friends of ISPI EMEA who contributed their time and talent toward making the Skopje Conference a great success as a learning and sharing opportunity for all who participated, and for sharing important suggestions to support our continuous improvement efforts. diverse, knowledgeable, experienced, engaged participants are as important to the value of our conferences as our great presenters."



Unfortunately due to the pandemic, there will not be an EMEA conference in 2020. We will let everyone know about the 2021 EMEA conference soon.

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Timebanking: A Community Performance Network

STEVEN J. KELLY, CPT

hOur Timebank Trustee; Part-
ner KNO Worldwide.



The ongoing crisis during the suppression of the COVID-19 illness will have longer term impact. Once the immediate “peak” has passed, we will still need time to re-build our small businesses and trades. Support for the re-opening of shops and other business will be critical. At the same time, many of us will be out of work or have less hours since it will take time to regain momentum. Some of us will have depleted our savings during this time. We may not have ready cash for small household jobs or assistance. Tasks and repairs will have been put off.

As well, lack of service access persists among the groups that have the highest rates of unemployment and poverty. These include children, lone parents, people with disabilities and the unemployed. The COVID-19 crisis and aftermath will enlarge these populations. People living away from urban centers can suffer geographic disadvantages that worsen these effects of poverty and social exclusion. Individuals may be cut off socially as well as from employment opportunities and public services. A community Timebank provides a mechanism for promoting and coordinating community self-help, promoting community self-reliance within a region. Often basic needs can be met that would otherwise result in severe deprivation and stress levels. We move beyond simple barter and neighborly assistance by building a skill bank that anyone can join and/or request assistance as needed. This can result in a better quality of life (without the need for cash) and stronger connections among citizens. It further strengthens many community’s historic volunteerism and self-reliance.

This is where the Timebank structure can help in your locale. People provide services to each other voluntarily, by giving their “time”. Although this is always the neighborly thing to do, our approach

goes beyond just help and simple barter. The “time bank” hub allows members to give and receive “time”, therein every person’s time is equally valued. No money is exchanged; all services are recognised. This allows for a broader exchange of services than might be available from nearby neighbors (always an important source for help). Building an on-line community timebank “bulletin board” allows for a wider selection of service offers to meet developing requests. This is not to displace our community small businesses, but rather to supplement with services that can be provided in a few hours by a skilled volunteer member. Types of tasks are quite diverse to include help with gardening or DIY repairs, training in crafts, software, or cooking; help with lifting or transport. Possibilities are endless.

In West Cork, Ireland, where I have been living the past decade, we are striving to make this a reality. Having established a nonprofit called hOur Timebank, we strive to advance the welfare and participation of the greater Cork community. We provide an online hub/exchange for trading “time credits”. Thus hOur Timebank provides an alternative way to meet every day social and household care needs through the mutual exchange of time, skills and opportunities. Members can be as active or relaxed as they wish.

An easy-to-use online website (or community hub) displays a bulletin board to highlight each member’s array of skills as a list of “offers”. It can be accessed by smartphone or laptop. Likewise, members can add specific requests for assistance to be addressed to the wider community. These are displayed on the online bulletin board and shared periodically by email and social media. Participants ‘deposit’ time in the time bank by spending a few hours delivering a requested service or doing other useful activities in their community. They are then able to withdraw these ‘time credits’ from the time bank when they need help

themselves. Everyone’s time is valued equally and everyone both gives to and benefits from the scheme. No matter what type of work is done, every person, every service, is equally valued.

As a CPT for almost 2 decades, I see this type of network as a community embodiment of ISPI values and the RSVP principles: Focus on results, take a systemic approach, add value and create partnerships.

I encourage you to consider whether this type of network might be suitable in your community. Timebanking has had strong results in the UK (<http://www.timebanking.org/>) over several decades and we in Ireland are growing quickly since our establishment a few years ago (<https://www.hour-timebank.ie/>). Check it out today!



Steven has been involved in performance improvement efforts for 40 years in both commercial and government arenas. After relocating his operational focus to Central Europe in 1990, he has applied performance improvement methods to projects in 30 countries as diverse as the Czech and Slovak Republics, Kazakhstan, Palestine, Ukraine, Nicaragua, Albania, Cyprus and Rwanda. Steven is the founding partner of KNO Worldwide in 1979. His academic credentials include an A.A. Business, B.S. Political Science, and an M.A. Management/ Human Relations. Steven is an ISPI Lifetime member who served two terms on the Board of Directors.

7 THINKING TRAPS THAT LEADERS ENCOUNTER

KIM ADES

As a leader, you are not just responsible for your performance, but the performance of your team. With so much riding on you, it's easy to get caught up in projects and meetings without taking the time to consider your successes and where you may be falling short.

There are areas where you're getting stuck. There are thinking traps that you may not even know you're falling into.

After working with hundreds of leaders, I've identified the seven most common thinking traps that leaders encounter. What's your trap, and more importantly, how can you overcome it?

1. Tunnel Vision

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

In the midst of a packed schedule and back-to-back meetings, leaders often fall into the trap of simply crossing items off of their to-do list. While this may sound like a systematic approach to getting things done efficiently, it prevents them from taking the necessary time for strategic development, goal and vision setting and even personal development. They are so

neck-deep working on the day-to-day of their business that they fail to lift their heads and see the bigger picture.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Journaling has proven to be an extremely powerful way for leaders to focus on themselves each day — helping them to manage their emotional state, stay on task and keep sight of their vision. Among many notable advantages, journaling can be a very effective way to plan, problem solve and make critical decisions using a visual medium to gain perspective.

2. Isolation

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

One of the common traps that leaders fall into is that of shouldering the burden of success on their own. They put pressure on themselves to work on an overwhelming volume of projects

and are reluctant to hand over responsibilities for fear that their standards won't be met. They feel that no one can do the job as well as they can so they take it all on — from the smallest projects to the largest. Their attention to detail is spectacular but the amount of detail on their radar is crushing. They cannot humanly keep up, feel like no one else really cares quite as much as they do and wonder why they feel so alone.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Extraordinary leaders recognize that they are much stronger when surrounded by a powerful team both inside and outside of their organizations. In addition to hiring strategically, they

actively seek out partnerships and input from individuals who are experts in their fields, such as accountants, lawyers, coaches and strategic consultants. They rely on experts to help them see what they are unable to see, and to advise the both personally and professionally.

3. Image Management

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

Taking the blame for an unsuccessful project or a bad decision can be embarrassing and defeating and can drive leaders to feel like their reputation is at risk. Both at home and at work, leaders can easily fall into the trap of deflecting blame or taking measures to hide their mistakes. They are used to being highly successful and in complete control over every

situation. When things don't go as planned, they feel backed into a corner and find it safer to blame someone or something else for the problem. In their mind, deflecting responsibility

buys them some time to figure out how to bounce back without too much public fall out.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Extraordinary leaders take ownership for their actions and outcomes without blaming others. They recognize that admitting their mistakes makes them more human and more likely to succeed in the future. Remarkable leaders understand that there's a direct connection between their thinking and their results; they constantly challenge their thinking and their actions, knowing that mistakes are to be expected. In addition, when

mistakes occur, they tune into trusted internal and external advisors to help the entire team recover from a poor decision.

4. Poor Decision Making

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

In a fast-paced, high-pressure work environment, leaders can fall into the trap of making decisions that don't feel quite right. They ignore their instincts and find themselves working

with people whose morals, values and vision clash with their own. In order to move forward on an initiative with speed and determination, they will unconsciously take action that is not quite a fit with their desired outcomes. Over time they begin to notice that they have made a series of decisions that cumulatively create a negative domino effect.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Extraordinary leaders don't lose sight of what's important to them. They make decisions that align with their priorities and choose to work with others who operate the same way.

Extraordinary leaders live by their organization's principles each and every day — they keep their promises, treat their employees with respect and act with integrity. While they are very skilled at finding and leveraging opportunities, they only do so when the opportunity is a true fit. They lead by example, making sure that the organization's vision and values are understood, and shared, by all team members.

5. Complacency

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

When things are running smoothly leaders can fall into a routine that can lead to the trap of complacency. They block off opportunities, they begin to lose their drive to challenge status quo and they stop learning or investing in professional development. Professionally, they stick to what they know and quickly dismiss ideas that do not appear to be a strategic fit — particularly those that are too "wild" or unproven.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Extraordinary leaders are always on the

lookout for change, improvement and opportunity. They never see success as a sign to start coasting; instead, they take continuous action to help their team move forward. They take risks, make bold decisions and leverage their success to make even bigger strides. Extraordinary leaders take the initiative to get moving when things are seemingly at a standstill. They are tuned into the pulse of their people and make sure that the team is engaged and fully leveraged.

6. Short-sightedness

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

When in survival mode, leaders may fail to see past their current state and fall into the kind of trap that allows them to deal with their immediate circumstances but prevents them from looking beyond. Their short-sightedness gives them the ability to fight fires in the present, but thwarts their vision of the future. They may have short-term goals, yet a very faint idea of what lies ahead.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

When emergencies occur, extraordinary leaders take a moment to gather their thoughts, round up the appropriate resources and work through problems with an eye on the long-term strategy. They leverage the expertise around them by delegating important tasks while making sure their input is received. They also make every effort to get enough sleep and reduce their stress levels by exercising and living a healthy lifestyle.

7. Fear of Failure

WHAT'S THE TRAP?

Leaders who are determined to succeed can fall into the trap of constantly playing it safe to eliminate the risk of failure. They may turn down new ideas or avoid taking action because they are

scared of making mistakes. They shy away from experimentation, staying in their comfort zone. They often regret past failures and view them as letdowns, serious personal flaws or catastrophes.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Extraordinary leaders recognize that each failure brings them closer to success. Their defeats don't discourage them, instead, they find a way to leverage their failures and turn them into opportunities. Truly remarkable leaders have a high degree of emotional resilience: the ability to bounce back from adversity with speed and agility. They don't let their setbacks define them, and they certainly don't fear future failures. In fact, they invest quite a bit of time extracting important lessons from their failures and figure out a way to turn it into an advantage.

What's Your Trap?

Which thinking trap do you identify with the most? That's the very thing that is keeping you from becoming an extraordinary leader. Once you can pinpoint where you may be falling short, you can begin to address it in a meaningful way that can have an unbelievable impact.

Kim Ades is the President and Founder of Frame of Mind Coaching™ and JournalEngine™ Software. Author, speaker, entrepreneur, coach, and mother of five, Kim has 15+ years of experience coaching many of North America's most respected leaders. Recognized as an expert in the area of thought mastery and mental toughness, Kim uses her unique philosophy and quirky coaching style to help her clients deal with core issues and shift their thinking in order to yield extraordinary results.

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"Once you can pinpoint where you may be falling short, you can begin to address it in a meaningful way that can have an unbelievable impact".



Redemption for the Sins of Learning

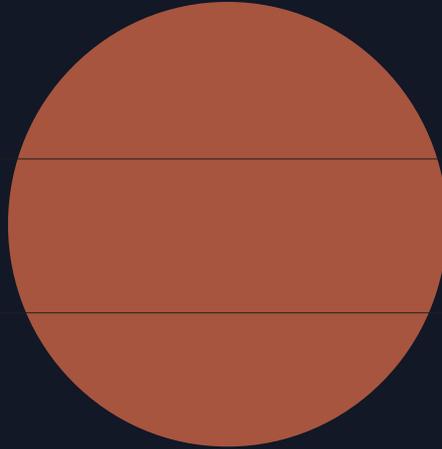
Jim Naughton

I have come to a point in my career where I find myself reflecting on the good and the bad, the highs and the lows, and the hopes and wishes I have for those who will step forward when I ultimately, one day, step back. Today, I want to expose some of the challenges we face in our organizations — challenges that I see are leading us all down the path toward “sins” in our learning programs..

It seems that despite our best efforts, organizations often fail to create improvements in performance. Sure, they may provide training, and a lot of it, but when employees don't change, business results remain stagnant.

Only a full acceptance of our “sins” can allow us to be ready for new growth and move us toward better days. So, take a hard look at the list of missteps below. Which ones can you honestly say you've had some role in perpetrating?

- Focus exclusively on new hires and ignore the rest of the workforce. Then, take credit for providing learning solutions for the whole organization.
- Teach primarily knowledge and awareness topics that have little or no impact on performance. Then, try to convince business leaders you make a huge difference.
- Recycle and republish information into thousands of training documents. Then, complain that the Sisyphean task of updating the training leaves you no time or budget to do new and important work.
- Insist on a form of technology malpractice by making everything e-learning. Then, proclaim that it's the learners' fault when they refuse to spend countless hours clicking through screens.
- Implement hastily assembled, one-size-fits-all rollout training to expediently handle a major initiative affecting the entire organization. Then, wonder why real change never happened.
- Insist on making every learning program a formal scheduled and planned event and not taking advantage of the massive number of available resources that have sprouted over the past decade. Then, bemoan the lack of initiative individuals have regarding their own development.
- Chase trends as if the solution to your dilemma was just discovered and announced in yesterday's webinar. Then, blame the chaos from lack of constancy as a lack of agility on the team instead of a failure to pay attention to the science of learning.



If these sound familiar and you work in the learning function in your organization, please join me for a dose of humility and an opportunity to repent. We can do better! We can help to make our organizations stronger by focusing our efforts on what makes a difference.

The best way to counter the structural flaws in the Learning and Development function is to create a strategic plan for learning. Strategic planning allows you the time for introspection and insight into what's working and what's not working. It's a chance to step back and see the big picture so you can make a course correction for the future. If what you're doing now doesn't clearly lead to successful outcomes, it's time to identify a change in approach that makes sense for your organization. Redemption springs forward from good strategic planning.

So today I plant the seed for green shoots to follow, recognizing we'll make some progress toward the goal, but perhaps not achieve everything we hope for in the span of our careers. Sometimes we need to nudge things forward in the right direction, and let momentum and time do the rest. I'm reminded of the words of Bishop Oscar Romero, who shared, "We are prophets of a future not our own." So, build your legacy on a foundation that paves the way for others to ultimately find the better way. Nudge forward. Redemption is near.

Jim Naughton (jim.naughton@innovativeLG.com) is a senior consultant at Innovative Learning Group, a performance-first leaning company located in Troy, Michigan. With nearly 40 years' experience in the learning industry, Jim has helped global companies accelerate their performance. He has worked across all aspects of the learning and development spectrum and is an expert in curriculum architecture, learning strategy, technologies for learning delivery, content curation, and impact evaluation. eronika Shestakova, MS in Finance specializes in Risk Manlike Eurex Exchange and HSBC Bank.



Need to Develop or Revise a Training Program? Listen to Who's Doing the Work

TRENT BARTHOLOMEW
M.ED., CPTM



Creating a new technical training program or revising an existing one can be daunting, especially if a training manager is a department of...one! Fear not. An effective job or occupation analysis process does indeed exist; it can help any training department meet its goals to effectively capture the essential duties and tasks required of its employees whenever new or existing training is needed. What is this job analysis process that can come to your rescue called? It's known as DACUM, a two-day job analysis workshop which traces its conceptual roots all the way back to the 1960s.

DACUM is the acronym for Developing A Curriculum. The workshop involves a trained facilitator and a panel of subject matter experts. Ideally, the group would consist of between 5-12 employees. The goal? Capture a graphic portrayal of the actual job duties and tasks for a given job from the perspective of those who actually do the work: your SMEs. Training managers are keenly aware of the importance of building training programs based upon job duties...and yet these job duties can too often only be from the supervisor's perspective or what management "thinks" its employees are supposed to be doing on the job. Here are the foundational concepts which form the foundation for the job analysis:

DACUM's 3 Key Concepts:

1. Expert workers can describe and define their job/occupation more accurately than anyone else.
2. The best way to define a job/occupation is describe the tasks expert workers perform.
3. All tasks demand the use of certain knowledge and skills, tools, equipment, supplies and material, and positive worker behaviors.

As L & D professionals, we often hear from management on what employees should be doing. However, the DACUM process will get you to the what the employees are doing. As you can see, a tremendous benefit of completing a DACUM workshop is a clear illustration of any gap analysis existing within a current training program.

When I facilitated my latest DACUM workshop, I noticed my expert participants were puzzled on the first day when I kept pointing to a very big blank wall behind me. I had to reassure them that this wall would indeed be full of their actual job duties and all of the necessary tasks for each of those duties at the end of our two-day workshop, luckily, I had plenty of handouts of what a DACUM Research Chart looks like to use as a visual aid. (See illustration of the DACUM chart at right.)

Best Practices for Utilizing the DACUM Job Analysis Process:

1. The experts on the DACUM panel must feel free to provide what exactly it is they do and are responsible for in their current jobs, without the fear of any repercussions from their supervisors or managers.
2. The facilitator must create a professional working environment in which all panelists adhere a "No Judgment Zone" so that effective brainstorming sessions can occur, and all ideas are captured.
3. Present to the panelists the negative consequences of Group Think; each panelist has a unique perspective as to what his/her job duties are and that must get captured during the workshop.

DACUM's Advantages for Training Departments:

- Group interaction—expert panel members are free to share ideas and contribute to the process.
- Brainstorming—the process is repeated several times throughout the workshop to aid the panelists in identifying all of the duties and tasks.
- Group synergy—panel members are led by the trained facilitator to motivate and empower one another.

DACUM Research Chart

	← Tasks									

- Group consensus—panel is guided by facilitator to assess each contribution until a consensus is reached.
- Future-oriented—the panel is asked to provide specific future occupational trends and concerns which may impact their jobs in the future.
- Employee and Employer Buy-in—support and strong buy-in occur when employees learn that duties and tasks were identified by expert workers.

DACUM Workshop Benefits for Training Departments:

- Defines the "as is" of the job being analyzed
 - Utilizes a two-day process to gather all information from expert panelists which may save expenses and time away from jobs for panel members
- Provides basis for developing job specific performance appraisals and standards
- Fosters a competency-based perspective to training needs
 - Ensures job efficiency by assuring each task within a given job is efficient and has value
- Yields accurate job descriptions

This best-practice approach to better capture, align, and develop the actual job duties and tasks of employees enables companies to more accurately tailor training and development needs necessary to meet the needs of its employees. The DACUM facilitator training I received at The Center for Education and Training for Employment in the College of Education and Human Ecology at The Ohio State University enabled me to conduct

DACUM trainings for my large department within Safety Operations, especially critical now as I am in the process of analyzing two jobs within our safety-technical training programs.

For more information about The Ohio State University DACUM training program visit: <https://dacum.osu.edu/workshops/dacum-institute/>

Trent began his career in learning and development over 30 years ago as an adjunct instructor in the post-secondary career education field. He has also been an instructional designer, curriculum developer, faculty mentor, program dean, dean of education; and finally, as the Director of Academic Training and Faculty Development, serving 42 campuses and over 1,400 instructors across the country.

As a Lead Instructional Designer and Course Manager for the Safety, Health, and Environmental System Safety Training Department at Amtrak, Trent recently redesigned the entire Signal Maintainer qualification program, including creating and integrating safety demonstration videos, interviews, and problem-based scenarios into the training program.

Tips from the Front Lines: What is Working Today

Donna Griggs

My organization specializes in assisting companies implement large changes that have an affect on their people, processes, and/or technology. Some of the key ingredients to making a successful change can be used in this unprecedented time of new beginnings. The biggest difference? No one deliberately chose all of the uproar that Covid-19 has caused. But, we can still make a tough situation bearable and even come out on the other side as a better, more patient, kinder more forgiving society. (I say that because every customer service representative I have talked to in the last month has been fabulous. It is a new record for me!)

Here are some ideas that have come from our clients – both organization leaders and employees. Keep reading and see if there are any you can pass on to your clients or employees.

1 All employees want to feel supported and know the truth about what is happening within the company is critical. Have daily 15-minute update meetings with everyone in the organization; be transparent, understanding, and strong. Answer questions. And above all, stay calm - even if you don't feel calm. Make sure your leaders are keeping in constant communication with their employees as well. Some of my clients has a 10 minute meeting at the beginning and end of the day is one way to do that.

2 Ensure that employees have what they need to work at home – this includes technical support. One client allowed all employees take their office chairs home so they could be more comfortable. They bought laptops for anyone who needed them. (Yes, they had an asset management plan in place). It made a huge difference in their morale. Do you have a home office? Remember, not everyone has that luxury. People are

working on their dining room table or setting up a card table in their bedroom – whatever it takes. At the same time they are a tutor and referee during the day since the kids are not in school (I do not envy them). My favorite story is my client who takes calls from his hammock – he says the internet reception is better. Innovative ways to get peace and quiet.

3 Find fun ways to encourage employees. One client has a daily exercise break for 15 minutes that everyone in the family can participate in. They have hired a coach to lead it virtually. It has caught fire and now there is a daily blog about it and people look forward to the time.

4 Find methods that everyone can use to chat and stay in touch. “I miss everyone” is the biggest complaint I hear from employees. When people feel like they belong, they are more encouraged, motivated, and productive.

5 Capture, publicize and celebrate. Blogs. Thankfulness. Pictures of the latest meal. The dogs. Funny photos of kids. Quotes. Great ideas. My clients are amazed at the great ideas that are coming from their employees. The key is to make sure people are staying connected in a variety of ways. There is a tremendous amount of innovation right now as people look for better ways to do things. Congratulate everyone for their efforts.

We all have a front-row seat to something that we have most likely never experienced before. It will be something that is talked about for years to come. Stay positive, remember we are blessed, and help other people as much as you can.





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