

Transcription - Future Working

Welcome back I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec. Today we're going to talk about the future. We're going to look into our crystal ball and look at what we'll be doing and how we'll be working and we might set it at just 10 years time, so that's something that we can all think about. Now Fulyana is worried about her cognitive abilities, so that in 10 years time she's hoping that she could have some implants or some pills she can take that will keep her talking. She was very concerned that she didn't really know what we were going to talk about in this particular podcast but she was quite happy that if I felt that she was straying from the topic, I would just change the title of the podcast and it would be whatever she talks about. So if you feel that she's not really on topic today that's probably because she's thinking about something else. We don't know what it is but she'll tell us, I'm sure, at some point during the conversation.

What sparked the idea of talking about it, is that for some time I have been following the research and been aware of changes in the way we all work and because I work quite independently, I suppose I'm at the forefront of knowing about this particular area and knowing, in terms of technology, I'm very exposed to emerging technology. I would be quite comfortable with the idea that in 10 years time I would think that less than five percent of the population will have what we can see as full time jobs these days, that there will be a whole change in the way work is done, the way all sorts of activities are done and often I get told when something isn't working well enough, my partner's comment is well, you know in 10 years time that person might have a job that'll be done by a machine. It'll be done by a program, it'll done be done by a clone. He's quite clear about the changes that are going to happen.

I am, at the present time, reading a book that was written in 1910, called "How to Live on 24 Hours" and the basis of it is that everything else we have we can control as resources but time is the one thing that we can't control, in terms of getting more of that resource. We are given 24 hours in a day and we have to live on that 24 hours. It's different to a financial, his comparison is to a financial amount of money, so it's not how to live on 24 hours a day, it's how to live on 24 hours as a finite resource. It's fascinating to read the book because this was written over a hundred years ago and absolutely everything that I have read, up to this point, could have been written today. Everything that he's expressing about how people feel about their work, their job, their passion, their interests, it's all relevant today. So our conversation today is going to be about time, time management and looking into the future. How we will be managing what we do in 10 years time? You can speak now

Thank you. I'm going to ignore all the introductions about dementia and all of that because I've forgotten it now. I really do believe that it is exciting the way that, you know, there's lots of information about what the future might look like. Some people have done international studies, there's books written about living an extra 30 years etc etc. I think it's exciting because this structure would be self-applied rather than we do it because you went to school, you went to work and worked for life and stayed in the same company. We know that's already changed. We know that that hasn't happened for a number of years, most time two to three years, three to five years and then you move on.

Now, if you're looking at the possible scenario of very few people have full-time jobs, that's very exciting because then you can be, instead of being dedicated to one thing, you can use all aspects of your learning and skills as you grow and learn, so you can participate in corporate sort of work, you can participate in the entertainment world, you can participate in whatever you feel you have grown towards. You might start off wanting to be in the medical profession and then suddenly you want to be in law and all of sudden you want to do something else. You can do that, managing how you split that time and how you would do, what I call branching off, into different areas. It would be very much a self-discipline thing. The advantages are great but the the concerns could be that you just jump from one thing to another because you haven't got a structure and achieve none of it, and this way, underutilise your ability. Having said that, I also believe technology, and back to Kim's point about you get a program to do that and a machine to do that, that would be perfect for you to use that to advantage. You can then use that to say, oh right now, at this point in time, I'm going to dedicate the next three months or a year whatever, to write a book. Tomorrow I think I want to be in the education space, where I share my experience and so on and so forth and you can try it and if it doesn't work, it's not the end because the world around you has changed. It's how you apply it to yourself and I know from talking to people who went from working all their life in the corporate world and now I'll use the word "retired" loosely, they're very uncomfortable, they're very anxious about the fact that they don't have a structure that takes them from getting up at the crack of dawn to working back at night and being in demand all the time. They haven't been trained yet, haven't been educated to do that and I think this is the greatest failing that we have, because we should be doing that now, we should be showing people how they can determine that sort of path, that sort of framework. It is about financial planning, it's about time management, it's about skills development, skills sharing. It's so many things that need to come into it for people to be able to have that ability to set the structure for themselves, that we're not addressing.

Periodically, they'll be talking about, well this is going to happen. You only have to look at the way that, as a very basic example, outsourcing organizations came into being because there was a whole slew of retrenchments that happened and people didn't know what to do, they didn't know how to address the issue, they didn't know how to apply for jobs because they never had to do that in the past. Some of them had never applied for a job, they were on the manufacturing side of things, they'd gone into it from school, they'd never written a resume and on their resume, now, it's got somewhere that's closed down. What happens to the way they look at themselves and the way they reorganise themselves and adjust themselves, and yes, some people can come out of those situations and shine but the vast majority of people need help. It is our responsibility, as being part of the business community, to provide that structure now, so that these resources are available for us in the future because we're not talking about machines taking over and no-one having a job with nothing needing to be done.

There will be different jobs, there will be other activities that need to be done and jobs that we can't even think of now, they will be there that need to be done and so we we have to have those conversations. We have to have those think tanks, we have to prepare people for that transition. It's the same as if you look now, we don't prepare people for what is called retirement, other than send them off to a financial planner so they'll have enough money to be retired. What does that mean? You know, it means something different for everybody. We conditioned people to thinking that they had to work for 30, 40, 50 years for their mark on

society and then their big step was to be retired, to do nothing and to do it well. Some people had a plan for a time, we're going to do this, going to do this, going to this and they were structured about it but that sometimes was not the reward they thought it was going to be. It wasn't as fulfilling as they thought it was going to be and the biggest issue I see is that it didn't give them an identity afterwards. People who have worked for a long long time in a particular role, a particular job, that's how they see themselves, that's what they see themselves as and when they're not that anymore, they don't know what they are. There's no-one to tell them what they are, they're at a stage in their life where people expect them to know who they are, what they're doing and there's no help for them. It's why we saw the emergence of men's sheds, I believe, and it's why we see, still, an increasing amount of depression and suicide, particularly in men, because that contribution to the community and being recognised is not there.

The good news is that there are people coming up with ideas to do that. I don't want to say what and where yet, but there definitely is and some people looking to invent all these things that we're talking about. People who go through the experience now, when you think about the number of people who are leaving the full-time environment, they're all different, they all respond differently. Some will suffer identity related issues, some will think oh beauty I can now do what I want and they do it. Bringing them together through, as I know an organisation has been set up for the moment, but they can bring those ideas together and build something from there. What I like about it is, by the people, for the group, it's by that group for the group and to help the future people. As long as we keep reminding ourselves that change is continuous and what we think will work for now, in the next 10 years will be different again and again and again. For me, I think that's exciting. I hate the same repetition.

I think too we need to be mindful of the transition into doing the things that we really want to do. Let's say we've worked in a task oriented position for a long time and we've always felt that we wanted to do something else, you know, that was our our real interest, that's where we wanted to see how could we explore that avenue but it was always on the wish list, we never had the resources, the time, the finances, the permission, to do it. The permission is the thing that concerns me most about that transition. Now that you've got all this time and you can do that, yes, you have to give yourself permission to say, this is the most important thing that you should be doing, not that I can do it now. You could always have done it but you have permission to think of this as the most important thing. On a personal note, I can tell you that that's very hard to do. Over the last, probably five years, I've had more opportunity to pursue the floral art side of things than I had previously. It has been incredibly difficult for me to give myself permission to say that this is an important task, this should be the main task that I'm doing, and even now, I am preparing for an international competition in about three months time, and I won't let myself work on the design until the end of the day and then I'll stop and tell myself, why are you doing that, you're allowed to do this whenever you like because you'll do all the other stuff whenever you like, so why not do it in a part of the day when you can think clearly and just have a day that you do that. You're allowed, you're the one that's in control. It's very hard to do and I acknowledge that's very hard to do and I think that's something that we always need to be working on. Giving yourself the permission but also recognizing you are actually okay to have fun and to experiment as well. We've been conditioned to be, you know, industrious. We're conditioned to not waste time.

Sometimes when you don't have the structure, you're coming up with something even more

fulfilling and innovative and again, to just say oh I'm enjoying that and obviously you have to have the safety net around you on the financial side and all of that, those things are important, you can't just think I will just go with the flow and let everything fall apart. Obviously there's certain things, but you've got to give that to yourself and say, what do I have to do now? The financial things are settled down and so it is enough to pursue how they want to have a fulfilled contribution, but do we do we ever allow ourselves to acknowledge that or do we or say oh we just better be careful, what if this happens, what if that happens and we spend so much time worrying about the what ifs, that we lose the moment, we lose our spending of our 24 hours. We lose the time we could have spent and that's the same when you're giving yourself permission. You worry so much about giving yourself permission, spend so much time thinking about it, that the time that you could have given to either of the tasks that you were doing is gone.

Once you do a little bit, it almost gives you courage, like, I did that and I liked it or I didn't like it and I just decided to pursue it or not to pursue it. Once you do it, once you kind of get that strength. I think it's probably the right time for us also to remind people, if you're in a situation where you have pursued something that you thought you always wanted to do and it's not as fulfilling or it's not as rewarding or it's changed from the perception you had, that it is okay to stop. (Yes) It is okay to say no, this is not what I thought and move on. Don't dwell on it, don't say I spent all that time thinking about joining the circus and now they don't have animals in them any more. I can't pursue my life's dream because there's no more animals in the circus. I think that you always need to be looking out for the next thing and do something that you would never have considered before. I'm learning Italian at the moment, for no other reason than there was an app and I thought I'd like it. I do that, you know, five minutes a day and I know that I'll never use it, but I'm finding it quite intriguing. It's interesting, it's frustrating at times because it's an app that actually makes you spell the language as well as speaking but you have the opportunity to try things that you always thought you'd like to try and some new things that, all of a sudden, you discover.

I think we probably successfully strayed off time management completely but we did talk about using the time resource and I think that it's a topic that we will come back to time and time again, because it is an emerging area of interest for all of us. We might even find guests to talk about that, their experience of what they're doing in that space as well, from all stages of the working spectrum. For now, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn and this is Inside Exec.