



## **Deep Knowledge and Attribute Mapping**

## DEEP KNOWLEDGE AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT

This process is designed to help you whether you are:

- Looking for a new job in the same line of work
- Looking for job in a new line of work
- Starting an enterprise
- Creating a life of serious leisure
- Phasing from full time work to part time

The approach helps you understand the impact that paid work has had on your life and how the knowledge, skills and wisdom acquired over a lifetime of paid and non - paid work can reframe the next part of your life.

This is perhaps best reflected by the following quote:

### ***Joy of Life***

*This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.*

George Bernard Shaw

## **WORK AND IDENTITY – IS ALL WE ARE WHAT WE DO?**

Today's first conversation is on Work and Identity, Is all we do, who we are?

What is generally the first thing you ask when you meet someone in a social situation for the first time?

What do you do?

“What do you do?”

Not for work; not for a living; not for a crust.

They have to provide you five things without any mention made about paid work.

### **Work and Language**

There is no doubting the power of language and how it shapes behaviour.

Look at these four sentences, forensically dismantle them and look at how language affects behaviour

- How do you do?
- What do you do?
- What do you do for a living?
- How do you earn a living?

How, in fact do you “earn” a “living”? Do you mean what do I do for paid work? How do I derive an income?

### **What is this thing called work?**

Work strongly influences our lives, the lives of those around our community and the broader society.

How does it directly affect us? For 5 days a week, 48 weeks in a year, for up 30 to 40 years work tells us:

- What time we get out of bed
- What to wear
- Who to talk to
- When, what, where, and if we have lunch
- What form of transport and route we take

Much of what we see in our external environment and the majority of our social interaction is from work. It's not just the physical time at work – it's the time you spend thinking about it. It's reading emails on your phone outside of working hours.

For some they are forever umbilicled to work through technology. How many hours do you spend at or involved with paid work?

Work also provides us with money to consume and live comfortably. It allows us to earn money so we can reward ourselves. We can also work to earn money so we can invest so as to live more comfortably at a later date.

Apart from money how does work benefit you? That is, if money is the extrinsic benefit of paid work, what are the intrinsic benefits?

In other words what influence does paid work have on you at an emotional level?  
(Answer the questions in yellow)

What are the intrinsic benefits of paid work?

So work and identity - what comes to your mind when we talk about work and identity?

To think about paid work and its influence on the other elements of your life is a healthy and positive discipline to practice. Self - honesty is the key.

If you are someone who is confident that you have control over your choices – great!  
If so, then think about someone you know that might be struggling

If however, you feel that work dominates how you see yourself in the world then answer the following fearlessly!

What did you like the most about the work?

What did you like the least about the work?

What have missed the most from not having paid work in your life?

What have missed the least from not having paid work in your life?

What would you like to do now – really would like to do now?

What is stopping you?

## THE ART OF A GRACEFUL TRANSITION

An understanding of transitions and how to move through them with success is an important platform to build when you are looking to find alternatives in this part of your life.

What are the various transitions we go through?

Well it starts at birth – leaving the safety and comfort of the womb; then as we grow older we move further from our parents and begin to explore our surroundings; our ego kicks in at around 3 and we discover the sense of self.

Then comes institutionalised learning – kindy to primary, primary to high school, then onto further study or entering the workplace.

Leaving home (now days at around 40); entering and leaving committed relationships; parenthood; grieving with loss; retirement from full time work and finally our own mortality, our inevitable transition from life to death.

Successful transition can depend on several factors. These include:

- **The personal meaning a transition has for you**

For some people, change is exciting and full of possibilities. If we have an optimistic outlook on life we may see the period of transition as gestational – a useful place to process our experiences and bid farewell to a familiar part of our life environment. If, on the other hand, we fear change then the unique personal meaning of the transition can be lost to us - especially if we try to avoid it by being busy for the sake of something to do.

- **How we process and express our feelings about the transition**

It can be uncomfortable trying to express deep and ambivalent feelings - especially if there is an expectation that we should be feeling happy. Transitions can elicit a mixture of painful feelings including: loss, grief, confusion, loneliness, sadness, anger, resentment, boredom, panic, or lethargy. But there can also be an admixture of pleasurable feelings such as: excitement, wonder, anticipation, joy, pleasure, energy, expectation, and peace - all or any of these feelings can arise during the transition. Finding a way to be able to express some of the feelings that accompany any major life transition will ease the process considerably.

- **What did we learn from previous experiences of transitions?**

A key to moving successfully through transitions is in our ability to appraise and learn from our previous transitions. For instance, were we able to ask for help from friends and neighbours when we needed it? As a couple, did we work co-operatively through the transition or did we sometimes blame each other for creating the

situation? Were we able to take steps to make it a positive learning experience by talking about it, during and after the event? How do we handle transitions differently now, as a result of those other changes?

- **The availability of support systems**

Any transition can be the source of considerable stress. Good support systems such as family, friends and colleagues can help facilitate a smooth transition.

- **Counselling**

Older generations may have felt that you only saw a counsellor at times of family deaths or community disasters, but counselling is now widely accepted as just a normal part of life. Professional counsellors listen empathically to our concerns, in a safe and confidential setting and they help us find ways of processing our feelings, adapting our thinking and developing outcomes, especially during times of major change.

- **Your personal coping skills**

We learn many coping and problem solving skills throughout our lives, especially in our workplace environments. If we are goal and action orientated, we may experience frustration in the early part of the transition period when we feel nothing is happening and we have no control.

(Source: Kaye Healey 2004)

For any successful transition, the critical factor is the strength of our belief that no matter what, things will be ok. That no matter how bad it is, at our core we believe that it will be ok.

This started with us crying in our cots and feeling reassured by a gentle hand on the chest to soothe us, or being picked up and held.

As we got older we learned to self soothe, bawling at the front gate at school we hopefully had someone comforting us telling us that it would be ok.

The degree of emotional support we get from a young age greatly influences us throughout our lives – particularly for men. Boys that didn't develop strong emotional resilience growing up typically struggle with life's significant transitions.

Resilience – what does it mean and can we develop it?

The following is a Quote from a Psychologist called Hara Estroff Marano

*At the heart of resilience is a belief in one's self, - yet also a belief in something larger than oneself.*

*Resilient people do not let adversity define them. They find resilience by moving*

*towards a goal beyond themselves, transcending pain and grief by perceiving bad times as a temporary state of affairs... It's possible to strengthen your inner self and your belief in yourself, to define yourself as capable and competent. It's possible to fortify your psyche. It's possible to develop a sense of mastery."*

What are some of the traits of emotional resilience?

1. Being able to separate us between who are at our core and the cause of our temporary suffering. In other words our stress or trauma does not overtake our permanent identity
2. Keeping good company – surrounding ourselves with other resilient people
3. Self awareness – knowing what we need, what we don't need and knowing when we need help
4. Able to accept and to surrender – doesn't mean to give up it means to fully experience the pain and trust that we will bounce back. Understanding that pain is part of the ebb and flow of life – which this too shall pass. When we lost my nephew a few years ago my brother – in-law asked my sister will we ever be normal again – she replied with “not the normal we had – but a new normal”
5. Being present – to sit in silence – Zoe's story? Elkhart Tolle
6. Not having all the answers – sometimes trying really hard to find the answers prevents us finding the answers naturally in due time
7. Good self care habits – whatever they may be – what nourishes you?
8. Enlisting the help of others
9. Considering all the possibilities – knowing this is my story – how can I change it? What is permanent and what can I change?
10. Getting out of our head – the hardest to do is to still the mind and practice non-thinking. Writing helps clear the head of the story, exercise or any healthy distraction

So what are the ways we can develop emotional resilience?

- **Staying Positive**

People mean well when they say “stay positive” to someone undergoing a painful transition. To stay positive means allowing all your feelings to exist side by side, not to be in denial about the issue. As part of our survival instinct, our brain registers more strongly to negative stimuli rather than positive. However by choosing to see the positives in any situation we can change the neuronal pathways in the brain by practising to choose positive over negative.

The ratio is 3 to 1 positive thoughts to negative thoughts. The book the Brain that Changes Itself is worth reading. (Doidge is the author)

### **Live to Learn**

Learning is a significant contributor to developing emotional resilience. It starts with using Thinker Questions rather than Judger Questions. For example, what is it about this situation that is causing me pain rather than “why is this happening to me”.

“Is there something I can do that will give me more control over my life” rather than “this is unfair, I don’t deserve this.”

When faced with pain a resilient person will look at the problem immediately and ask, “What is the solution to this?” The key is to ask neutral non-judgemental questions.

### **Open your heart**

The act of doing something kind for others helps emotional resilience as it creates a more efficient use of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is the neurotransmitter associated with feelings of happiness and wellbeing.

Receiving and appreciating kindness from others supports the development of resilience through the practice of gratitude.

Feeling gratitude for even the ordinary events in your day starts training your brain by unadapting your emotions to the things you normally took for granted.

### **Take care of yourself**

It would seem an obvious thing to do but being good to your self is an incredibly important part of developing emotional resilience. Good food and exercise are a given but taking mental breaks are also really important.

Practising mindfulness or mediation is an excellent form of creating no thinking. However if this seems too hard then look to day - dreaming.

PET and MRI imaging of the brain at rest show that there is significant activity in the regions of the brain associated with decision-making, memories and the processing of emotionally important events.

A couple of other key things to do with self-care is spending time outdoors and surrounding yourself with people you like.

### **Hang onto humour**

There has been much written about the positive effect laughter has on our wellbeing. Laughter moderates tension – thereby reducing inflammatory responses to pain, physical or emotional even if momentary. Call it a pressure valve for your constitution.

**What are some examples of transitions in your life so far?**

**What are some of the things you did to help you with this transition(s)?**



## SO WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

### Deep Knowledge - work's legacy for your life long fulfilment

So far we have examined the influence of work on you and how this affects your sense of self, how you and others perceive your self. By having a deep understanding of the role that work has played in shaping the decisions and directions over our adult lives we are able to use this knowledge to support future decisions such as:

- Looking for a new job in the same line of work
- Looking for job in a new line of work
- Starting an enterprise
- Creating a life of serious leisure

To help you develop your “encore career” or find purpose and meaning from unpaid work and or serious leisure you examine what you have learned from work. This includes the:

- Actual work experience
- Training
- Professional development
- Life experience
- Lessons from others

We can take what we “know” from work and apply it to our lives in other work and other areas of life.

This includes:

- Know how
- Know what
- Know why
- Know who
- Know when

Work has given you the gift of knowledge most of which is in your head and often indecipherable. The different forms of knowledge are:

### Different forms of Knowledge

- **Human Knowledge**

What you know or know how to do. As “skill” it may manifest in areas such as providing feedback to colleagues, developing strategic planning or re-writing policy and procedures. As “expertise” it may be the complex understanding of budgetary processes, safety procedures or policy implementation.

- **Social Knowledge**

This form of knowledge is found where you are encouraged to share knowledge in groups and is often termed “social capital”. This form of knowledge is largely tacit (see below) and may exist as an extensive network of personal relationships within and external to the organisation.

Communities of Practice operate within this domain where groups are formed around common ends.

- **Cultural Knowledge**

This describes collective knowledge that is shared more broadly within the organisation, that is, how to think and behave to fit in to a particular section of the business.

Losing one person generally will not affect cultural knowledge however if the majority of one area such as a complete sales team leaves then they take with them a collective knowledge that may affect the level of understanding across the business of “how we do things here”.

- **Structured Knowledge**

This knowledge is embedded within systems, processes, tools and routines and is explicit and rule based.

- **Tacit Knowledge**

Tacit knowledge is referred to as personal knowledge embedded in individual experience and involves intangible factors, such as personal beliefs, perspective, and the value system. Given the intangible and personal nature of tacit knowledge, this represents the greater challenge in creating, storing/retrieving transferring and applying the knowledge.

This is the gold when everyone else is trading in dull tin.

- **Explicit Knowledge**

Explicit knowledge can be articulated into formal language, including grammatical statements (words and numbers), mathematical expressions, specifications, manuals, policies and procedures.

The real legacy from your paid working lifetime is not the dollars ticking over in super, it is what is ticking over in your brain power.

While work has given you resources to consume and consolidate, it has also given you knowledge to become **resourceful** in order to create the life you want in your later life.

## **WRITING YOUR GOLD PAPER**

This approach differs from completing a resume and applying for a job – I am not saying not to produce a resume or apply for a job through traditional methods – this is an alternative and complementary approach.

In effect you write your own story about your work history in the context of “whose problem was I solving”.

- What was the problem you solved?
- Whose problem was it?
- What was the cost of this problem?
- What was your solution to the problem?

We then look to identify how your knowledge and skills contributed to your solving the problems – this creates your value either to a new employer, to an enterprise or to serious leisure. Either way we are looking to identify your deep smarts from your paid working lifetime and reapply them in a way that helps you find purpose, meaning and connection.

### **How to un-tap the liquid gold in your head?**

I start this process from the point of view of risk. Rather than say why is my knowledge valuable to the business or to me, I ask what is the “risk” to the business (or me) if this knowledge was lost forever.

Think about the work you have done or are still doing when reading the following and doing the exercises.

If I was doing this at your work, this is what the process would look like.

### **Risk Assessment for Your Business**

- What does the business do?
- What are the key components?
- What are the key business drivers?
- How do you mitigate the risk of NOT meeting the drivers?
- Who are in roles that mitigate the risks?
- What do they “know” (that others don’t) that mitigate the risks?

This is a really basic explanation of what is a complex process. Let’s apply the same process to your life!

## **Risk Assessment for you**

- What do you (or did) do for paid work?
- What are (were) the components of the work?
- What are (were) the drivers? Such as:
  - Profit
  - Safety
  - Timeliness
  - Reputation
- In your role what do (did) you do to mitigate the risks of not meeting the drivers? Just pick the one you thought was most critical to the business.
- What are (were) the most important tasks of your role?
- What valuable knowledge do (did) you apply to this job role that is NOT documented? In other words what did you “know” about the work or the business that:
  - Resulted in other people asking you questions
  - Felt easy when you were dealing with a difficulty or crisis at work
  - Didn't get done when you were not around
  - Made you feel valued at work
- In doing so what was the problem you solved
- Whose problem was it?
- What was the cost of this problem? How did it affect the drivers?

- What was your solution to the problem?

You now take this information and convert it to a two or three page paper that you could send or present to a potential employer if you wanted to add it to your resume or you could...

Step 1:

Pick a company who you are keen to work with and look up the operations manager or senior person responsible for the day - to - day business. If the website does not have the person named then do a linked in search of the company name and then the person might show up.

Step 2:

Email them and tell them that you have written this paper as a means of seeking work and believe that the problems you previously solved are similar to those his/her company faces. You are not asking them for a job you would just really appreciate it if the person could read the paper and make any comments or suggestions.

This could lead to a meeting/coffee and it might lead to some contract work or it might lead to another company. It's better than sending a resume and wondering if you'll ever hear back from them!

The process outlined above can also be used to develop a serious leisure pursuit. This allows you to apply your work related attributes to something other than paid work and can include gifting your time to a specific need – a community based organisation might need your knowledge and skills to undertake a task they are unable to do.

The main message from this approach is that over your working lifetime you have acquired knowledge you don't even know you know. Unlocking it then creates new opportunities for you.

See below quicker process

## Knowledge Portfolio

The aim of this process is to create a re-usable framework that best captures and demonstrates your personal and vocational attributes – in other words what you and others feel you are good at – really good at.

So once you have come up with a list of a minimum of five attributes then have a crack at this table.

Attribute	Demonstration of this in practice	Application of this to someone's problem
	When I...	

I'd suggest doing this table as general as possible and maybe even leaving off the third column unless you know of a specific opportunity like the one above.

If someone like an employer wants to talk to you then your pitch focuses on your deep knowledge and attributes – a sprinkle of examples to demonstrate and then you address:

1. What is the problem?
2. Whose problem is it?
3. What is the cost of the problem? (now and if you do nothing about it in the future)
4. What is your solution?
5. What is the value of your solution – might be amount you charge or the rules YOU APPLY to any role being offered

The mindset shifts from being a resource for hire at the employer's behest to becoming known for what you know and being rewarded accordingly.