

A BOOK OF **INSPIRING ADVICE**

**LESSONS IN
LEADERSHIP & LIFE**

**FROM GUESTS OF THE
INSPIRE CLUB PODCAST**

BY

**IW INSPIRING™
WORKPLACES**

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The Inspiring Workplaces Awards

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INTRODUCTION

What if the most profound lessons in leadership and life were just one conversation away? In this transformative collection, drawn from the Inspire Club Podcast, discover the insights that have shaped extraordinary careers and enriched personal journeys. From navigating challenges to embracing authenticity, these lessons are a blueprint for thriving in every aspect of life.

This book is a celebration of human connection and growth, weaving together timeless wisdom and practical advice from leaders, innovators, and visionaries. Each story highlights a universal truth: the power of introspection, empathy, and resilience to transform our lives and communities. Whether you're leading a team, building relationships, or striving for personal excellence, these unforgettable lessons offer actionable insights to inspire your next step forward.

Are you looking for clarity in a noisy world? This book offers more than just advice—it's a guide to finding purpose, setting intentions, and making an impact. Packed with relatable anecdotes and actionable takeaways, 'Lessons in Leadership and Life' is perfect for anyone seeking to unlock their full potential at work, at home, or within themselves.

Every page of this book is a reminder that growth is a journey, not a destination. With wisdom gathered from some of today's most inspiring voices, 'Lessons in Leadership & Life' is your companion for navigating the complexities of modern life with courage, authenticity, and purpose.

INSPIRE CLUB PODCAST

The Inspire Club podcast comes from the world of work with just one rule for each guest. They must share a story of someone who has inspired them along the way. We then explore their career, life away from work, share advice and tips for inside and outside of workplace and much more. Want to feel good and learn something in half an hour?

Listen to [The Inspire Club](#) podcast on  Spotify



Matt Manners

CEO & Founder, Inspiring Workplaces Group

**“...it’s OK to
have
silence.”**



**HEATHER
YOUNGER**

Workplace Culture | Author
Keynote Speaker

...I had someone recently say to me, ***“Heather, it’s OK to have silence.”***

That was a big one for me. It made me confront the feeling of being uncomfortable with silence. I was on a call with a group of people, and someone put in the chat something like, *“Yeah, resting in the silence—being okay in the silence.”*

At one point during the call, there was a gap where I felt nervous because I didn’t have anything left to say or cover. I reached out to a team member on the other side of the chat and said, *“Oh my gosh, what else are we going to talk about right here?”* As I was saying that, I remembered what someone had written in the chat: *“Rest in the silence.”*

It was such a valuable reminder. Often, we feel the need to fill every void with noise or activity, but learning to rest in the silence and take it as a gift is incredibly powerful. For me—and for anyone, I think—this was the best piece of advice I’ve received. It’s a reminder to embrace stillness and recognize its value instead of fearing it...

**“Do one
thing well.”**



**STUART RHYS
THOMAS**

Founder
The Other Way to do
Internal Communication

...One of the people I admire greatly, other than the Guinness Taste Test, is a guy called David Hyatt. He runs a denim company in West Wales called Hyatt Denim. Their philosophy is simple: do one thing well.

I think there's nothing better than saying to yourself: ***“For the next half an hour, I'm going to do this.”***

You turn off your emails, switch off your phone, and focus entirely on that one thing. That's where you can do some deep thinking and really get to the heart of whatever it is you're trying to contemplate.

When your phone pings with a text, your email goes off, or social media notifications appear, you never get into that kind of deep space.

So, my productivity tip would be: **do one thing well...**

“What kind of person do you want to become?”



MATT MANNERS

CEO & Founder
Inspiring Workplaces Group

...I want to shine a light on someone: my former boss, Simon Pearce, in Sydney.

Back then, I was an inexperienced twenty-something, cutting corners and thinking I was better than I was. Simon saw through it all and gave me a reality check I'll never forget. It wasn't feedback I needed twice—it hit hard and stayed with me.

His words were straightforward yet profound: ***“What kind of person do you want to become? What kind of manager and leader do you aspire to be? When trouble comes, do you want to look around and find no one willing to stand by you? Or do you want to be someone people will rally around, someone worth their loyalty and trust?”***

That question hasn't just lingered—it's echoed through every stage of my life. I can still picture the moment, standing in his office as those words landed like a lightning bolt. They shook me to my core and left a lasting impression.

It's a powerful reminder to stop and ask yourself: ***Who are you now, and who do you want to be in the eyes of others?***

That moment wasn't just feedback or advice —it was a turning point, one of those rare insights that reshapes your path and defines your future...

**"What's for
you won't
pass you."**



SCOTT MCINNES

Founder & Director
Inspiring Change

...I'm going to give you two pieces of advice. The first one came from my granny, who passed away in 1994 at the age of 84. She didn't say a lot, but when she did, her words were always insightful and stuck with you. One thing she said to me was, ***"What's for you won't pass you."***

The meaning is simple yet profound—if something is meant for you, you'll absolutely get it. And if it's not for you, it won't happen. I think we often stress and worry about things that don't go our way: not getting that job, missing out on that house, or a breakup with someone we thought was "the one." But her words remind you to stay present and trust the process.

The second one is more recent and came from Brendan Foley, a coach and facilitator I know in Dublin. About three years ago, when I was setting up Inspiring Change, we had a chat. He said something that stuck with me: ***"To be really successful in business, you need to be an inch wide and a mile deep."***

That advice resonated with me because it's exactly what I've done. Inspiring Change is focused on internal communications, engagement, leadership, and culture—a very niche area. I've turned down more work than I've taken because it wasn't aligned with the niche I wanted to specialize in. I want to be known for being really good at this work, to become the go-to person in my field.

You don't become the go-to person by being a jack of all trades—dabbling in everything and becoming an inch deep and a mile wide. Brendan's advice shaped my approach, and it's something I've truly taken to heart. It's guided how I've built my business and my reputation ever since...

"Back yourself."



SONIA STOCKER

Director
Stockerhouse Consulting

...This piece of advice is more emotional: ***back yourself***. It's a common phrase, and loads of people say it, but for me, it was my brother who drilled it into me. I think it's absolutely critical because so few things in life are black and white.

Backing yourself means **knowing your own mind, getting your story straight, and fully committing to the decisions you make.**

That doesn't mean you can't have the humility to acknowledge when you've misjudged something or made a mistake. But if you don't back yourself and commit fully from the outset, the outcome is unlikely to be good.

It's a simple but vital mindset that's made all the difference for me...

**"If you fail,
then I failed
you."**



**RUSSELL
ROBINSON**

Associate Professor
American University

...Before joining the agency I work at now, I was employed at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, an incredible organization. It's one of the few agencies where there's a profound connection between the employees and the mission: to serve and care for our veterans and those in the military.

I eventually left that position to take on my current role. At the time, my supervisor was a retired Army colonel. During my last week at the VA, he became unusually persistent, almost relentless, in drilling into me the key lessons I'd need for my next step. Normally, you'd expect to coast a bit in your final days, but he wasn't letting up. Finally, I asked, *"What are you doing?"*

His response stuck with me. **He said, "Look, my job is to set you up to go to this next level and succeed. If you fail, then I failed you."** He went on to explain, *"I know you, Russell. You believe in impact. You believe in fun. But you've got to be accountable. You're going to be the director now, which means everything that leaves your shop is a reflection of you."*

He emphasized that while I should give people the freedom to create and take ownership of their work, they also needed to understand my standards. This included every detail, even something as seemingly small as how memos and letters were formatted. His advice was clear: leadership requires balancing trust in your team with setting and upholding clear expectations. That lesson has stayed with me ever since...

**"...be a
business
person
first."**



MATT GOSNEY

Vice President
Organizational Development
UHealth

...I spent about five years working with Walmart, the world's largest retailer. During that time, there was a brief and unusual period where, due to some attrition, my direct boss was the Senior Vice President of Talent, Roger Cude. This situation didn't last long, but it gave me the unique opportunity to learn from someone at a very high level of the organization.

Roger was an exceptional talent strategist, and during one of the only one-on-one meetings I had with him, he gave me a single piece of advice that profoundly shaped my career. He said, ***"Matt, if you want to continue in a career in human resources, talent, and organizational development, be a business person first."***

What he meant was this: to excel in HR or talent management, you must understand the needs of the business. Learn how the business succeeds, how it makes money, delivers value, and operates. That perspective has been invaluable throughout my career.

If you don't understand the organization's strategy or how it plans to achieve its goals, you can't design programs that effectively attract, develop, or retain the right talent. Roger's advice to be a business person first has been a cornerstone of my professional approach and remains one of the most valuable lessons I've ever learned...

“...you will face adversity. That’s a fact, so get over yourself.”



LISA HAGGAR

Global People Director
HR Author

...I've been incredibly fortunate to have some amazing mentors over the years. But one piece of advice that stands out came from one of my earliest mentors. She was an ex-barrister, an extraordinary woman, who sadly has since passed away.

When I was just starting my career, she gave me a piece of wisdom that has stayed with me for over 30 years. She said, ***“As a strong female in your career, you will face adversity. That’s a fact, so get over yourself.”*** It was blunt but empowering.

She also said something that’s etched into my memory: “There will be people in your life and your career who will throw stones at you. Let them. Just keep those stones in a corner, and one day, you’ll use them to build your empire.”

Her words painted a vivid picture. She said, *“When you’ve built your empire, you’ll stand on top of it and look down at all the people who doubted you, underestimated you, or didn’t give you the opportunity. And you’ll know that every stone they threw helped you rise higher.”*

It wasn’t about vengeance or bitterness—it was about resilience and proving yourself. That advice taught me to channel negativity and doubt into something constructive, to turn challenges into stepping stones for success. It’s a lesson that has never left me, and it’s one I’ve carried throughout my entire career...

"You just go on, don't you?"



JO MOFFATT

Founder & Advisory
Board Member
Woodreed

...This advice came to me fairly recently, during a Zoom call over Christmas. I've been fortunate to have a lifelong friend named Edwina Dunn. She's an extraordinary woman who co-founded Dunnhumby, a data marketing company best known for creating the Tesco Clubcard. Customer loyalty is her specialty, and she has gone on to establish other successful businesses with her partner, Clive Humby.

More recently, Edwina has been focusing on her not-for-profit organization, *The Female Lead*. It's a hugely successful movement dedicated to inspiring and uplifting women and girls to reach their full potential. It's truly remarkable what she's achieved.

During our conversation, we were talking about business, work, and life—just the kind of topics you chat about with old friends. Reflecting on her years of experience running businesses, she gave me a simple but profound piece of advice: ***"You just go on, don't you?"***

Given the challenges of the past year (Covid)—especially for people running their own businesses, freelancers, contractors, and anyone who has fallen through the cracks of government support—her words carried a lot of weight. She elaborated: ***"You just keep on going. You focus. You have ups and downs. There are days when you wonder why you're doing it, but you just go on."***

For me, this wasn't just advice; it was an observation about the world of self-employment and entrepreneurship. **Success often comes down to tenacity, persistence, and perseverance—qualities that set apart those who continue from those who give up.**

Her words reminded me of one of my favourite Churchill quotes: ***"If you're going through hell, keep going."*** It's advice not just for business, but for life. The act of simply continuing—waking up each morning, focusing, and carrying on—is often what makes the difference in the long run. Thank you, Edwina, for such a powerful reminder...

**"Don't just
climb the
ladder – make
sure it's leaning
against the
right wall."**



**TONY
MARTIGNETTI**

Chief Inspiration Officer
Author | TEDx Speaker
Inspired Purpose Partners

The best advice I ever received came from a mentor early in my career, who said, "Don't just climb the ladder – make sure it's leaning against the right wall." **This simple yet profound wisdom shifted how I view success and purpose. It reminded me that true fulfillment isn't found in achievements alone but in aligning those achievements with what genuinely matters to you.**

Over the years, this advice has become a guiding principle, especially during moments of uncertainty or transition. It's why I stepped off a conventional corporate path to pursue work that deeply resonates with my values: connection, creativity, and impact. It also fuels how I guide leaders today – encouraging them to pause, reflect, and ensure their journey is meaningful, not just successful.

This advice wasn't just career-defining; it was life-defining. **It reminds me that in a world often driven by external measures of success, the true reward lies in leading a life aligned with your authentic purpose...**

"Just because I choose to work at this time of night doesn't mean that you should."



KELLY SWINGLER

Keynote Speaker | Author |
Founder of The World's
Number 1 Burnout Academy

...The best advice I was ever given came from one of my bosses, a lady named Alison Suffolkan. **She told me to stop emailing outside of work hours, and the way she delivered that advice has stuck with me ever since.**

I remember one particular night when I was preparing for a board meeting. I had just returned from London quite late and wanted to make sure I had all the information ready for the following day. It was 11 o'clock at night, and I was going through all the papers to ensure I was fully prepared. Suddenly, an email from Alison popped into my inbox.

Without thinking, I responded immediately. To my surprise, she replied straight away, but her message wasn't what I expected. **She said: "I'm not even going to read your response. Never, ever, reply to an email this late at night again. Just because I choose to work at this time of night doesn't mean that you should."**

She went on to explain: *"If people know you email at all hours, they'll start emailing you at the time that works for them. And you might feel pressured to respond. So don't start the cycle. Never, ever, ever do it."*

I replied, thanking her for the advice, but she immediately emailed back, saying: *"You've just responded. I told you not to. Stop it."*

That moment has stayed with me. It was such a clear and valuable lesson about boundaries and work-life balance. It taught me to respect my own time and set an example for others to do the same. And yes, its an advice that has definitely stuck...

**"...it was all
about saying
YES to
opportunities."**



**JANE ROQUES
-SHAW**

Employee Experience
Designer & Celebrant
Life Moments with Jane

...The best advice I received came from a phenomenal woman named Helen Parker, who works at Universal Pictures and reports to Eddie Cunningham. The two of them worked closely together, and Helen's guidance has had a lasting impact on me.

She shared this advice with a group of us when I first started there, and **it was all about saying yes to opportunities. Helen emphasized the importance of saying yes—especially early in your career—to things that might feel outside your comfort zone. She encouraged us to say yes to unexpected opportunities, stretch assignments, and tasks beyond our job descriptions.**

Her reasoning was simple: giving things a go can lead to incredible opportunities. Taking that advice to heart has certainly been transformative for me. By saying yes and stepping into the unknown, I've been able to take on roles and projects I never would have imagined.

One of those was leading the People, Growth, and Experience team at WarnerMedia—a significant stretch for me. Learning and development isn't an area of expertise I've had throughout my career, so it was a big challenge. But it turned out to be an amazing opportunity that helped me grow and evolve in ways I never anticipated.

Helen's advice—to say yes—has been a guiding principle, and it's opened doors to experiences I wouldn't trade for anything...

“The darkest hour is before dawn.”



EMMA BRIDGER

Best-Selling Author |
MD at People Lab, Co-
Founder at The EX Space

....That's a really good question. I think I'm going to be a bit cheesy again and talk about my husband this time. He has loads of one-liners that are both annoying and annoyingly true. His advice is less about practical steps and more about mindset.

One of his sayings that really sticks with me is: “*The darkest hour is before dawn.*” It might sound clichéd, but it's something I often come back to when things feel bleak—because they really have over the last year (during Covid). When things go wrong or you have one of those days where you drop the ball, it's a reminder that, no matter how bad it feels, the sun is going to shine again.

I'm not even sure if it's advice, but it feels like it. He has a lot of sayings like that —“*It'll be fine,*” or “*Trust in the process.*” But “*The darkest hour is before dawn*” is the one I always return to. It keeps me going when I'm in those moments of despair, wondering when I'll see the light again.

So yeah, that's probably the one I'd pick. It's simple, but it helps me push through...

**"For God's
sake, David,
always be
you."**



DAVID BEENEY

Author | Mental Health
Advisor | Founder at
Breaking The Silence

...Very early in my career, I attended a "train the trainer" course. On the final day, each of us had to deliver a 30-minute training session to our peers. I was scheduled to go last, and I spent the entire day feeling quite anxious about it.

Finally, it was my turn. I delivered what I thought was a solid training session. But at the end, in front of all my peers, the course leader said to me, *"David, I am really, really disappointed in you."*

I was stunned. He continued, *"Do you know why I put you on last?"* I shook my head, confused. He explained, *"I put you on last because it's been a long day, and I thought you'd make us all smile. I thought you'd make us laugh. I thought you'd be engaging and entertaining, because that's who you are. But today, you've been really boring."*

He added, "Technically, your session was fine, but promise me this: never, ever, ever again deliver anything where you're not being yourself. For God's sake, David, always be you."

That moment has stayed with me ever since. From that day forward, I've always embraced being myself. If I feel like handing out tins of baked beans, I'll hand out tins of baked beans. If I want to include a plastic frog in my presentations, I'll include a plastic frog. If I want to toss around bouncy balls, I'll do that too.

The point is, I've stopped worrying about what other people think and started focusing on being authentic. That piece of advice—to always be myself—has been the best guidance I've ever received....

**“Don’t
miss the
opportunity
to learn.”**



BETH COLLIER

Communication, Creativity
& Leadership Consultant

...The best piece of advice I ever received came when I was interning in California. An actor named Bill Hayes, who had been in the industry for a long time, shared it with me. He said, *“There are a lot of interns that come in and out of this place, and most of them don’t take advantage of the opportunity this really is.”*

As an intern, you’re at the bottom of the food chain, doing jobs no one else wants—photocopying scripts, running errands, and answering phones. But what he told me was this: ***“Don’t miss the opportunity to learn.”***

At the time, I didn’t know if I’d end up working in film or TV, though I’ve always loved pop culture and the entertainment industry. I took his advice to heart. Whenever I finished my tasks or found myself with downtime, I would ask questions like, “Can I go down to the set for a while?” or “Can I visit the editing booth?” or “Can I see what the music team is working on?” I’d just go and watch people.

That advice—***“Don’t miss an opportunity to learn”***—has stayed with me ever since. Even if something doesn’t seem directly relevant or aligned with your goals, you never know what you might take away from it. I’ve found that inspiration can come from the most unexpected places.

In my work now, I draw ideas from so many sources. I read a lot, absorb information from various areas, and stay curious. You never know what might spark a new idea or give you fresh perspective. That’s the advice I’d give to others: never pass up a chance to learn, because you never know where it might lead you...

"Make a perfect list of the voters."



MIKE KLEIN

Founder | Editor-in-Chief
#WeLeadComms

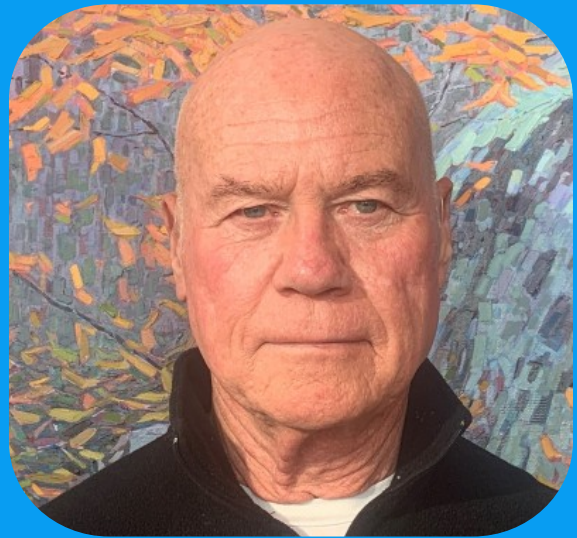
...Back in the 1990s, I had a boss, coach, and mentor who insisted on teaching me some timeless lessons. At the time, I was running political campaigns, and he introduced me to what he called "**The Lincoln Rules.**" These were principles Abraham Lincoln reportedly developed in 1840 for running effective political campaigns. But as I came to realize, these rules weren't just about politics—they apply to any organization or community effort aiming to accomplish something meaningful.

The rules go like this:

1. **Make a perfect list of the voters.** Determine exactly who your stakeholders are. These are the people whose involvement and influence will determine the outcome. It's not necessarily everyone. Engaging people just for the sake of it isn't always productive—you need to focus on those who have a genuine stake in the outcome.
2. **Determine with certainty whom they'll support.** Don't assume people will automatically align with your goals just because they're part of your organization. In the corporate world, you might think employees will do what they're told because they're being paid, but that's not always the case. Entire books exist about resistance within organizations, proving this isn't a given. Knowing where people stand and whether they're aligned with your vision is critical.
3. **For those who are undecided, send someone they trust to persuade them.** This is where most corporate communication efforts fail. Companies often use spokespeople they trust instead of those the audience trusts. If you're dealing with a tenuous labour situation, for instance, who would be more effective at communicating—your CFO or the union leadership? The results will vary drastically depending on who delivers the message. Trust is the key to persuasion.
4. **Turn out all the good voters on election day.** This means focusing your energy on mobilizing those who support your cause. Many organizations waste time and resources trying to mobilize their opposition because they feel obligated to engage everyone. Instead, effective communication is about rallying those who will contribute positively, not energizing those with other intentions.

These principles have stuck with me ever since. They're as relevant to internal communications and business strategy as they are to political campaigns. By identifying your key stakeholders, understanding their positions, communicating through trusted messengers, and focusing on supporters, you can significantly improve your chances of achieving meaningful outcomes. It's a timeless lesson that continues to guide me...

"...those who grasp the impact of their words and actions are the truly inspirational leaders..."



LANCE SECRETAN

Coach | Founder & CEO
The Secretan Center Inc.

...The best advice I've ever received hasn't necessarily come from people I know, but from heroes—if I can put it that way. One example is Gandhi. Initially, I only understood Gandhi as someone who fought for freedom. But as I learned more, the principle of *nonviolence* stood out as the most powerful thing I've ever heard or learned. It has profoundly shaped who I am.

When I talk about nonviolence, I mean it in every dimension, even in the seemingly small ways we use language. For example, imagine I said to you, *"I'd kill for your fancy hat."* That phrase, although casual, could actually trigger stress hormones in your body, like cortisol and adrenaline, which can have negative effects on your well-being.

Now, compare that to me saying, *"Man, I love your hat."* That simple shift in language produces entirely different hormones in your body, like oxytocin, which fosters feelings of connection and positivity. The difference is in the chemistry: the first response motivates through fear, while the second inspires through love.

Great leaders understand this difference. While there aren't many who do, those who grasp the impact of their words and actions are the truly inspirational leaders—the ones we admire and love.

Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence has taught me that the way we interact with others, even through our words, can either harm or heal. It's a lesson in leadership and humanity that I try to carry with me every day....

**"...put
yourself in
the other
person's
shoes..."**



PERRINE FARQUE

Author | Keynote Speaker |
Marketing Director
Perforce

...The best advice I was ever given was to put myself in the other person's shoes, see the world through their eyes, and find common ground. It's a simple concept, but incredibly powerful when it comes to starting meaningful conversations.

Rather than trying to argue or push your point across—which is rarely fruitful—this approach focuses on understanding. Even if you're factually correct, forcing your perspective often doesn't lead to the outcome you want. What truly matters is your ability to influence others, not overpower them.

The best way to influence is to genuinely understand where the other person is coming from. When you take the time to see their perspective and find common ground, you create a foundation for collaboration and progress.

That piece of advice—to approach situations with empathy and a focus on shared understanding—has shaped the way I communicate and engage with others. It's a lesson I come back to again and again...

**"Ultimately,
you have to
be able to
sleep at
night."**



NICK COURT

CEO
The People Experience Hub

...This advice came from an old boss of mine, Angus, who was the head of industrial relations at Tesco. I remember talking to him about a few challenges I was facing at the time.

His response was simple but profound: ***"Ultimately, you have to be able to sleep at night."***

What he meant was that you need to have a clear conscience. You need to know that what you're doing aligns with your values and that you're doing the right thing, even if it's not always easy. If you feel you're not acting in the right way, that unease can follow you and keep you awake at night.

It's a piece of advice that has stayed with me ever since. It's a reminder to act with integrity, ensure your decisions align with your principles, and avoid choices that could weigh on your conscience later. After all, peace of mind is priceless...

**“Be yourself,
everyone
else is
taken.”**



KAY VESSEY

Head of Talent and Learning
H&H Agency

...This is an interesting question, and I've had loads of great advice over the years. **But there's one quote I always go back to—it's by Oscar Wilde: “Be yourself; everyone else is taken.”**

I love this quote because, for me, it's all about authenticity. It's a reminder to embrace who you are. Putting on a mask or acting like someone else takes so much energy, and it's ultimately unsustainable. This idea ties back to the importance of individuality. **We're not cookie-cutter people—we're complex, nuanced human beings.**

The more we can be ourselves, the more we can understand and appreciate each other for who we truly are. That authenticity brings value to everything we do, whether it's at work, in our personal lives, or within our communities. When we all embrace who we are and respect what others bring to the table, we create a better world for everyone....

**“Build
yourself
around the
attributes
you like in
others.”**



DAVID BELLAMY

Founder & CEO
Harkn

...One piece of advice someone gave me has stuck with me for 30 years, which says something about its impact. He told me: ***“Build yourself around the attributes you like in others. When you see people doing things you admire, adopt those traits. And when you see behaviors you don’t like, leave them behind.”***

That idea of consciously building your capabilities, character, and approach by observing others has been something I’ve carried with me ever since. I still do it today. When I meet people, I notice things in the way they communicate, how they carry themselves, or how they handle situations, and I think, *That’s a great way of doing things*. I try to incorporate those qualities into my own approach.

It’s also about looking for the good in people—the positive characteristics and attributes that make them stand out. It’s a mindset that’s served me well and continues to shape how I grow and work with others...

**"What's for
you will not
go by you."**



SARAH HOOD

Director of Talent & Mobility
BUPA

...The best advice I've ever been given—and I've been fortunate to receive a lot of great advice—came from my mum. She's Scottish, and while I won't attempt the accent, there's a phrase in Scotland that she's always said to me: ***"What's for you will not go by you."***

It's such a comforting and reassuring piece of wisdom. **Whenever you're in a situation—like going for a job, taking a big risk, or facing uncertainty—it's a reminder to trust in the process.** It's about fate, really. It's the idea that what's meant to be will happen, and what isn't meant for you won't.

This phrase has helped me so many times in my life, especially when things didn't go as I hoped. Whether it's disappointment over missing out on an opportunity or fear of the unknown, it's been a grounding force for me. It's a way of keeping faith and staying optimistic, even when things feel uncertain.

That advice—to trust that what's for you will not pass you by—has been a constant in my life. It's something I always fall back on, and it never fails to bring me a sense of calm and perspective....

"...treat everyone like people, not based on their job title."



CLARE CATHCART

HR Director
ELEVATE Hub

The best piece of advice I ever received came from my mum, even though she's never worked in the corporate world or an office environment. I had just finished university and been offered a temporary role as a receptionist. I remember her words very clearly: ***"The best thing you can do in the world of work is treat everyone like people, not based on their job title."***

Her advice came from her own experiences. She had worked in cleaning jobs over the years and noticed how some people looked down on her, while others treated her with great respect. That contrast made a lasting impression on her, and it resonated deeply with me.

It's advice that has stuck with me throughout my career, especially working in HR, where I interact with so many people every day. It's about treating everyone with respect, understanding their unique personalities, and building effective relationships. Beyond that, it's about genuinely connecting with people—asking about their weekend, learning about their children, or finding out about their interests. **It doesn't matter if someone is a CEO, a head of HR, an administrator, or a receptionist. Everyone deserves respect and a meaningful connection.**

Thank you, Mum, for that advice. I've developed and expanded on it over the years, but those early words of wisdom—shared when I got my first temp receptionist job—have shaped how I approach work and relationships to this day...

"Figure out what you want to fight for."



DEBRA COREY

Author & Global Speaker |
Chief Pay it Forward Officer
Step It Up HR

...It's interesting how advice often reflects where you are and what you're dealing with at the time. For me, one of my biggest challenges has always been wanting to be involved in everything. I love being part of things, and I even play devil's advocate in meetings—even when I agree with what's being said. While that enthusiasm has its benefits, it could also make me a bit annoying.

The best piece of advice I ever received came from my boss at Gap, Steve Finland. One day, he pulled me aside and said: ***"I love your passion, and I love your energy, but you need to be more selective. Figure out what you want to fight for. Because if you don't, people are going to stop listening. They'll just think, 'Oh, there's Deborah Corey sharing her opinion again.'"***

That advice was a game-changer for me. It wasn't just about meetings—it became a mindset. It taught me to be more intentional in all aspects of my work. When I communicate with employees, I focus on what truly matters. When I design new programs, I'm deliberate about what I include. Being selective has had a ripple effect across my career, improving how I work and connect with others.

Thank you, Steve, for that incredible advice. It was the first domino that set off a chain reaction of positive changes in my approach to work. It's a reminder for all of us: focus on what matters most, and your impact will be so much greater...

**"Make a
nuisance of
yourself."**



JOANNA PARSONS

Author | Internal Comms
Chief Executive Officer
The Curious Route

...Many years ago I started a new job and was in the process of trying to understand the business and getting to know key stakeholders. I met with the director of strategy who gave me this advice: **"Make a nuisance of yourself."**

He told me that if there was meetings I needed to be in, then I should ask to attend rather than wait to be asked. He encouraged me to be proactive, introduce myself to everyone, get outside my swim lane and really understand the organisation and its people.

It was great advice and I still take it to this day!...

"Never do something once..., unless you're prepared to do it a thousand times."



JASON LAURITSEN

Keynote Speaker | Author
Co-Founder and CEO
Check-In To Thrive

...This piece of advice has been incredibly important to me, though I can't remember where I first heard it. I wish I could credit the source because it's been so impactful. It's parenting advice, but I've found it applies to many areas of life. The advice is: ***"Never do something once with your children unless you're prepared to do it a thousand times."***

At first, it made perfect sense in the context of parenting. For example, if you let your kids sleep in your bed just once, you set an expectation—and they'll want to do it every night. But over time, I realized this principle holds true in other areas as well. It applies to pets, relationships, and even the workplace.

As humans, we tend to view a one-time action as the start of a pattern. If you **allow something once, it quickly becomes an expectation. If it happens a couple of times, it can even become an entitlement. And undoing that expectation or entitlement can be incredibly difficult.**

This advice has helped me approach situations with more foresight, ensuring I'm intentional about the boundaries and behaviors I establish. It's a simple but profound reminder of how our actions set the tone for future expectations, whether at home, at work, or in any relationship....

**"Take every
day as it
comes."**



SUZI ARCHER

People Engagement Director
Norgine

...Outside of work, the best piece of advice I've received—and the one I refer to almost daily as a working mum—is to ***"take every day as it comes."*** Every day is different, and some days you feel like an absolute rock star. You get the kids out on time, make it to stay-and-play, and manage everything on your to-do list.

Other days, I'm just grateful if I show up to work fully dressed, not covered in my two-year-old's Weetabix, and the dogs are safely contained in the house.

It's a reminder to approach parenthood—and life—with patience and kindness toward yourself. Taking things day by day helps me stay grounded and realistic about what I can achieve, and it's advice that's served me well...

"Trust your gut."



RACHEL MILLER

Author | Keynote Speaker |
Founder
All Things IC

...The best advice I've ever been given came from my brother. In fact, he said it to me again just about an hour before we spoke: ***"Trust your gut."***

My brother and I are very close. For context, I'm one year, five months, and a day older than him—not that I ever let him forget it! Professionally, we couldn't be more different. He trained to be a vicar and is now the Director of Studies at Blackburn Diocese, where he teaches vicars how to preach.

Over the years, we've supported each other as peers, acting as checks and balances for one another. He's always said, ***"Trust your gut—not what anyone else would say, but what you feel is right."*** That advice has become a cornerstone of how I navigate life.

It's easy to get lost in the noise. Everyone has a view, an opinion, or a suggestion, especially as an entrepreneur, a business owner, or even a parent. But trusting my instincts—tuning out the noise and focusing on what feels right—has been invaluable.

**"Life is change.
Change is
constant.
Growth is
optional."**



KARIN VOLO

AI Consultant | Speaker
CEO and Director
Evoloshen

...I wish I knew where this came from—I don't have the original source—but it's advice I've lived by for over 25 years: ***"Life is change. Change is constant. Growth is optional."***

That phrase really resonates with me because it captures the essence of how life works. Things are always changing. We go through different phases in life—leaving university, diving into our careers, building relationships, getting married, having kids, buying a house. Life is a continuous journey of transitions and adjustments.

But what stands out to me in this advice is the idea that *growth is optional*. While change is inevitable, how we respond to it is entirely up to us. We have a choice in how we want to approach and adapt to life's changes. It's tied closely to the concept of a growth mindset: **if you choose to embrace growth and continually develop yourself, you'll keep evolving as a person.**

This advice has been a guiding principle for me, reminding me that while I can't control all the changes in life, I can always choose to grow and move forward. It's a mindset that keeps me focused on progress and self-improvement, no matter what comes my way...

**"Family and
community.
Spending time
with good
people."**



LINDA JONAS

Management Trainer
Co-Founder
Check-In To Thrive

...This is a bit personal, but it's definitely the kind of wisdom worth sharing. I once asked my 99-year-old grandfather what he thought was most important in life. His answer was simple: ***"Family and community. Spending time with good people."***

That was his core philosophy. It's also why he was saddened when I moved to Australia, so far away from family. For him, being surrounded by good people was key to a meaningful life.

His advice really inspired me and made me reflect on my own relationships. It led me to rethink some friendships and become more intentional about the people I choose to spend time with. Our time is a gift, and being mindful of how and with whom we share it has become so important to me.

Through his words, I've learned to value the people around me and focus on building relationships that truly matter. It's a lesson that continues to shape how I live my life...