



Five Minutes with... Gabriella Salmon



My name is Gabriella Salmon and I work within my own business (www.freetoachieve.net). My work involves business transformations and coaching individuals using EFT and NLP as leading edge tools.

My professional career includes experience in consulting across various industry sectors and in the last 5 years change management and communications across Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Education, Insurance and Financial Services.

My work has predominantly focussed on system implementations and business process change. I have designed Change and Communication Strategies, I have led teams of change agents, devised project plans and executed against timelines, set up communication channels and infrastructure. I have designed change interventions and delivered against them on an international and national scale.

1. How did you come to perform in a change management related role? What attracted you?

Having worked for a global consulting company in the past I had been exposed to various projects and have always had a fascination of the Change Function and what it means. I decided to give it a go at the end of 2006 and discovered my compassion and understanding of how people felt emotionally is a key factor in change.

I felt a natural connection for people undergoing change whether it is personal or professional. I am very attracted to viewing change from an integrated perspective. I believe in fairness and have concern for how people are treated during change. I love listening to people's individual concerns and dealing with their emotions and facilitating transitions, so they feel as calm as possible during the change.



I am very passionate about connecting people to their hearts and creating happiness in their personal and professional life. This type of change is becoming well known overseas where work and community life are more closely woven together. Yet the conversation we are now having with business leaders in Australia are pointing to a yearning for something deeper and authentic in our organisational life and our work.

My approach to transformation brings about, a sense of community and good health back into people's lives at the individual, team and organisation levels.

2. Why is good change management so critical to the way businesses perform today?

Change Management is about people and I don't think that business realize the impact to the bottom line of hiring the wrong people in the business as well as dealing with a hugely disengaged workplace.

Some of the best change is dictated by the workforce and having the authentic conversations with the people involved. I have attached the 10 principles by Meg Wheatley as each time I share this with people they have a very positive emotional reaction; followed by "if only we could get this into our organization". www.performancefrontiers.com/articles/Wheatleys%2010%20Principles.pdf

I think that good change management is the ability to look at the number of projects occurring and being able to assess which projects can be integrated so they become a program of work rather than fragmented little projects which compete for the attention of the same stakeholder group.

3. What makes a great change management practitioner?

I believe that a good change manager needs to be able to communicate the truth to the people affected. It is the ability to be pragmatic about the approach they bring to these situations. Sometimes we simply need to say "unfortunately this is a business decision and sometimes business have not had the opportunity to consult or collaborate and this has to be the way forward, so how can we work through this together to help make our lives easier?"

A good change manager will invite people into the conversations and ask what they need in order to get full buy in and then devise a change strategy including the change interventions agreed to by the employees. Listening skills and follow through are also very critical for credibility.



4. What would you say to anyone thinking of starting/developing a career in change management?

Are you passionate about people and do you care enough about people to make a difference?

Do you have the guts to speak up and take on an education role with your project team and the business to set the expectations of the change function and what will be delivered?

Emotional maturity, a keen sense of emotional awareness, flexibility, and being emotionally resilient are vital. I believe it's very powerful to connect to other Change practitioners and getting yourself a mentor to check in with how you are feeling and how to overcome obstacles you may face.

5. What is your idea of a great change management challenge?

Leaving the organization with a "Big Buzz" in its culture

Transferring the capability to organisations and to people to positively adapt to a changing world in a way that is sustainable and makes a real difference.