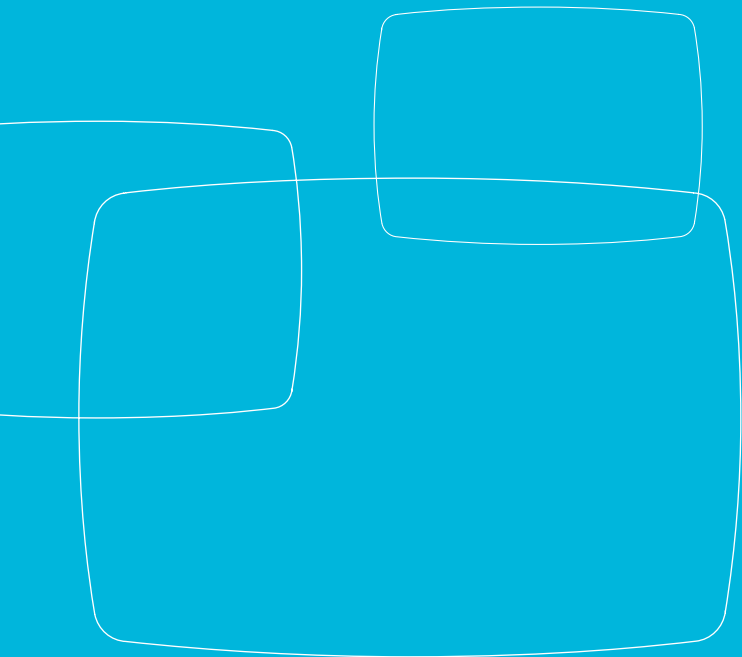


the **BiG**
PICTURE

managing your own career in television



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Writing and research by Leonie Morgan

Design and Production Colorbox Design Group

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1 Foreword

Women Working in Television is a partnership between the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and the Australian television industry. The Nine Network, the Seven Network, Network Ten, the ABC, SBS, Commercial Television Australia (CTVA) and the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) have been actively involved in this partnership since 1998. In 2003, the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) joined with us to make Women Working in Television an industry-wide partnership.

Women Working in Television focuses on initiatives designed to assist career development and networking opportunities. The initiatives to date include:

Taking the next step

Workshops for women in television aimed at developing skills in career planning, negotiation, communication and mentoring.

A lunch with...

A series of television industry networking lunches on a range of topics for small groups of participants. Lunches have been hosted by each of the television networks, SPAA and ASTRA in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide over the last four years.

Networking forums

A series of forums in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, which feature local, interstate and international speakers and offer a networking opportunity to a large number of women.

Shared Visions - Women in Television

A publication containing interviews and personal anecdotes drawn from the networking forums.

Visions of Balance - juggling family with work in television

A booklet aimed at both men and women working at all levels within the television industry who are seeking to juggle the often competing demands of work and family.

Working Networks - a practical guide to networking in television

A booklet containing helpful hints and industry case studies focused on enhancing and improving networking skills.

The Big Picture - managing your own career in television

The latest initiative of Women Working in Television is ***The Big Picture - managing your own career in television.***

There are many people involved in bringing this publication together and our thanks go to all of those who generously and enthusiastically contributed stories about how they successfully manage their careers in Australian television: Liz Armstrong, Beck Barnett, Lauren Bean, Natarsha Belling, Rosemary Blight, Fiona Crawford, Liz Deep-Jones, Jacinta Dunn, Sinddy Ealy, Corallie Ferguson, Emma Fitzsimons, Julie Foster, Posie Graeme-Evans, Sandra Hook, Bridget Jobson, Kaaren Koomen, Kathryn Lord, Azar Marashian, Leanne Mercer, Paula O'Toole, Margot Phillipson, Julianna Poli, Fiona Robertson, Tanya Scott, Maree Slater, Deb Stewart, Ros Tatarka, Chrissie Tucker, Deanne Weir and Lisa Wood.

Thank you to Connie D. Henson and Imogen Wareing who have also contributed career management tips.

We also thank the Women Working in Television Committee for their ongoing commitment to the career advancement of women across Australian television: Kathy Seymour and Maree Slater from the Nine Network, Justine Carroll from the Seven Network, Bridget Jobson from Network Ten, Chrissie Tucker from the ABC, Krystyna Chawa from SBS, Julie Flynn from CTVA, Alex Jones from SPAA, Debra Richards from ASTRA, as well as Leonie Morgan, Sabina Wynn and Helen Lovelock from the Australian Film Commission.

The Big Picture - managing your own career in television was researched and written by Leonie Morgan for and on behalf of Women Working in Television.

2 Introduction

We all know how competitive the television industry is - just getting a foot in the door is often a major challenge. Once you are in, an abundance of talent, skill, experience, confidence and networks helps you stay there.

But there is much, much more to it than just holding on to that job. Job satisfaction and being able to build on your achievements are also important. And while not everyone is aiming to be the 'Next Big Thing' or to achieve a top-rating program, we all want to feel that we are gaining some ground and moving ahead, and that our contributions are recognised and valued.

And while recognition is important, we also want some autonomy. We want to feel we know where we are going. We want to manage our own careers to maximise our potential.

This booklet aims to provide you with the tools to more effectively get the most out of the hours you spend at work and to manage your own career according to what is important to you. It includes practical advice, hints and stories from women working in the industry about how they manage their careers in Australian television.

In 2003, Women Working in Television focused on career management strategies. Quotes from participants in the small group networking lunches over the year have been included to illustrate various aspects of managing a career and maximising potential in Australian television.

But before we begin it's important to note that everyone's career aspirations are unique. What feels right for one person might not be right for another and the suggestions made in this booklet are just that... suggestions. As it is your own career, how you actually go about managing it, is really up to you.

Managing a career in television - it's really all about persistence, passion and patience!



3 Starting from here

Whether you work for yourself, a small organisation or one of the large television networks, managing your career is ultimately your own responsibility. It's your decision whether you actively go after a new job, a new assignment or new responsibilities - or whether you focus on maximising your potential where you are now - while striving for personal growth and work/family balance.

However, some help is at hand. If you work for an organisation your employer might provide some training in career development techniques or access to career information services to help you with personal career decisions. And if you work for yourself, the further reading in **Useful contacts and resources** on page 60 will also be of assistance.

There are some golden rules that will underpin any decisions you make in actively managing your career.

1. You are the only one who knows what you want from your work/life and who can effectively plan your future.
2. Your life situation and other things around you could change so career plans need to be flexible. It's estimated that most people will change careers an average of six to seven times during their working lifetime, so don't feel that everything has to always remain the same.
3. You need to really get to know yourself before you can successfully manage your career. Knowing yourself is all about being aware of your personal needs as well as your skills, aptitudes, likes and dislikes. Working through some of the checklists in this booklet will help you to clarify what these might be.

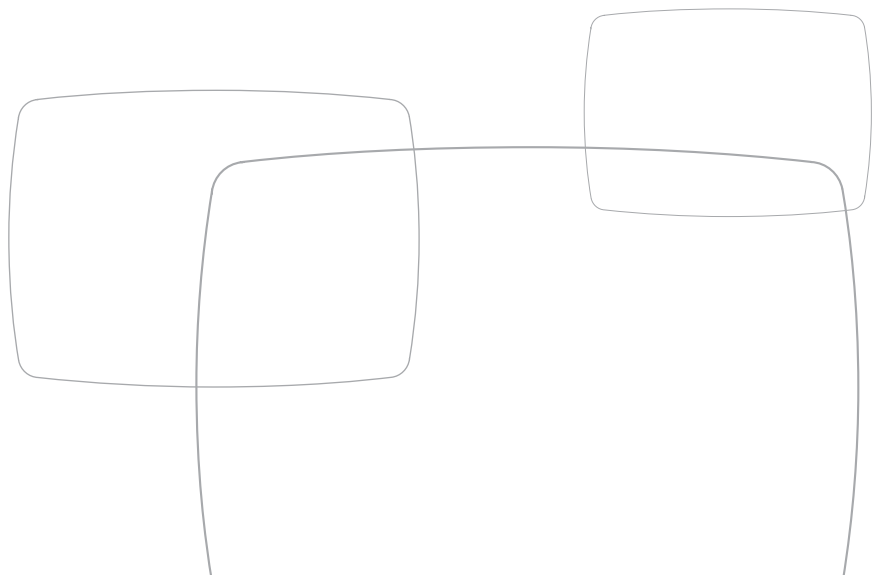
4. There are resources and people to help you along the way if you are not too sure about your career direction and what you want to get out of your work/life. You'll find more details about these as you read on.

So where do you start with managing your own career? The first thing to do is to take a good look at where you are now.

Working out where you are now

The definition of a career has changed over the years. Where formerly a career was probably a linear progression upwards in a single function or industry, today it will probably include more changes of direction. So long as you're gaining skills, knowledge and insight, you're going in the right direction.

When starting to move forward in actively managing your career you need to begin from where you are now. Sometimes it's useful to do an overall work/life inventory. The following questionnaire, adapted from *No More Blue Mondays*, will help you do just that. It also points to the areas you may need to work on, as well as providing an assessment of whether you are currently taking active control of your own career.



Your work/life inventory

Adapted from Sheerer, Robin E. *No More Blue Mondays - four keys to providing fulfillment at work*, Davies-Black Publishing, California, 1999, page 97.

Think about your current job and consider it in the light of the following statements. Be honest with yourself. Place a tick next to each statement if it applies at least 90 per cent of the time or an 'NA' if it is not applicable to your current job.

- I am satisfied with the results I produce at work
- I know what the cutting-edge issues are for my area of work, my organisation and the television industry
- I have recently volunteered for a new project, developed a proposal or come up with a creative new idea
- I have deliberately created a support system to assist me to do what I want to do in my work/life
- I belong to professional organisations and attend meetings and conferences related to my work in television
- The people who work for me appear energised by their work and I see them as competent and able
- I have a mentor or role model
- I have a clear direction for my work/life and have outlined my goals for the next three to five years
- I understand organisational structures and politics and am sensitive to them
- I know the goals of the organisation in which I work
- I am supportive of my boss and other managers
- I meet regularly with my supervisor to discuss progress and have also worked out other ways I can monitor my own progress
- I actively seek out work I find stimulating
- I have told my supervisor and other relevant people about where I want to go with my work/life
- I ask for and take on more responsibility
- I use my imagination, ingenuity and creativity to help solve organisational or creative problems
- I take the initiative and work hard
- I follow through on projects and complete them
- I meet deadlines
- I am on time for work and meetings
- My working space (including my filing system) is functional and supports getting my work done
- I communicate openly with people I work with, particularly when I experience problems with them
- I keep up with my emails and other correspondence
- I return telephone calls as soon as possible
- I have a daily planning system in place that works for me
- I admit it when I make mistakes
- I acknowledge and congratulate myself on my success

- I take advantage of opportunities to learn and try new things
- I am up-to-date on the newest information, equipment and technology in my particular area of work
- I keep my commitments and follow through with what I say I will do
- I acknowledge people around me for their contributions
- I can truthfully say that I love the work I do
- My work means more to me than just a way to make a living
- I have recently (within the last six months) stepped out and taken a risk with my work
- I am able to easily describe my skills and accomplishments to others
- I have a system for keeping track of my accomplishments
- I actively chose the field of work I am in and the challenges present in it
- I regularly put myself in situations that stimulate personal and professional growth (conferences, seminars etc)
- I present my views and ideas assertively and persuasively
- I take responsibility for ending my own boredom and getting myself out of a rut
- I delegate tasks enough so that I am freed up to do projects that interest me
- I have people who coach me on achieving my goals
- I am aware of the type of support that is available within my organisation to assist me with my career planning
- I am reasonably happy with the balance between my work and family life
- I have a balance of play and work in my life
- My people skills are as good as my technical skills
- My appearance reflects my goals and the image I want to project
- I know what I value in life and how work contributes to this
- I am healthy and physically able to carry out goals
- I am happy with the way my job fits in with the rest of my life

In summary, I am currently operating at per cent (0 - 100 per cent plus) in my work/life.

What did you score? Give yourself one point for each tick.

- 40-50:** You're doing a great job of managing your work/life. You are action-oriented, you know what you want and are exercising your personal power.
- 30-39:** You're on the right track. Take more responsibility for your own work/life and look less to others for direction or blame.
- 0-29:** You're waiting for other people to take care of you and your career. Wake up! Actively work through the exercises and checklists in this booklet and take steps immediately to take control of managing your own career.



Managing your career

Connie D. Henson Phd is Director of Learning Quest. She has been a Leadership and Development Consultant to organisations in Australia, New Zealand, Asia and the USA.

Dr Henson was guest speaker at the Women Working in Television small group networking lunch at Network Ten Sydney in March 2003.

Managing your career is like managing any other project; it takes effort and requires follow through to be successful.

Focusing on what is important to you, including your goals and values, is the foundation. Given the amount of time we spend working, it should be consistent with the things we care the most about. Naturally our values and goals change throughout our lifetime, as we gain experiences. This means that we will need to re-assess them on a regular basis.

The second area for focus is on what you can do. This is essentially what you can contribute, and includes your skills, abilities, experiences and personal characteristics. It is important to be honest with yourself about what your potential contributions are. This may require reflecting on what you have done in the past, and asking others for their feedback. Once you know what you want and where you are, the next step is making a plan to get where you want to be, and of course following through with the plan.

Most people find making changes or reaching a goal easier if they do a little each day. The smaller steps are easier to achieve and give us confidence to move forward. The daily routine, which includes some type of self-development, also keeps us in the learning mode, which enables us to be more adaptable and able to take advantage of changes in our environment.

It is also helpful to review longer periods of time to see the big changes we have made and to remind us of the success we have had.

Regardless of your profession, taking charge of your own career and focusing on ongoing development is important for continued career success. Moreover, integrating your work goals with the rest of your life and values is essential to your continued satisfaction.

Assessing your strengths and weaknesses

Think about what your talents are, think about what your passionate interests are, and then how you can merge them into your ideal career path.

If you worked through the work/life inventory above you will be able to assess where you are at in your current job and how you might be able to take some additional responsibility in better managing your career.

In order to really know yourself, to focus on the things you need to do to better market yourself and to begin to be in charge of managing your own career, you also need to be aware of your existing strengths and weaknesses.

No doubt you will already know some of the things you are good at and the areas in which you are achieving well, along with some of the skills that you might need to improve upon.

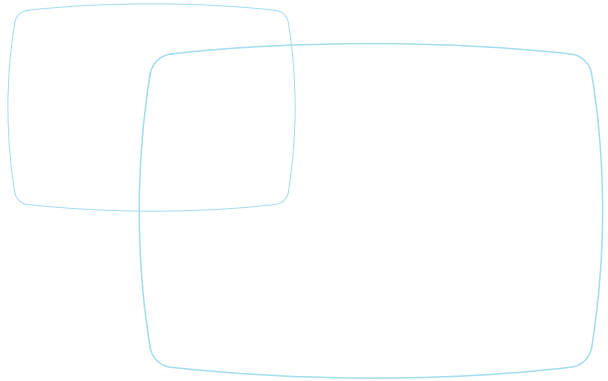
The strategies set out below will help you identify your strengths and weaknesses at work. Set up two columns. One with a heading 'strengths' and one with a heading 'weaknesses' or 'things to work on'.

- Take the job label off yourself ('I am a production manager') and define yourself instead as 'I am a person who can...'. Then think of how you would finish this sentence. What tasks do you do? What skills do you use in these tasks? Make a list. Put a star against the ones that you feel you are really good at - these are your strengths. Put them on your list of strengths. Put the ones that you feel you might need to work on into your second column.

- What energises you? These will usually be the things you are good at. Think about the tasks you do at work - what do you enjoy, what strengths are you using at these times? Add these to your list. Then think about the tasks that really take away your energy. These will usually be the things that you do not enjoy very much. If they are skills you really need to do the job, add them to the second column. They may be things you can work on.
- Ask yourself: 'What does everyone tell me I'm good at?' If these are not already in your list of strengths, add them in.
- Think of other types of work that you did prior to your current job or the tasks you might do in your unpaid time, including the time you spend with your family. Then ask yourself: 'What skills did it take to do that?' Write these down and put a star against the ones you feel you are really good at. Add these to your list of strengths. Add the others to the list of things you might need to work on.

Don't be too hard on yourself. Remember that a weakness is something that either through lack of experience, exposure or interest you haven't fully developed and are therefore not very good at yet. You have the potential to improve in these areas.

And sometimes, although you might be aware of all your strengths and weaknesses, you need to take the plunge and jump in anyway, as Margot Phillipson says in the case study below.



stories from television



Identifying your strengths and weaknesses and jumping in anyway!

Margot Phillipson has been involved in the development and production of South Australian television since the mid-1970s. She is currently Executive Producer Television for the ABC in South Australia.

Everyone talks about the need to identify your strengths and weaknesses, but I think it is a mistake to dwell on the weaknesses.

From my experience, women find it very easy to come up with the things they are not good at. I hate public speaking, for example, but I give it a go and it's not so bad as long as I prepare myself. I've spent a lot of time having to encourage women to take the opportunities that are offered, to give it a go, to say to them, 'you have got the skill base. Okay, so you're not good at this but we'll work on it and you'll find that you are actually better at it than you think'. It's a lack of confidence rather than a lack of ability.

I find I don't have to do this with the men. For some reason, men don't seem to have any weaknesses and they are full of confidence. They leap in, they do the job while you sit back because you haven't leapt in, and often you find that they are not doing it as well as you could if you were doing it.

So remember, if men are so competent, why do we always see those signs: 'Danger: men at work'? And what did God say when he had created man? 'I can do better than that' - and then he created women!

So this brings me right back to where I started. If an opportunity is there, know yourself, believe in yourself, have the right qualifications and grasp the opportunity with both hands!

Looking at the things that impact on your work/life

At different stages in your career and in your life - different things satisfy you. At some stages, particularly when you don't have a family, you will want to put all your energy into your career, at other times you will want to ease off.

Ideally you will be the one to set limits on the satisfaction you get from your current job or where you might go in the future. However there might be issues or circumstances that are outside your direct control. These might include one or more of the following:

- You may have family responsibilities that you need to take into account when looking at the job you want to do or are able to do.
- Your level of training might be inadequate or inappropriate for the requirements of your current or ideal future job.

- The people you work with might have conservative views about the sort of jobs women can or should do, or the way that women should behave.
- You might lack self-confidence.
- The location in which you live might restrict the range of jobs you might aspire to.

If any of the above factors apply to you, think carefully about whether you want to change them. Some will be within your control, others will not, and there may be some you won't want to change.

Remember that at one time or another everyone will experience some form of constraint that will limit their progress. Most of these issues will work out over time, but with others there might be some additional action you'll need to take or you might need to seek outside advice or assistance.

Working through the checklist below, adapted from *My Career, My Life, Myself*, could assist you in assessing what you might do to overcome any career constraints.

Following on from this is an action plan developed by Liz Armstrong from the ABC.

Which career hazards require my attention?

Adapted from *My Career, My Life, Myself*, published in Australia by Nine Network Australia under license from Worklife Australia Pty Ltd, page 19.

There are a range of factors which will influence your ability to meet your career goals. Overcoming certain 'hazards' or changing certain attitudes or behaviours will often in themselves have a positive influence.

Mark below those issues which concern you as possible hazards hindering your career growth and development.

- Failing to think strategically: Focusing on detail may result in not seeing how your work fits in with that of your fellow team members. Don't neglect work that helps them as well as you.
- Over-the-top ambition: Being competitive is important and will get you noticed. But standing out too much as an individual may produce resentment and could be counterproductive to advancing your career.
- Insensitivity to others: Listen to what is not being said, as well as what is. The 'hidden agenda' at work causes the same damage as computer viruses in software, ie neither is easy to detect and both can sabotage work activity.
- Over-dependence on mentors or sponsors: The value of your informal advisers to the career steps you are planning is to challenge your ideas, not to tell you what to do. Don't become too reliant.

- Clinging to past roles: Each position change, be it a transfer or promotion or new employer, requires a different behaviour and personal style. Check you have adjusted to suit the changed circumstances of your position and your employment environment.
- Running solo: When problems are really difficult, don't hesitate to recruit help from others. Better to find a successful solution as part of a team, than be a loser who tried alone.
- Breaching trust: Failure to follow through on promises to others jeopardises organisational efficiency. Also, people who can positively influence your career reduce in number if you do this more than once.
- Liking everybody: In reality this is impossible, so don't pretend. But do demonstrate respect for technical competence in others. Your words - spoken and written - should consistently reflect this in your communication at work.

Now check with three people close to you. Do they agree these are hazards for you? If so, they are the issues you need to address to increase your chances of achieving your career plans.

tips for success



Managing career constraints

Liz Armstrong is a Training Adviser at the ABC. Liz would like to acknowledge the work of Paul Stevens from the Centre for Worklife Counselling in Sydney which she drew upon in developing this case study.

After you've completed the research and planning stages of your career development, you may need to give some thought to any barriers that may be in your way.

There are always things which you could call constraints, but it's really important to work out which ones are really constraints and which ones may only be perceptions. If you are letting the perceptions hold you back, then no amount of development planning will be effective.

Have a look through the following possible constraints and think about whether any of them might have come up for you:

Constraint	Perception or Reality	Action Plan
You'd like to take on a different job, but you're a bit afraid of not being as good at it as you are at your current job.	This may be true, but you don't need to be afraid of a learning curve, so long as you have been realistic about your ability to do the new job.	Try to stop being overly focused on 'job mastery' as a motivator, at least for a while.
You're not all that comfortable when it comes to taking risks.	Familiarity is comfortable and safe. You may have a low tolerance for risks.	Perhaps you might need to build more steps into your action plan, so that any changes will be incremental and not cause you too much stress.

You want to work pretty near to where you live.	This is a real restriction if you live in an area where employment is limited.	You might have to go elsewhere for a while to get the kind of experience you need for the longer term.
You have lost a previous job.	Aarrggghh. Even if you've received a beneficial financial settlement, losing a job is a setback if it wasn't planned.	Allow yourself some time to recover your composure and focus on the benefits of planning a new goal.
You feel that if you changed jobs now, you would be wasting all your experience.	You might waste your qualifications and experience if you stay in a job you don't like anymore. If you have a disproportionate need for status in your job, this could be holding you back.	Try to suspend your focus on 'status' as a motivator.
You wouldn't want to take a step backwards.	Sometimes you might need to go backwards first if you are changing career direction. It's difficult to go from one industry to another and maintain status.	Try to suspend your focus on 'status' as a motivator.
You don't feel really comfortable when you have to sell yourself to others.	This is a reflection of your level of self-confidence.	You can't change your personality, but you can prepare yourself for one interview at a time and represent yourself positively based on your achievements.
You feel that it is the organisation's responsibility to help you with your career.	This is only partly correct. Career development is a partnership between the individual, their manager and the employer.	Remember that your part in the equation is to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self direction and motivation • Self assessment • Career decisions • Follow up • Learning and skill development • Any necessary behavioural changes.
You don't have the level of education to get the job you really want.	You have investigated the job role thoroughly and found that it requires more formal education than you currently have.	Investigate educational opportunities and make a plan to do further study or revise your career plan so that your level of education is more appropriate.
It's much harder for women to become managers.	The reports show that despite many years of social and legislative reform, women still have a long way to go to achieve occupational and career equity in the workplace.	Make a plan, taking into account a realistic appraisal of your skills, knowledge and attributes, in order to be as competitive as you can in the industry of your choice. Ask someone you have respect for to give you a reality check and listen to the feedback, even if it may be painful.

Think of any constraints as just another opportunity to make an action plan, rather than letting them encourage you to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

Working out where you want to go from here

You need to be open to all opportunities.

And don't ever be scared to make a change.

Beginning to really take control of your own work/life is a little like starting on a journey. You need a map and people to help you along the way but, as with a journey, you must first have an idea where you want to go.

Writing down what you hope to achieve and setting realistic short and long-term goals will make you feel like you are actually going somewhere. You'll have a sense of achievement that you really are moving towards managing your own career.

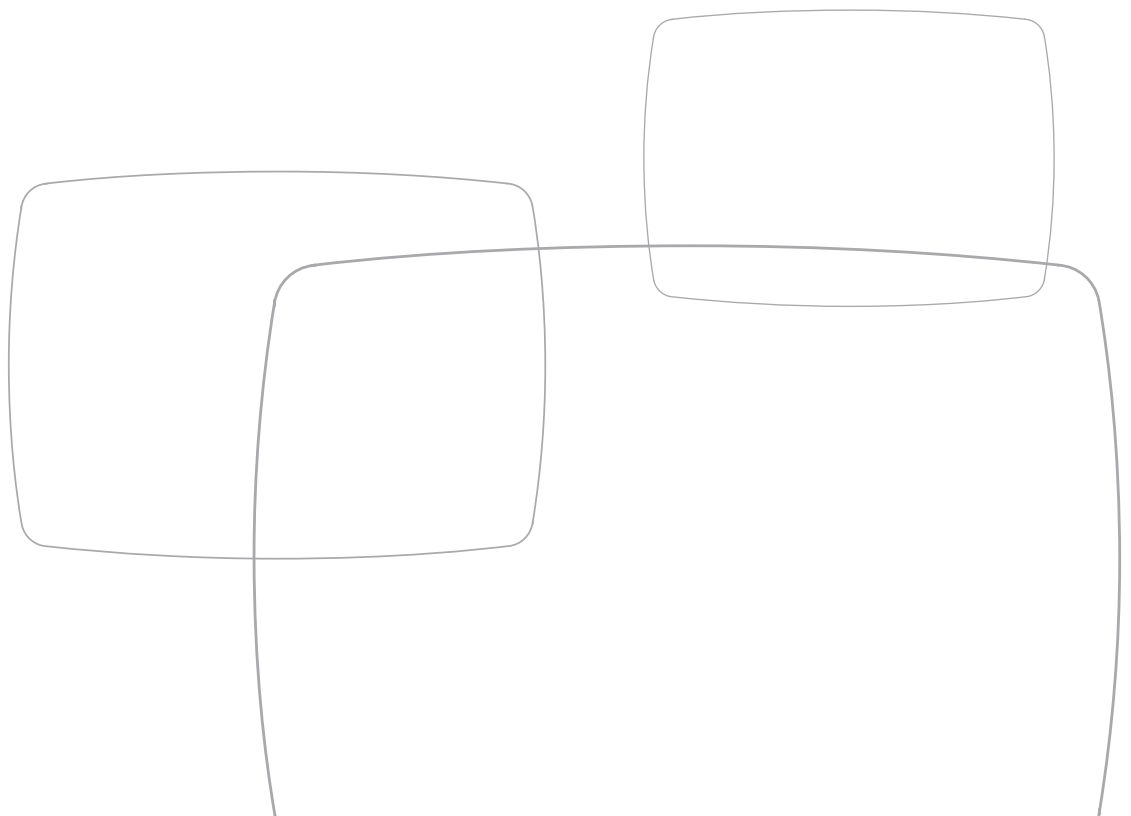
Goal setting is important because goals give you direction and motivation and reinforce your self-esteem.

How you might set your work/life goals:

- Think about what you want to achieve in your work/life. Work out what's really important to you and write this down. Make sure you specify the 'what', 'when', 'who', 'how many', 'how often' and what your end result will be.
- Try to only focus on one or two big goals at once and keep your goals balanced. Don't spend all your time working on your career at the expense of your family or your health.

- Write down all the steps that you'll have to take to reach each goal and break this list down into smaller actions that you can take this week, this month and in the coming months. You now have an action plan that is achievable.
- Work out any additional resources you might require to reach your goal. This could include time, money, expert assistance or additional training.
- Identify potential obstacles you might encounter in attaining the goal, and plan what you are going to do to prevent these holding you back.
- Stay focused on the benefits of attaining your long-term goal. Attaining short-term goals might mean you achieve benefits along the way such as an annual bonus, a better work and family balance or an improved relationship with your boss.
- Stay flexible. Allow time for unexpected problems, delays or revisions.
- Visualise yourself accomplishing your goal. This will help your focus.
- Reward yourself for the small successes along the way.

And remember, although you are working towards these goals, you need to remain flexible and to adjust what you're working towards if things change.





Don't be afraid to take detours...

Azar Marashian is the Network Ten Program Schedule Manager.

I started in television about eight years ago after spending eight years in radio. I loved radio but as production manager it meant that my hours were extreme to put it mildly. So I got into television.

After about three years in sales marketing, I realised that my dream was to work in programming. I had been involved in radio programming and loved it. I didn't think television would be any different. Unfortunately positions in programming were (and are) few and far between, especially at Ten, due to the size of the organisation.

A position finally became available as the Assistant to the General Manager Network Programming. To almost everyone I knew, including myself, it was a backward step as far as a career is concerned. I was a Marketing Executive with responsibility for various accounts and promotions and to move into an assistant role didn't seem like a natural progression. But I knew that I had to (for want of a better phrase) be 'in their face' to get noticed. Whilst in that position I absorbed as much as I could, asked lots of questions and put in my two cents worth when I could. Finally, three years later a role was created for me as Program Schedule Coordinator and a year later I was promoted to Program Schedule Manager with a staff of five.

During my time in radio and television there are a number of things that I've learnt about moving forward in my career.

- When developing an action plan for your career, you have to be prepared to take detours. Things don't always work out the way you had planned they would. Be prepared to take sideways or even backwards steps if you have to. What may seem on the surface to be a bad career move may be exactly what you need to do.
- Find a mentor. My first boss at Ten, Melissa Suriano, was a great mentor. She was always generous with her knowledge and experience and guided me through the intricacies of television culture. We set goals, re-evaluated them when necessary and worked towards achieving them. Most managers want to help. You have to be prepared to seek their help and work together in achieving them.
- Tell everyone your goals. Chances are if they can't help you they probably know someone who can.
- Volunteer your time in the departments that you're interested in. You only have to spend one lunch time a month in an area that interests you to get a better idea of what the job entails, and whether you want to pursue it. Plus, when a position becomes available, you're top of the list. They know you have the experience and the fact that you volunteered your time works in your favour as it illustrates that you are enthusiastic - exactly what every manager wants!
- Listen to and respect your managers. I don't think you have to always agree with what they have to say, but they have a wealth of experience. So take note.
- Do what courses you can. It may one day come to a choice between you or another person and if the only difference is that you've done a course, then it will all have been worthwhile.
- Don't be afraid to take every opportunity presented to you. You may not think you're ready, but the person offering it to you obviously does.
- Finally, don't be afraid to change your career goals at any time. We often set out with a clear goal in mind only to discover another passion. You shouldn't feel that you have to continue on the original path if it no longer holds any value.

All in all I think the best tool for creating an action plan for your career is the people around you. Turn to your peers or your managers and you'll find many an action plan, failures and successes, ideas and suggestions that you can draw from and adapt to suit you.

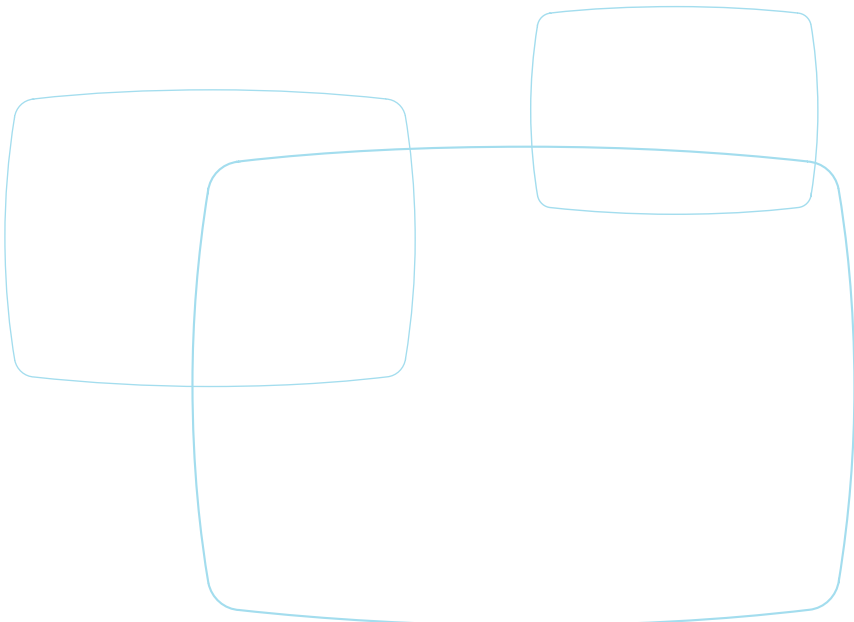
take some action...

Some quick questions to ask yourself as you begin to more effectively manage your own career

- What would I like to do more of at work?
- What do other people say I am really good at?
- What do people ask me to do because no-one else does it as well?
- How can I get a better fit between my work/life and my family responsibilities?

Some steps to take

- Follow up on one of the books listed in **Resources and further reading** on page 64.
- Talk to three people who seem to really love their work. Ask them what they like most about it, what they like least about it, what a typical day or week is like for them and whether they would make the same career choice if they could do it all over again. Ask them how they go about managing their work/life.
- Volunteer for something at work that you know you are really good at.



4 Making opportunities work for you

Now you have the first stage of your career management plan in place. You have an idea of what you want to achieve in the next few days, weeks, months and maybe even years. And you also have some

idea of your strengths and the areas in which you need to improve. The next step is to look at what's available around you and make sure you maximise all the opportunities that present themselves.

stories from television



Love what you do and when you stop loving it, stop doing it!

Sandra Hook is General Manager of The LifeStyle Channel.

The closest I've ever come to developing a career plan was in my early twenties, and even now I'm not sure that it was a plan as such - more a desire to gain experience and find a new, interesting thing to do.

Between 20 and 30 I rarely had a job for more than two years. In the first year I'd learn, in the second I'd consolidate and as best I could, master it. Then I'd move on, sometimes within an organisation, sometimes to a new employer.

I've had a fairly diverse media career. I started in a small advertising agency in Brisbane and have since worked in large agencies in Sydney, small and large publishing companies, partnered in a corporate communication firm and now work in television.

Along the way I've been an office junior, copywriter, media manager, promotions manager, PR consultant, marketing director, editor and now the General Manager of The LifeStyle Channel.

While this may look like a fairly eclectic path to nowhere in particular, it has provided me with a breadth of media experience and opened up a variety of choices.

A few things have informed my decisions and perhaps helped me along the way.

- Starting somewhere small can be great for your career. In smaller organisations I was exposed to and had to do a much wider variety of tasks. This helped me to gain a lot of experience quickly.
- Find smart/talented/creative people to work for - learning from the best can only be a plus.
- Volunteer/have a 'can do' attitude. As glib as that may sound, enthusiasm for your job or company is never lost on your employer. At first I volunteered, and later was employed, to manage AWARD - Australian Writers & Art Directors Association - where I worked with the top 'creatives' of the time and learned more in a year than had I spent ten in an agency.
- Join committees but only if you really want to help (not because it's good for your career).
- Seek and accept responsibility and the consequences that come with it. No scape-goats or buck-passing please!
- Find teachers and ask questions. Then teach and help others along the way.
- Always look after your team; their successes are your successes (and their failures are yours too...).
- Love what you do and when you stop loving it, stop doing it!
- Be humble, be honest. Do what you say you will do. Work hard.

Building your confidence

*I speak my mind and I'm up front -
I believe you garner respect for being like
that.*

Having confidence in your ability is very important to your feelings of self-worth. It's also vitally important for career success too. And yet in 1996 and again in 2000, when we asked senior women in Australian television about why there were far fewer women than men in senior levels of the television industry, well over half said this was a result of women lacking confidence in themselves.

Confidence is about having positive self-esteem, feeling self-reliant and self-assured and taking on the world with energy and enthusiasm - in short, it's about feeling good about yourself. Here are some steps to take if you want to build your confidence:

- Stop putting yourself down. Really focus on the things you do well and always remember these. No matter how badly you think things might be going, try to hold onto this positive self-image.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.
- If you have negative thoughts, try to cancel them out with positive ones. This might be easier said than done, but you might try to focus on how you felt when the project you were working on came to a successful end.
- Everyone makes mistakes at some stage. It's okay to make a mistake as long as you learn from it and then move on to the next challenge.
- Share your successes with the people you work with and also give them encouragement for the things that they do well.
- And if you still feel that you lack confidence, don't be afraid to seek some professional help.

stories from television



Meeting each opportunity with determination and confidence

Kathryn Lord is Chief of Staff, News, in Sydney for the Nine Network Australia.

They say that in real estate, the key to success is the three 'p's': position, position, position. A seasoned and very wise old journo once informed me that in media that translates to persistence, persistence, persistence.

I've carried that little saying with me since my first encounter with a television newsroom - work experience at Prime Television, Wollongong. And while my career hasn't been very long, nor am I even half the way to my ultimate career goal, those three words have prompted me to push for each opportunity with determination and confidence.

I spent months volunteering my time at WIN Television Wollongong to learn 'on the job' the tricks of the news journalist trade. For my current role as Chief of Staff at National Nine News, Sydney, I daily hunted down by phone Nine's News Director until the job was mine.

I won't say that working within a male-oriented team is not daunting - it is! I find self-confidence and alertness the keys to surviving and thriving... and the fast-paced atmosphere of news ensures those attributes are even more vital.

Many of my male colleagues are at least ten years my senior... which makes ageism one of the issues I deal with day-to-day. I must constantly remind myself that my contribution does count, whilst acknowledging I do have a lot to learn... and at what better place to do so? My colleagues, both male and female, make that the easy part.

Developing your negotiation and assertiveness skills

I've learnt that you need to speak up if you want to improve your situation and create your own opportunities.

While you might not think of yourself as a great negotiator, you use your negotiation skills all the time. You're negotiating when trying to get a new project up, when you ask your boss for a raise, or a change in your job, when you want the cooperation of the people you work with, and even when you decide who in your house is going to cook the dinner.

You use your negotiation skills so much that it makes sense to really focus on improving them.

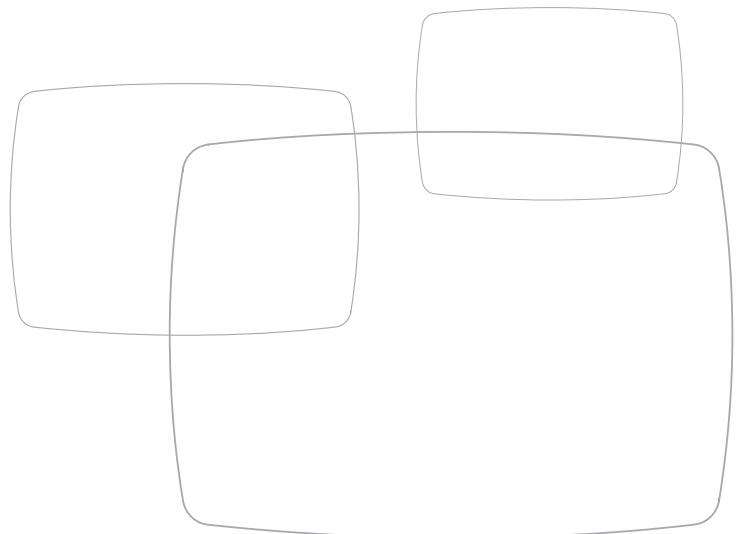
Negotiation is not always about winning. You don't have to be tough and mean to negotiate successfully. You do need to be assertive. You need to be aware of your own needs and what you want to achieve.

To improve your negotiation skills work through the steps below:

1. Preparation - before you actually start negotiating, take some time to work out exactly what it is you want to achieve, as well as considering what the other person wants and needs. Think about the give and take of negotiation - what you might be willing to give up and what you're willing to settle for. Try to anticipate what the other person's objections might be to your ideal outcome.
2. Get the negotiation off to a good start - build a friendly base before you actually begin negotiating. Chat informally and try to establish some trust.

3. Make sure you listen carefully to the other person's proposal and try not to interrupt. Carefully consider their plan and then talk about the parts you like and how they fit in with what you want.
4. Propose solutions - don't just list objections. If the other person raises objections to your proposal, you should have already anticipated them. Use the other person's objections to focus on the positive aspects of your proposal.
5. Be honest about any flaws in your proposal.
6. Clearly state your ideal outcome - but be practical if a less ideal arrangement might be satisfactory.
7. Focus on potential joint gains - both the gains you want to make and those that the other person might make - this is about arriving at a 'win/win' solution.
8. Know when you've reached an agreement - when you think you're both in agreement on what the outcome of the negotiation might be, move the discussion on to a summary and verbally present what you think has been agreed to. You might want to write down what has been agreed.
9. Follow up - in order to maintain trust, your follow-up is very important. Do everything you agreed to do and if you have any problems, contact the other person and work through the issues.

Working in sales Paula O'Toole, the Nine Network Australia's Brisbane Sales Director, has had to really develop her negotiation skills. Read on to see how she has achieved this.





Working in sales - it's all about relationships and negotiation

Paula O'Toole is the Brisbane Sales Manager for the Nine Network Australia.

- Know your own organisation back to front - you need to know all about it to sell it! Know your organisation's strengths and weaknesses and what you can offer to counteract any negatives.
- Know your competitors and what their strengths and weaknesses are. Do you have a product to offer as an alternative to one of your competitors?
- Don't be seen as someone that 'slags' their competitors - talk about your company's positives rather than someone else's negatives!
- Use your organisation to your advantage - use the different departments in your organisation to sell your offer (eg promotions, programming).
- Introduce your clients to your key personnel and show the depth of support you can offer.
- Highlight your organisation's strengths and quote examples of how you have delivered similar projects.
- Know what's driving your client's organisation, ie is it cost reductions, increase in market share, increase in sales etc. Each client is different and has different needs. **Know these needs.**
- Sales and negotiation is all about **relationships**. Get to know your client's key decision makers and form a relationship with them. Keeping a spreadsheet of clients' likes/dislikes and sporting interests helps when it comes to servicing. Also ensure mailing lists are up-to-date including correct spelling of surnames, correct titles and addresses - if it's incorrect, it reflects on your organisation.
- If you can't provide a request by a particular deadline, phone the client and explain that your offer will be late - be honest, and you will find that most of the time the client understands.
- Know relevant data/figures prior to meeting with clients - there's nothing worse than an unprepared rep!
- Read trade magazines, daily newspapers, the internet etc, ensuring you are well informed on your industry. You must know what is going on and include **relevant** pieces of information when speaking to your clients.
- Avoid asking questions that can be answered with just a yes or a no - milk your client for as much information as possible - it shows you are interested in their business.
- Don't constantly ring your client (ie several times a day) waiting for a response. There is nothing worse than an annoying sales person - it's off-putting and can backfire.
- If you do miss out on a piece of business don't rant and rave (embarrassing to both you and your organisation). Ask the client why not, and what you could have done better. Turn it into a learning experience.
- Don't use email all the time. It can get impersonal. Have a quick coffee or make a phone call from time to time - it's easier to form relationships face to face or verbally rather than via email.

Developing your networks - and using them effectively

The most important thing I've learnt in managing my career is to always be taking active steps to enhance my networks.

Along with talent, skill, experience and confidence, networking is seen by the Australian television industry as one of the key factors to finding and retaining a job in television. Your networks are vitally important in managing your career.

The initial research that formed the rationale for setting up Women Working in Television emphasised the importance of networking. The senior women we spoke with said that the success of men's informal networks and the lack of women's networks were major reasons for the low number of women at senior levels in Australian television.

Networking is all about making, developing and maintaining contacts. It's also about gathering, collecting and distributing information to the mutual benefit of yourself and the people in your network.

Although it does take time, networking can pay enormous dividends, particularly in the competitive and ever changing world of television. Networking helps you keep up with the changes and trends. It also helps you become known by a lot of people and this could give you an edge in this hugely competitive industry. You then become the person people think of when an opportunity arises and this means you get the break you might be looking for. There's a real advantage to people knowing who you are and what you are capable of.

Networking is an important facet of managing your own career and in the case study below Chrissie Tucker, Manager Diversity with the ABC, sets out her tips on networking. If you want to know even more about the art of networking, read the Women Working in Television's 2002 publication *Working Networks - a practical guide to networking in television* (see **Resources and further reading** on page 64).



Networking - out and about!

Chrissie Tucker is the Manager Diversity in the Human Resources Division of the ABC and a member of the Women Working in Television Committee.

Networking and getting out and about have been very important for me during my working life.

I have met a lot of interesting people and heard many stories as well - which adds to my knowledge and experiences.

Networking provides a variety of opportunities and options to extend yourself and, as you get to know more people, the easier it gets!

Who are your potential networks?

- people you work with
- people you have worked with in the past
- people you meet at conferences, business meetings and markets
- professional association contacts
- school and university friends

- family friends, neighbours and other people in your community
- people you meet at social occasions (yours, your partner's or your children's)
- email and internet contacts.

Some general tips about networking:

- don't always expect anything in return - be giving
- always follow up and send thanks
- have your business card available at all times and make sure it's easily accessible
- keep a list of contacts and keep in touch
- listen to others - don't do all the talking
- arrive early - leave late and maximise the opportunities at networking functions
- always remember people's names - it helps to repeat them when you are first introduced
- take the step to go to places on your own, and introduce yourself to others
- at a networking function, the real movers and shakers usually stand at the front of the room or furthest from the entrance
- keep the conversation going and ask questions: Who? What? How? When? Where?

Balancing networking with work and family responsibilities:

- networking will need to be more focused - you might need to keep up with your networks via email
- try to keep up-to-date with all media subscriptions and supplements
- aim to attend two or three strategic functions a year
- arrange meetings around your needs.

Developing your personal style

Your style is not just about how you look, it's about lots of other things as well - it's about what makes you different from all the others.

Everyone is an individual. Ascertaining what you bring to the workplace and the way this forms part of and adds to the workplace team is an important aspect of managing your own career in television. It's about defining what's different about you and ensuring that this is conveyed to the people that matter: your boss, work colleagues, external clients or the viewers.

No matter what you do in television, your personal style will be important - and even more so if you are an on-camera personality like Natarsha Belling from Network Ten.



Achieving your personal style

Natarsha Belling is a Presenter/Reporter with News at Network Ten.

Achieving a perfect style as a news presenter is certainly a challenge. You need to strive for that ultimate balance, presenting the news with authority and objectivity, yet still maintaining an element of sensitivity and personality.

Certainly a major part of my personal style has been shaped by the growing importance of breaking news. Consumers now demand up-to-date unbiased information and can source it from a variety of mediums. Hence news services and their presenters have dramatically changed as a result. A news presenter now needs the skills to not only read the news, but source it, interpret it, develop and analyse it.

Live interviews are now an essential part of many news bulletins and, as a presenter, I need to be across all major developments, prepared at any moment to conduct a live interview with authority and substance. I believe working as a journalist is also a critical foundation for a news presenter. That invaluable experience helps you understand the issues, re-focuses and refines your interviewing style, and allows you to appreciate the deadlines and difficulties of putting a news bulletin together.

I also feel it's important never to stop learning and to evolve and improve with the times.

Becoming more visible

Maintain a positive attitude at work so that whatever is said about you on the grapevine tends to be upbeat.

Once you've worked out your personal style, it's time to promote yourself and become more visible within your organisation and within the television industry.

It's time to be noticed - but remember you need to do this carefully because depending on what you actually do, getting noticed can either improve your prospects or it can have quite the opposite effect.

Here are some ideas taken from *Career Management - whose responsibility?* that will help you to become more visible:

Working up your own personal publicity plan

From *Career Management - whose responsibility?* published in Australia by Nine Network Australia under license from Worklife Australia Pty Ltd, page 20.

- Gain the attention of influential people: Look for opportunities to be appointed to project teams or taskforces. Contribute articles to your employer's newsletter or other forms of employee communications such as intranet postings. Merit alone will not advance your career but how others perceive you will. Display cheerfulness, energy and courtesy at all times, even when you do not feel like it.
- Know yourself better: Take a good look at yourself. Your personal appearance may need attention. 'Dress successful, be successful' is a saying that sums this up well. Read all you can about career management, how to appraise your skills and competencies and how organisations function. Expenditure on quality books on these subjects will not be wasted.

- Campaign discreetly: Don't announce your personal publicity campaign to your colleagues. Any finesse of diplomacy will be shattered if you do.
- Do more than your share: Take on the project or assignment others are not keen to do. Offer to take on some of the outstanding matters in your boss's in-tray or at least offer to do something that will help your boss conclude the task in hand.
- Be seen: Attend all functions such as farewells, award presentations, meetings, company picnics etc. Become active in the professional association linked to your current occupation. Attend all meetings. Write articles for their newsletter. Get photographed at their functions.
- Know your colleagues better: While working on your personal publicity campaign, you should not neglect those with whom you work. Essentially work/life is teamwork. Getting ahead requires that others respect you and that they cooperate with you when tasks have to be achieved. Your success requires the involvement of others.

Projecting a successful image

I believe the people you want working for you are the people who are chomping at your heels. Of course, you have to make sure they are focused and loyal too.

Projecting a successful image is vitally important to making the most of opportunities that might come your way. It could be as simple as how you walk and how you talk. But at the end of the day you should always remember that what is seen to be 'successful' is in the eye of the beholder.

If you want to project a successful image:

- Look at the confident people around you - they usually have particular physical traits which you might like to pick up on. Stand up straight and hold your head up. Speak clearly and use a firm handshake. Smile and look relaxed. Look people in the eye. A word of warning though - you'll need to be sensitive to those around you, as these particular characteristics of confident people are culturally specific and may not always apply if you are working with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Learn from your mistakes, but don't continually focus on them.

- Don't put yourself down, especially at work. Making demeaning remarks about your appearance or skills, even as a joke, will project a poor self-image.
- Be proactive. Speak up about how you or others could handle problems early on. Don't portray yourself as a victim. Show that you are responsible for your own decisions and results.
- Gracefully accept compliments. Don't say that your project wasn't much of an accomplishment, or that anyone could have done it, or that it contains mistakes.
- Never undersell your own ideas. For example don't ever say 'This might not make much sense but...'
- When you've made a poor suggestion or think you haven't handled a meeting as well as you would like, go back to the key players and restate your position confidently.
- Be confident about asking for what you need from the people you work with or your supervisors. Don't ever say 'I know you're busy but...' or 'I hate to bother you but...' Be direct - 'I need some of your time please.'
- Ensure that interruptions to conversations don't prevent you from making your point.
- Be succinct and to the point - say what needs to be said and no more.



Enjoy it when things go well... and be sustained when doing the hard yards at 2am in the morning!

Kaaren Koomen is General Manager, Multimedia Regulation and Strategy with OPTUS.

- Establish a career in an area that you love. I really enjoy working in the communications industry and dealing with legal, regulatory and policy issues for Pay TV, satellite broadcasting and internet services. It is such a dynamic industry that is changing the way we communicate as a society and this creates enormous challenges and opportunities for industry and government alike. Playing a part in this new landscape and finding solutions to legal, regulatory and policy problems truly motivates me to jump out of bed in the mornings. If you are going to develop a career, you need to enjoy what you are doing and be energised from it - so that you can then enjoy it when things go well, and also be sustained when doing the hard yards at 2am in the morning!
- Take up opportunities. Make job changes that will give you experience in new and emerging areas, or volunteer to work on projects that will give you valuable new skills. Whilst this applies to everyone, I especially encourage young people to try different things and acquire a range of skills early on in their career, at a time when they may have the freedom to take risks and have the flexibility to relocate to another jurisdiction if required.
- Having said that, a golden rule is don't stay in the wrong job for too long. If a position is not right for you, and the road blocks or organisational problems are not going to go away in the foreseeable future, then start to think about a strategic move. If you can't solve the problems, then move on! Don't be in the same place with the same problems in ten years time!
- Learn to be a good manager, support your staff and share your successes with them. Good managers attract good people to their project teams. This creates high-level outcomes for everyone. People who just have naked ambition, and cannot work effectively with others, rarely succeed as well as those who are a pleasure to work with and gather a team of hard working, dedicated staff around them.
- In a busy job it is sometimes easy to get snowed under with day-to-day demands and not assess the big picture. It is important to make the time to regularly review what you do and how you do it, and importantly, whether there are new issues and opportunities coming up around the corner that you can prepare for and embrace. Sometimes you can change the nature and scope of your current job just by doing it differently and taking on new challenges. In other cases you need to recognise the parameters of your position, and if it is not where you want to be, start thinking about making career changes either inside or outside your current company.
- I hesitate to use the word networking, as I feel it sounds manipulative, but it is vital to build a knowledge and understanding of the people and players around you. Be pleasant and courteous towards them, and understand that the exchange of helpful non-confidential information allows everyone to do their job better. As a bonus, if you stay in the industry for a long time many will become close colleagues or even friends. Working with industry associations can also be a great way to join forces on particular projects and issues for mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Have a clear focus on what you want from your working life and career, and then identify the steps that you need to get there. Apply some of the strategic skills you have developed in solving complex projects at work to yourself and your career!
- This last one is the most difficult - try and stay fit and healthy, and aim for some balance in your personal life! For long-term high performance you require energy, stamina and endurance. These are very hard if you are not healthy and are constantly plagued by colds and a feeling of exhaustion. For people with a family, this is even more of a challenge. I have two gorgeous children aged two and four and a wonderful husband and whilst I love working, I know that my family is the most important thing in my life. When we work to live and not live to work we can get the best of both worlds (even at 2am in the morning!).

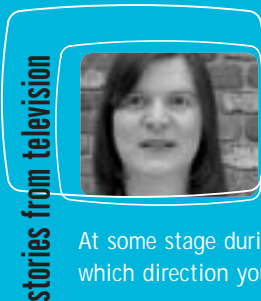
Identifying your transferable skills

Women seem to move up more quickly and effectively by zig-zagging between different organisations and jobs. In one job you increase your skills, reach a level of proficiency you're comfortable with, give yourself an imaginary promotion then go out and see if someone will believe you.

In **Starting from Here** on page 4 we talked about the importance of assessing strengths and weaknesses in beginning to manage your own career. Within your list of strengths you will have also included your skills.

Skills are the things you do really well, they are built up through repeated practice and your skill base broadens as you go along.

Skills are acquired in every part of your life, in your work, leisure activities and social interactions, including those you gain while caring for your family. When assessing and promoting your skills it is important to look at the broader picture and not just your work-related skills. This gives you a picture of your transferable skills. They are the skills you have to sell, the skills that you will use in any job you might aspire to.



Developing your transferable skills

Lauren Bean is a television producer/production manager and is the Director of Beancorp Productions.

At some stage during your career you might decide it is time to have a really close look at what you are doing and which direction your career should be heading.

When I reached this point in my career, I started to think about what I needed to do should I choose to move my career sideways into something, dare I say, non-television focused.

Undertaking some tertiary study can help to formalise your skill base, as well as make you look more appealing to future employers.

If you have been giving some thought to taking on some study, here are a few things to think about:

- Take stock of your skill base. Start reading the ads you find in the employment section of the paper, and also have a good look at ads and job descriptions on the internet. Analyse the language used and also the selection criteria. Use these as a starting point to help you assess your own skills and how they would transfer into another role.
- Start thinking about how your skills would stack up if you were chatting with a would-be employer. A network might know what a producer or production manager does, but how would you describe your tasks to a non-television savvy employer?
- Look at any gaps you might have in your career and think about how you can improve yourself and add value to your career. Look for roles that might assist you to give strength to areas that could do with some improvement.
- Have a look at other television-based roles that interest you and think about what you would need to do to be considered for a position in these particular areas.
- There are often many courses that you can attend within the company you work for to grow your career. Courses such as 'learning to lead' will assist with team managing, as well as the many computer courses to enhance or upgrade your skills.

Should you decide to undertake some tertiary study, there are quite a few things to consider when shopping for a qualification:

- Try and match the course to your background. You may want to take a course in professional writing however if you have spent the last five years working as a production manager then it could get a little tricky marrying the two together. This becomes more apparent when actively looking for a job.
- Really look at the spare time you currently have and how much time you can dedicate to study. As an indication, a part-time Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma requires around 20 hours per week, excluding class time.
- Tell your employer about your desire to undertake further study and ascertain if they will assist you financially or provide you with study leave.
- Cost! Huge issue. Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas and Masters Degrees - expect to pay around \$6,000 per year. \$18,000 is a lot of money to spend on education. Add books to this and it becomes quite expensive. TAFE courses are far more reasonable.
- Research the institution offering the course. Do they have a good reputation? Who are the lecturers - are they leaders in their field, or multi-purpose lecturers who may not really know the subject matter very well?

Whatever you decide to do, the rewards are immense and you will never have wasted time with any study you undertake.

At the end of June, I finished a Masters Degree. I work full-time, and I am the mother of two young children. It was hard, and at times I wanted to throw it in. However I had committed to something and was damned if I was going to give up. I also made a great new network of colleagues from companies such as Telstra, BHP-Billiton, ANZ, Motorola and IBM.

I have completely formalised my existing business skills and learned a vast amount about the world outside television. I now understand the importance of my skills and how they transfer into other businesses. This has given me a far greater understanding of many of the people and businesses I have dealings with.

I have a new network of friends and colleagues, and I have been asked to become a Lecturer in Television Production.

My future can expand in many directions.

take some action...

Some quick questions to ask yourself to help ensure opportunities work for you

- Do I have strategies in place to actively expand my networks?
- Do I have contacts outside my immediate work area?
- Am I making the most of all the opportunities that are around me?

Some steps to take

- Take credit when you deserve it and focus on what you do well at work.
- Don't be afraid to speak up and express your ideas.
- Don't participate in negative gossip.
- Build on your relationships with the people who know what's going on and who get things done in your workplace.

5 Getting help along the way

At the outset of *The Big Picture* we emphasised that managing your career and reaching your full potential is ultimately your own responsibility.

There are also other sorts of help that you can use along the way and some of these are set out below.

Finding a mentor

It's important to be selective when choosing a mentor and to always remember that confidentiality and integrity go both ways.

Having a mentor is a great way to help you to develop in your job, prepare for future career moves and assist you with managing your own career.

A mentor is someone who is usually more experienced and can help you to advance in your career or in your other life pursuits.

A mentor might:

- provide assistance on request
- share knowledge, especially that gained from experience
- share their contacts and networks
- provide information and a different perspective
- assist you with problem solving and provide strategic support
- act as a sounding board
- help boost your self-esteem and self-confidence.

Your organisation might already have an established mentoring program. However, most likely it will be up to you to go out there and find a mentor for yourself.

- The first thing you need to do is to work out what sort of assistance you think you might need from a mentor. Do you need assistance with managing staff or projects, assistance with the technical aspects of your job, general feedback, or support and encouragement. Look for a mentor with skills and knowledge in the area in which you think you need the additional help.

- Check whether your organisation already has an established mentoring program - contact Human Resources to find out. You might also find a mentor independently through checking with your informal networks or your industry association.
- If your organisation doesn't have a formal mentoring program, you will need to find your own mentor. Do this carefully. Discreetly look around for someone who has solid experience and skills in the area in which you work. Someone whose background, values and style are similar to yours. Someone who is knowledgeable and respected in the industry and has good connections.
- When you find someone who you think might be a potential mentor, a good first start is to volunteer to help them with special projects. Put in extra hours and see how you work together. Really get to know them. You don't have to ask the person point blank if they will be your mentor - although you could.
- Take the time necessary to establish a good working relationship. Learn about each other. Build a personal bond, not just a work relationship. There needs to be mutual respect and you need to be confident you can ask your mentor anything.
- You might now move towards more openly establishing a mentor relationship. Arrange to meet on a regular basis to talk and review projects. Look for challenging ways you and your mentor can collaborate on assignments.
- Now you're probably moving into a more formal mentor relationship. You might begin to set goals together and to write these down. Give some thought to what your mentor will get out of this. Ask about your mentor's expectations. What do they want from it - the satisfaction of watching you grow, the knowledge that another key position in the organisation is being filled by a competent person, a vocal supporter for their ideas or a sincere thank you now and again. The mentor relationship should be a reciprocal one.
- Keep the mentor relationship on a professional level. If your mentor is a man, send clear messages from the beginning that sexual attraction is not the basis of your interest. Tell him that you are interested in being a business colleague and learning about the company and the job from him. If you were to become sexually involved with your mentor, you'd open the door to a whole set of potential problems.

- Keep the relationship going. Ensure that the relationship is powerful and beneficial to both of you. Reciprocate when your mentor needs help or a different perspective. The best thing about mentoring is that the relationships are mutually beneficial.
- Don't shy away from any unpleasant truths about yourself that your mentor might point out. Make sure you listen to your mentor's advice and if you don't accept it, explain why.
- Maintain your autonomy - unless your mentor is your manager, you want advice and not someone telling you what to do. Tactfully discuss the advice your mentor gives, but leave yourself free to ultimately make your own decisions.
- If your mentor is in your workplace, you might need to think about how you will deal with any jealous co-workers who feel you're getting special treatment through your mentor relationship. But don't let this stop you from getting the most out of mentoring.
- Stay in touch with your mentor with a phone call, email or note every week or two.
- You'll need to know when to move beyond the mentor relationship. The signs that it might be time could be:
 - Your mentor isn't helping you to grow and move along as you think you should. It's time to look for someone who will.
 - You've chosen unwisely and your mentor is insecure in his or her job and is threatened by you. Look around for another mentor.
 - You've chosen wisely and found a good mentor, but you're outgrowing your dependency and becoming more autonomous - as you should. After you've learned the ropes, you should move toward a peer relationship with your mentor.
- Your relationship with your mentor will change as you grow. Throughout the relationship, asking for advice rather than for decisions will help you maintain your autonomy, and you can gradually shift the balance from mostly asking to mostly sharing and reporting. Eventually you won't need constant guidance from your mentor and you might become friends or equal partners. If the relationship does not develop, make sure that you split on positive terms, so your ex-mentor does not become an enemy.
- At this point, you're ready to become a mentor yourself. Find a promising young woman and return the favour.



Mentoring at Nine

Imogen Wareing is the Managing Director of The Growth Connection Pty Ltd. Imogen is the external consultant to the Nine Network Australia Mentoring Program and was guest speaker at the Women Working in Television networking lunch in May 2003.

The Mentoring Program at the Nine Network is an example of how successful mentoring can be in television.

Key elements in the Nine Mentoring Program are:

- It is demand-driven by staff.
- All mentors and mentorees are volunteers.
- Human Resources coordinates and facilitates the program.
- Mentors and mentorees fill in background information forms to assist with matching.
- Mentors and mentorees have separate information sessions with questions and answers on how the program and relationships work with an external mentoring consultant.

- Mentorees are guided through identifying what they want in a mentor, skills or knowledge areas they want to develop and nomination of a choice of mentors if they know who they need. Human Resources assists with access to potential mentors that a mentoree may not know but who fits their criteria.
- Mentors explore their role, do's and don'ts of mentoring, the boundaries between mentors, the direct manager's responsibilities and how to empower the mentoree.

The Nine Network is currently launching their third mentor program. Evaluation and feedback from the first two programs has been extremely positive. The mentors thoroughly enjoy their involvement in the program and are gaining personal and professional outcomes that include:

- broadening their own networks
- use of personal experience and reviewing their own careers
- satisfaction from assisting their mentoree and seeing results
- a chance to look at work situations differently.

Specific feedback from mentorees included:

- great learning from the mentor's objective perspective
- different strategies and approaches to consider
- expert assistance with work-specific skills such as script writing
- gaining a friend with mutual respect
- support and encouragement "invaluable"
- increased knowledge of other departments and how they interact
- clarified career directions.

Both groups of mentors and mentorees have also reported that feedback from people not (yet) in a mentoring program is very positive - "they think it's fabulous!"

The Nine Network mentoring model is relatively informal, with just enough organisational support to ensure that participants are equipped to manage the relationships, help them to happen and monitor the mentoring programs to ensure they are delivering what the participants need and value. It is not a time consuming or expensive model - talk to your Human Resources department about introducing something similar!

Would a career coach work for you?

There are so many different coaching styles on offer. If you're clear about the outcomes you want to achieve from your sessions, then it helps you pick the right coach and get the most out of it.

While you might be able to find a mentor in your workplace, you may have difficulty in finding someone to provide the particular advice and assistance you need. Or you might decide you need someone who is not so connected to your workplace, someone with specific expertise and training in the areas of career counselling and assistance. You might decide you need a career coach.

Career coaching usually takes place on a one-on-one basis. It can be used to assist you in thinking about career progression and the things you need to do in order to plan for your future. The coach/counsellor acts as a sounding board, helping you with exercises and discussion to prompt you to think about your situation and as a consequence to come up with your own solutions and future directions.

Each coaching session is usually one to two hours duration and the average costs will be about \$200 per session. As most people will have about four or five sessions this may be quite an investment so you will need to be sure that you are getting value for money.

There are many people providing career coaching or career counselling, and it's important that you find someone who you can trust, who meets your specific needs, knows a bit about the television industry and, most importantly, knows what they are doing. You'll need to choose wisely:

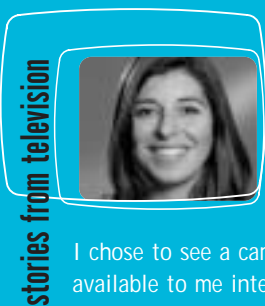
- Ask around - ask friends or colleagues if they have ever used a career coach or career counsellor. And if so, did they like them, did they know something about television and its needs and demands, and above all did the coaching assist them. You might be able to obtain advice from your organisation's Human Resources department. You could also look up career coaches or counsellors on the internet or in the

telephone book - see if any of them work specifically with people in the media/communications industry. If you are a member of an industry association, you could also follow up contacts with the association.

- Once you have three names, you can start to do some real investigating. Make a time to talk with each to decide who, if any, you want to follow up with. Ask them all similar questions - what will the coaching/counselling involve, who will be doing it, what is the cost of the service and is there a contract. (This means that you need to undertake to see them for a specific period of time at a particular cost.) Also make sure you ask them about the knowledge and experience they have with the television industry.
- After initial discussions with each of them, you will be able to make a comparison. Hopefully there will be at least one that you feel comfortable with and if not, then you'll need to start your research again.

As you will be making a substantial investment in this process it is worth taking the trouble at the outset to be sure.

See below for a case study from Sinddy Ealy, Broadcast Operations Unit Manager with Network Ten about how she found value in the career coaching process.



Widening your perspective through career coaching

Sinddy Ealy is the Broadcast Operations Unit Manager at Network Ten in Sydney and is currently undertaking further studies in media.

I chose to see a career coach because I was unsure about the direction my role was taking, and the resources that were available to me internally did not include a coaching program.

Initially I used the internet to gather basic information about career coaches and what they could offer. I also spoke briefly with our HR department to see if they could make any recommendations. Finally I made appointments to meet with two coaches from two different companies.

Although I wanted to start the coaching immediately, I had to put it on hold as I could not afford the cost at that time. Six months later, finances sorted, I was able to start.

In short, coaching has motivated me to pursue work that interests me and helped me channel my ambition productively. It's given me a fresh burst of enthusiasm about my professional life, and at the same time it has served to remind me that work is not the be all and end all. It's a lovely and empowering perspective to have.

Accessing skills development and training programs

Know where you want to be in five years time. Work out how to get there and then you can fill in the gaps with training or skills development.

The skills development and training programs that you can access through your employer or through other sources will provide you with the tools to give you extra backup in managing your own career.

Who better than Tanya Scott from ABC Television and Production Resources, to tell you all you need to know about skills development and training.

tips for success



Transforming training into learning - maximising your professional development

Tanya Scott is the National Training Adviser with ABC Television & Production Resources.

What is the difference between 'training' and 'learning'?

- Training is an event, usually structured to provide transference of knowledge about a particular topic or subject. Participants attend a 'session' or 'sessions' with the intention that they will leave with knowledge or a skill that they did not previously possess.
- Learning is an ongoing and informal process. Learning can be structured or unstructured. It can be deliberate or accidental. It can be about anything. It can be argued that we never stop learning, to do so would be to stagnate.

In order to take control of your professional development you should aim to maximise your access to both training and learning. Take advantage of training opportunities but be aware that in this structure you really only have the power to learn what someone else is prepared to give. How many times have you attended a course or seminar and thought 'that really wasn't what I wanted', 'I really didn't learn anything new' or 'what a waste of time'. On the other hand you have the power to take control over your own learning and maximise its impact upon your career.

So why should you take control of your own learning? Many employees make the mistake of assuming that their manager or organisation will ensure that they receive the appropriate development opportunities. Whilst this is partly true and employers will generally try to ensure that staff have the skills required to perform their current roles to an acceptable standard, few organisations are proactive enough to plan career path strategies for their employees. Between managing budgets, shoots, programs and all of the other people that exist in your workplace, employers generally assume that you have the skills to perform your job. They may consider future development opportunities as part of performance management but only you know your strengths and weaknesses, what areas you have skills in that you would like to develop further and which skills you wish to learn.

How can you do this? Conduct a skills audit on yourself. Think about your current job and the one that you want in five years and ten years from now. What skills do you need to develop to be successful in those roles?

With this goal in mind, plan in detail the skills that you will need. Obviously you may change your mind in a few years time about where you want your career to go, but by continuing to develop skills now you are opening up your potential options in the future. No-one ever restricted their career options by learning a new skill!

It is a good idea to keep an eye on the job vacancies in your industry even if you aren't planning to change jobs soon. By doing this you can see what skills are in demand, and possibly get some ideas about where you want your career to go.

So how are you going to learn these skills? Knowing what you want and in what order you need to develop them is a great place to start.

Training courses are fantastic at exposing you to new skills, but only if you go in knowing exactly what skills and knowledge you want to come out with.

Qualifications (particularly accredited ones) can also assist in that they provide formal recognition of your skills against industry benchmarks. There are countless providers of training so how do you find the right one for your needs? Ask colleagues and friends for their experiences. People are always willing to tell you about good and bad experiences. Consult your training department staff, visit the websites of industry training providers and, if in doubt, stick with the big ones like AFTRS, Metro Screen, and university short courses. Don't be afraid to ask to see their curriculum, course outcomes, ask about the qualifications and experience of their instructors, and check out the facilities before you part with any money. In short make sure that you know exactly what your benefits will be from the course before you pay.

Make sure you look at the new competency-based qualifications in Screen and Broadcasting (Television) which are developed specifically for this industry and are being implemented by the ABC, TAFE and other providers. By achieving a competency-based qualification you can develop skills from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma level in a range of industry specialisations including Camera, Sound, Editing, Broadcast Engineering, Directing and Make-up.

Some quick tips:

- TAKE advantage of courses and training opportunities that are provided to you and make the most of them
- PLAN your own career - no-one else will do it for you
- KNOW what skills you want and need to fulfil your career plan
- SEEK opportunities to learn these skills
- SEE every meeting as a potential contact
- KNOW the difference between enthusiasm and harassment
- FIND a mentor. Mentor someone else
- NETWORK - get out there and make contacts
- SUBSCRIBE to industry publications and internet newsletters. Be aware of creative, technological and other industry advancements
- ATTEND industry conferences
- SPEAK to colleagues and other people in the industry about opportunities
- MAINTAIN an up-to-date resume, being sure to embellish it only with truthful exaggerations!

How does succession planning work?

A key part of succession planning is to try to be open to others who may be looking for assistance.

Succession planning is about finding someone to take your place, to take over from you if and when you leave your job.

It is important because you never know when you might need to take some time out and you want to make sure that the good work you have been doing continues.

Maree Slater from the Nine Network Australia has thought a lot about succession planning and here are her ideas about how it should work in television.

tips for success



The what and why of succession planning

Maree Slater is Director of Human Resources with Nine Network Australia and a member of the Women Working in Television Committee.

Succession planning is a process or system of preparing for the replacement of a company's key people before the event of them leaving. Whilst it sounds simple, in practice it's rarely so, and requires some careful planning and the dedication of the senior management team for it to be successful.

A useful analogy a colleague shared with me that might help identify the potential benefits and pitfalls in succession planning is navigating a yacht. The good navigator uses a proven method to apply his/her knowledge and skills to chart a path that will reach the desired destination. From the current position, the best possible course is chosen bearing in mind wind, tide and speed. Even when the best possible course has been decided, constant revisions will be needed as the journey progresses to adjust for current and changing conditions. Of course disaster can always strike during the voyage with major storms and so on, so the navigator needs to plan for these as well.

Without such planning and ongoing management, voyages are rarely successful. So it is with succession planning - good planning and ongoing management ensures that when a key position becomes vacant or you lose a key person you have:

- the appropriately trained and developed person in place, or
- a well thought out plan for filling the vacancy (eg likely industry prospects, recruitment strategies etc).

What does succession planning look like?

In its most simplistic form, it merely means that every person in each strategic or key position in the organisation identifies at least one likely candidate for his/her replacement and proceeds to develop that person or people for the role. This assumes that:

- the people in these key roles are willing and able to do this
- there are people in the organisation who have the potential to fill the role (given the appropriate training, development and experience).

Such an approach leaves a lot to chance and with the ever-changing nature of our industry, chance is not good enough. You need to have a well thought out and managed plan that ensures you are not caught short when a key person departs.

How might succession planning work in television?

The following is a suggested initial approach that you might take for developing an effective succession plan in the television industry.

It involves:

- identifying the key functions for which replacements may be needed and who in the organisation might be able to undertake these functions (either now or in the future)
- developing a concise succession plan for these functions
- implementing and managing the plan.

STEP 1: Identify the key functions and possible candidates

Develop a list of the key functions within your company for which you may need replacements at some stage in the future. Note these should only be the functions that are critical to the success of the organisation - they should involve key TV functions and essential support functions. Whilst you should look at current roles/positions as a starting point, the emphasis should be on 'functions'. As organisations are constantly restructuring (and I'm sure yours is no exception), the emphasis on identifying key functions instead of focusing on current positions means that even when the role changes the need for the function remains.

Identify the essential competencies/capabilities needed by a person who would be able to successfully undertake this function. For each function, identify who in the organisation is ready now to carry out this function or someone who could be ready in 12 months time, or who could be ready in two years time.

STEP 2: Develop succession plans

Where no-one is identified as ready to undertake the function in two years time, what do you need to do now to plan for a replacement?

What training/development/experience would be needed to enable people identified as potentials to develop the necessary competence to carry out the function?

STEP 3: Implement and manage the succession plans

Inform identified people of their potential and get their feedback - is this function something they would aspire to? Do they have other alternatives? Note: there could be an argument for keeping this information secret, but my experience has been that they will find out anyway, so it's far better to be open. Note also that you have concentrated on 'functions' not current roles or positions - this also assists to legitimise the person's expectations and not have them assuming that they will fill a particular position.

Also discuss career options with other significant people who have not been identified as potentials for any particular function. This is extremely important, as they could be very good performers and essential to your organisation. What are their aspirations? Add to the list of potentials as required. If they're happy in their current role (and they're essential to your organisation) and do not want promotion/movement, what do you need to do to keep them in the organisation?

Draw up development plans for each individual. Have these agreed with their manager and the respective manager of the identified position.

STEP 4: Review progress each quarter

What has changed? What needs to be changed?

So, there you have it! Sounds simple? Not necessarily, but it is essential and always important to get it right. Your company's future depends on it. Good luck and productive planning.

take some action...

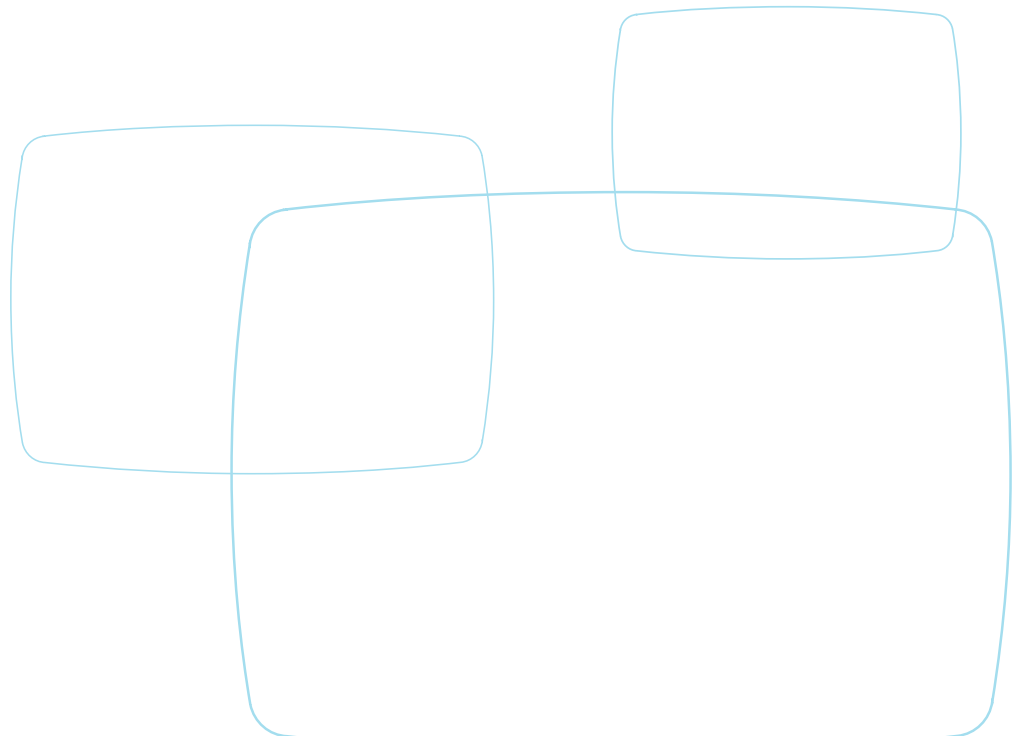
Some quick questions to ask yourself to ensure you're getting the best help you can along the way

- What sort of resources do I have available to me - amongst my colleagues, around my network or within my organisation to assist me to manage my career?
- Have I ever had a mentor? What help did they give me with my career and is it time to look around for another mentor?
- Could a career coach help me to work out where I'm going and what I'm doing?

- Have I completed my own skills audit? Have I checked to see if my organisation provides skills development and training programs that could help me build on these skills?

Some steps to take

- Make a list of the assistance you think you might need from a mentor, career coach and/or your organisation's Human Resources department.
- Become a mentor yourself.
- Subscribe to an industry publication and attend an industry conference.
- Seek out assistance in building on your existing skills.



6 Living within the culture of television

While there are many and varied industry sectors across Australia, you will know from working in television that this culture is rather different to most other industries.

This could be because television in Australia is such a relatively new industry. The first broadcasts went to air in 1956 and many of the key players in the industry began their careers when industry specific qualifications were unheard of and all you really needed to get a job in the industry was to 'know a mate in TV'.

The nature of work in the industry also makes for its unique culture. Working in television involves particular pressures such as long, unsociable and unpredictable hours, seven-day rosters or being on call and non-negotiable deadlines - particularly if you are involved in 'live to air' work. It could also involve working off-site on outside broadcasts. This makes for particular stresses and strains, but also for incredible highs and lows.

So as a woman in the industry, how do you successfully manage your work/life within this unique culture?

Surviving the 70-hour week

For some people in this industry, work has become their life.

As is common across many other areas of the Australian workforce, work in television often involves long hours. And in some television workplaces, like other areas of Australian industry, even when it's not absolutely necessary for you to be on the job, if you are seen to be there you will be seen as being committed to your job, someone who 'works hard' and who deserves a reward. This is so even though we all know that long hours on the job do not always equate to improved work outcomes.

While there are times when you will probably need to work more than a '70-hour week', it is a smart step to monitor this 'long hours' culture to make sure it does not become a habit.

Getting into a habit of working long hours when they are not absolutely necessary will have implications for many aspects of your life, not least of which is your ability to balance your work and any family responsibilities - and we will focus on this in the next section of *The Big Picture*. Continually working long hours will also have implications for your health and certainly for your levels of stress.

So how can you cut back on those unnecessary long hours while getting more out of the actual time you are at your workplace?

- Be honest with yourself. Ask yourself why you work these long hours and what is really gained from them. Always remember that presence in the workplace does not equal commitment to the job.
- Ask yourself if your work tasks could be completed more efficiently in less time on the job.
- If a lot of your time is involved in meetings - ask if these are really necessary and if they are, are they run as effectively as possible.
- Be honest about your time. If you don't have the time - tell people that you can't meet with them immediately but can at a specific time later. And make sure you don't promise more that you know you can complete in the allotted time.
- Try to keep phone calls to five minutes or less and, if it helps, jot down what you need to cover before you make the call.
- Find a daily planning system that works for you. You could write a daily list of tasks to do, people to call, jobs you can delegate all on one page of a notebook. Or you might try an electronic diary/organiser that will keep your daily schedule and maintain phone numbers, email and other addresses. Whatever planning system you decide on - don't keep multiple lists or schedules in different places.
- As you complete tasks on your prioritised 'to do' list - tick these off. This will give you a sense that you are achieving.

- Try to deal with any mail once only - whether electronic or paper. As you go through your mail, decide immediately whether you can deal with an item now, bin it, delegate it, add it to your to-do list or as a very last resort put it in a holding file for another day.
- Organise your desk and your files (both electronic and paper) logically and consistently so you don't waste time looking for things you have misplaced.
- Try to keep your desk clear except for the materials you need for the project you are working on now.
- But don't work too hard at trying to be neat if it is not your nature - if you can immediately find what you need, then it's all okay.

- Always take short breaks during the day to re-energise yourself. Go for a short walk or have a stretch.

And always remember that your success is not about how many hours you spend in the workplace, it's about what you achieve while you are there.

It's also about your mental attitude and the support you have both at home and at work. Read on for Leanne Mercer's tips for staying power in network television and for Rosemary Blight's tips for surviving the 70-hour week working in independent production.



Staying power

Leanne Mercer is the Executive Producer of *Good Morning Australia with Bert Newton* for Network Ten.

I started my working life in the media 21 years ago when, after leaving university, I worked as a cadet journalist on newspapers in Brisbane. I remember writing the television pages back then and being flown to Melbourne for the launch party of *Carson's Law* - those were the days of the huge launch. That was one of my first tastes of the TV world and from there I moved into it two years later to work in publicity at TV0 now known as QTV10 in Brisbane. There was *Prisoner*, *Perfect Match*, *Star Search*, the original *Simon Townsend's Wonderland* and lots of mini-series which were big back then. There were also first class flights, limos and long lunches.

Just how did a shy 22-year-old go from publicity to producing a local morning show in Brisbane at 23 to working in London on a tonight show at 26 then back to Australia to work on kids' shows before eventually moving to Melbourne at age 29 to work on *The Morning Show* (now *Good Morning Australia with Bert Newton*)? Was I wondering back at 22 what I would be doing when I was 41? I don't think so - although I have always been a person who has set goals for myself whether they be work, financial or personal. With 21 years experience in the media (19 of those in television), I've come up with some advice for not only survival in the business but for a career that has brought many happy moments and contributed to a life that has in many ways been very lucky.

Here are my tips:

1. Getting started. When you secure a job in television, do the best you can. This will mean putting in extra time for free to learn every aspect of your job. Be someone who 'can do' and who will go the extra mile rather than be a clock watcher.
2. Look around you. You don't need to find someone as formal as a mentor, but look to someone in your area who is good at what they do and follow their example. Someone you can learn from.
3. Wrong job but right place. If you want to stay in TV but don't like the job you are doing, do something about it. Don't whinge. Quietly make plans to move to another area and approach someone who you can trust that may be able to help with this.

4. The organisation is bigger than the individual. No matter how good you are at your job, no-one in this business is irreplaceable. Never resign because you want to prove a point or to be talked out of it. There will always be someone who will do your job. The game moves on. Also, always think twice about resigning to go into the unknown world of 'freelance'. You may never get back into a network in a full-time capacity.
5. The difficult personality. There are plenty of these in television. They may be intimidating, power hungry or just larger than life. You need to know whether the difficulty is because the person has high expectations. If that is the case then you need to try to work together to get the required outcome which is excellence. If they are just 'difficult' you either have to work around them or hope that you will outlast them.
6. New managers. When you have a new manager you need to respect their position and title even if you are disappointed that they have the job. You will need to be able to work with them. If you can't, then make plans to move on.
7. Being a girl. Life for women in TV can definitely be more difficult. You will need to be good at your job to survive and will need to duck and dive as new people enter the network that you are required to work with. But remember some of these people who enter your world and seem less experienced can also disappear just as quickly. It can be difficult for a woman starting out as many will try to thwart you. Of course there will be others who will help if you show ability and determination. Some of the men I worked with back in Brisbane gave me advice I still use today and helped build my confidence. Experience also builds confidence. There's not really a girl's network which means the boys will often get a leg up before you. If you are not good at your job you will not survive. The business is tougher on women but you just have to accept it. Better to be in a job because you're good rather than because you're a mate. There's less chance then of being sacked down the track. So if you are in television for the long haul you'd better hang on for a bumpy, but in many cases exciting and rewarding, ride.

Good luck!



How to survive a 70-hour week?

Rosemary Blight is a principal partner of independent production company RB Films. Her credits include the feature film *In the Winter Dark*, and the ABC TV series *Love is a Four Letter Word*. She is in post-production on the telemovie *Go Big* for Network Ten.

I am an independent producer so my hours and what I do with them are different to say someone who works within a broadcaster, but nevertheless I think we all have the same desire to reach a balance in our lives.

When thinking about what absorbs my time I would have to say development and financing is the hardest and longest. This is when the dreaded timezone eats into your life and destroys your sleeping patterns. It is during this time that your initiative and drive makes something happen or not. It's about making yet another cold call and pitching, pitching and pitching again. When you ring the UK and they say "can I call you back after lunch" you just have to stay up to the early hours and follow through. As I am writing this I am waiting to ring Canada, which is definitely on the other side of the world!

But despite the demands the one big advantage I have is that I run my own show so it is really up to me to ensure I have balance in my life. I have learnt over the years to create an environment that is sustainable. I have a child so I have always worked very close to home. I work with like-minded people, writers, directors who are accepting and supportive of me and my family, and I of theirs. I have three valuable partners who share the workload and the dramas, and keep the humour alive. We back each other up in many ways and I really don't know what I would do without them. I work hard, as they do, to ensure our partnership survives.

Obviously the key to working effectively is time management, which is easier said than done although I do try. I used to answer every call, respond to every email and take every meeting but in the last couple of years I realise that this is not realistic. I try and respond to all emails but I am much more precious about my time and I have set some rules. For example definitely no phone calls at home - I find people respect this. The energy this business takes is extreme and if you wish to survive you have to look after your physical, and especially your mental, health.

It often feels like we have to be everywhere at once. If we don't attend this party, this conference or this event the industry will forget us. It is important to network but in the end it is the quality of your work that gets you the next job and, let's face it, tired, strung out people networking are not great talent. I feel most decent partners respond to knowing you are committed for the long haul and respect that you can't be everywhere at once. Often one-to-one meetings are as valuable.

It is important to stop sometimes and assess where we are at, to make sure that all the hours you're spending are for the right goal. You can waste many hours, as I have, working on projects which are not right. A constant re-assessment of your goals will save time and make sure those 70 hours a week are good ones.

There is no easy answer to how to survive the long hours, but the one thing that will ensure that you get through them is loving what you do. I am happy spending 70 hours doing this.

Balancing work and family

It can make a big difference to your career when you have children. You need to change the culture and educate your manager and co-workers around issues of family - that 'children do exist'.

While balancing work and family is not just an issue for women, in most cases women do take the major share of responsibility for the family.

Most people will have family responsibilities at some stage - whether it be young children or older dependents, the challenge of balancing work and family is one of the major issues you will confront and overcome in effectively managing your career.

So how will you manage this in the unique culture of television:

- Flexibility is the key to balancing work and family - whether it is flexibility on the part of your partner and family, the people you work with, or your manager - and of course don't forget your own willingness to be flexible. If your job and your circumstances allow, you might also work more flexibly. You could try working part-time, job sharing or working some of the time from home.

- Work out what you value most in your life. Be honest with yourself and try not to adopt the values you think others want you to have. Make a list of the things that you really value and compare these to the way you spend your time - do you spend most of your time on the people and things you value most?
- It might be helpful to see your life as a series of phases and remember that it is possible to concentrate on different priorities at different times in your life. For example you might choose to focus on your young family now and pour lots of energy into your career later on.
- Have realistic expectations - you usually won't be able to do or be everything at once.
- Build up a strong support network. Stay in touch with family or friends you can talk with and rely on if you need help. Make sure you do call them when you need help.
- Try not to think you can do everything yourself. If it's possible, pay someone to help out - even if only occasionally. And make sure any tasks are shared around the family so no one takes on the entire burden.
- If you want to read more about balancing work and family, check out the Women Working in Television's 2001 publication *Visions of Balance - juggling family with work in television*. For details see **Resources and further reading** on page 64.

And finally - try not to feel guilty!



So you want to work in television AND you want kids!

Julie Foster is Chief of Staff at *Today Tonight* for the Seven Network in Melbourne. Julie's two sons are aged 17 and 21 and she says they have both survived despite her working in the television industry!

Well... You need HELP. And LOTS OF IT.

- **CHILDCARE & HOME HELP:** Buy the best you can afford. A live-in nanny, full-time housekeeper, gourmet chef and landscape gardener would have been my choice... But if you're already working in TV, you'll know the local crèche probably fits your budget better. Just make sure that if you're running late after work the staff will HAPPILY wait with your child.
- **The TWO JACKET RULE:** Always have a spare jacket to change into at a moment's notice. If kids are going to throw up on you they time it for maximum effect. Usually just as you're racing out the door. This has the desired effect. You feel guilty all day and he/she doesn't give it another thought.
- **SENSIBLE CLOTHES:** Throw out all your pastel coloured clothes and buy only clothes that match Vegemite. Autumn tones and swirly patterns are best. Grubby little hand prints from where the kids have clung to you as you try to leave the house usually blend in quite well.
- **SLEEP DEPRIVATION:** Learn how to get by on half as much sleep as you need.
- **PERSONAL GROOMING:** In the morning, allow yourself five minutes MAX for doing your hair and makeup. That's all the time you'll get in between searching for missing school shoes, socks and sorting out brawling kids.
- **DON'T STRESS OVER VEGETABLES.** If your kids get takeaway more often than they get a nutritious home-cooked meal, they'll think vegetables are a TREAT. This worked for me. I have one son who lists broccoli and spinach amongst his top ten favourite foods!
- **BE PREPARED!** When your kids are too exhausted to demand your attention (ie when they're asleep), prepare lunches and school clothes for the next day. This makes the morning circus a little easier to manage.
- **JOB FLEXIBILITY:** Pick jobs that work for you and your kids. Jobs that require you to be away from home a lot don't really work unless you've got fantastic backup on the home front. Think about changing jobs every few years as your children's needs change.
- **LEARN HOW TO SEND TEXT MESSAGES.** As soon as your kids can spell, give them a mobile phone so you can exchange text messages. On the plus side, you can confirm pickup times after sports practice and on the minus side you can worry yourself sick when they press the wrong button and YOU receive details of illicit after-school activities.
- **SECRET WOMEN'S BUSINESS:** In general, the entire office is not necessarily as interested as you in your kids' latest milestones. A little casual conversation is fine, but when you're at work, make work your priority. Don't use your kids as an excuse not to fulfil your work obligations.
- **REMEMBER IT'S ONLY A JOB.** Long after the show's been axed and the team's dispersed, your kids will still be there!

What if you have to travel for work?

It's about being super organised, particularly if you have a family as well.

In an industry that covers Australia, with most of the senior management based in Sydney, interstate travel is a major feature of many television industry lives. And with international conferences and markets, overseas travel may also be a feature in your work/life.

Travel may be exciting and involving at the beginning of a job but even if you really enjoy it, frequent long trips can be a challenge. You can lose touch with the people you work with and with your friends, and it's a particularly difficult lifestyle to maintain if you are endeavouring to balance a family while managing your career.

Although travelling for work takes planning and organisation, there are ways to help you ensure that your travel does not have such a major impact on your work and family life, while still being effective at your job.

- Use phones, email, tele and video conferencing if possible to cut down on your travel.
- Discuss your travel demands with your family. Try to reach agreement on how much travel is okay and discuss the outcome with your manager. Tell your manager in advance when you are unable to travel - for example you may want to be at home for family birthdays or special school functions.
- While you are away, stay in touch with the people you work with. Let them know what you're doing and pass along interesting bits of information. Ask them how they are going with the projects they are working on.
- When you're away, try to take an hour each day just for yourself. Relax and do something you enjoy so you don't feel as if you are working around the clock when you travel.

- Maintain a healthy diet and make sure you get some exercise.
- When you get back home make it your top priority to listen to family members tell you what happened while you were gone.

Strategies for getting past the barriers

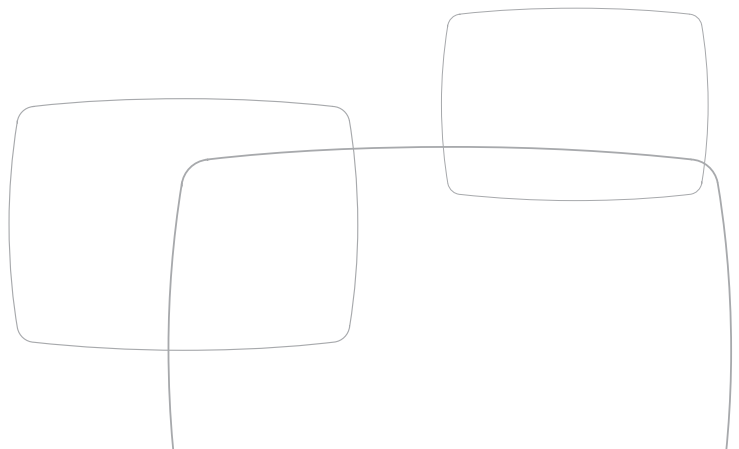
You need to actively manage your career. Keep sight of your goals and don't give up despite what might seem like insurmountable odds.

Previously in *The Big Picture* we looked at career hazards and the things that might be holding you back. Some of these such as a lack of qualifications, difficult bosses and co-workers may be the more overt barriers you might possibly confront. Others such as views about how family responsibilities should be balanced and conservative views about women's roles will be less obvious.

There are four key ways to get past these barriers:

1. Be proactive, positive and confident.
2. Know your rights and the legal obligations of your organisation.
3. Make sure you play your part - as well as rights you also have responsibilities.
4. Enlist support along the way - know where and who you can call on if you need assistance.

The two case studies below provide further strategies for getting beyond the barriers you might confront in television.





Barriers - perceived or otherwise

Emma Fitzsimons is Head of Business and Legal Affairs with Granada Productions.

Do you feel like there are barriers in the film and television industry?

While there are obviously barriers to getting a job in the first place, you may also feel that there are some particular barriers for you within your actual workplace.

These barriers (perceived or otherwise) might be there because:

- you don't have enough confidence to assert yourself and your skills
- you don't have the network of connections that seem to set your peers on a fast track
- you lack role models or mentors
- you don't get along with your manager
- you may have family responsibilities to juggle
- someone else is holding you back.

You will find advice on dealing with several of these issues in other parts of this booklet (for example in effectively managing up, in confidence building and in juggling the family). However, here are three additional practical hints that might provide some help.

1. Insist on a meaningful performance review with your manager at least on a yearly basis.

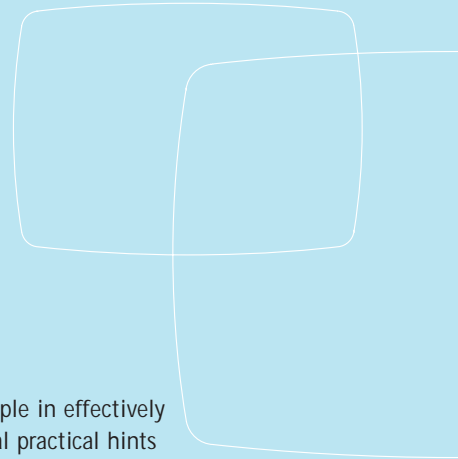
Is your job title or job description actually what you do - do you even have a job description? Has your role changed and has your responsibility increased? Before a performance review, research the market salary rate for the role you actually perform (and not the one you were hired to do) and give serious consideration to whether your title reflects your position. If you can demonstrate to your manager that you are fulfilling a different role to your original role and have increased responsibility, you have taken the best step toward a salary increase or promotion. Even if a salary increase does not follow a change in title, a more appropriate title will instantly make you more attractive for your next move both internally and externally.

2. Ask to go to meetings as an observer with your peers and manager, as many as possible (where appropriate).

Not only will you learn from watching people performing their roles but you will learn more about the business you are working in. You will also find your peer/manager will take the time to explain and discuss the meeting with you - developing a mentor relationship without either of you noticing. Your mentor will also be aware of the aspects of the business that you understand and have been exposed to (which could lead to other opportunities) and you will be given an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and skills when you discuss the meeting together.

3. Consider whether there is someone apart from yourself that is holding you back.

Without getting paranoid or conjuring up conspiracy theories, you may believe that there is someone in your organisation that is holding you back - perhaps failing to give you credit when credit is due (or even taking credit for your achievements) or downplaying your skills to their superiors. It is important to understand that people only do this when they consider you a threat. This is where confidence becomes important. Don't stoop to their level or tell tales, keep doing your best and try to focus on developing working relationships with and reporting to others so they become aware of your skills and your achievements.





Barriers only exist if we allow them to

Liz Deep-Jones presents the *Toyota World Sports* program on SBS TV.

There are NO barriers; they only exist if we allow them to. Of course we face many challenges (some greater than others) but the end goal is always achievable.

I believe that as long as you have the passion, drive, skills and talent you can succeed in any role you choose to pursue.

I was hired as a cadet journalist at SBS Television for the *Toyota World Sports* program when I was seven months pregnant with my first child, in my first foray into this industry. Soon after I was presenting the news updates for *The Soccer Show* until the birth of my first child.

At the time I was the only female journalist/presenter in the sports department which in itself proved extremely challenging but more so in my heavily pregnant state. The most important thing was that no matter what the circumstances were I never let anything get in the way of pursuing my goals.

My unconventional entrance into the male dominated world of sport, which was groundbreaking at the time, proved to me that anything is possible. But I think that the most important lesson to take away is that you must have a strong belief in yourself and never give up on your dream no matter what the odds.

Nelson Mandela once said:

Our worst fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?' Actually who are you not to be?

Nelson Mandela as quoted in Shane Gould's autobiography *Tumble Turns*, Harper Collins Australia, 1999, page 238

As we all know in this industry that we love, it isn't unusual to experience many knockbacks - we've all been there - it can be quite cruel, critical and testing but at the end of the day you just have to keep bouncing back and know that deep within yourself you can do it!

Resolving conflicts

It's so important to work well with your colleagues and if you have any problems to really work through them.

Working through to a win-win solution to a conflict situation will use many of the negotiating skills and processes we discussed in **Making opportunities work for you** on page 15.

It's all about thinking in terms of win-win outcomes, giving everyone the opportunity to put their view, helping people work out the real causes of the problem, identifying strategies that might resolve the issues, working towards a solution and reaching a resolution that everyone can accept.

Sounds easier said than done. Read on to see the strategies Network Ten Operational Human Resources Manager Bridget Jobson uses to resolve conflicts in the workplace.



Resolving conflicts in the workplace

Bridget Jobson is the Network Operational Human Resources Manager for Network Ten and a member of the Women Working in Television Committee.

Conflict is a natural part of life and organisations are certainly not immune to it! Whether it's a storm in a teacup or a serious issue, the problems need to be worked through to a hopefully successful conclusion to prevent working relationships becoming damaged. In fact, conflict can be healthy for an organisation as it can promote change, encourage open dialogue (!), the exchange of ideas and highlight important issues. But when you find yourself in a situation of conflict it can be very stressful. Working in Human Resources, I am asked from time to time how to deal with workplace conflict. Some of my suggestions are:

- At all times try to remain calm (even though you may not be feeling calm!) and focus on sticking to the facts rather than emotions.
- The use of 'I' statements rather than 'you' can be really effective as it's far less aggressive. For example instead of saying 'you make me really mad' try 'I'm feeling frustrated with this conversation' or 'I understand what you are saying, but from my perspective...'
- Listen. Give people the opportunity to say their piece before you respond. In turn, think about your responses.
- Try to think about putting yourself in the other person's shoes to ascertain where they are coming from.
- If you are in a situation where someone is becoming really overheated and angry, ask them politely to calm down so you can talk about the issue in a non-threatening manner.
- Never tolerate anyone shouting or swearing at you. This is unacceptable workplace behaviour. Tell them so quietly and excuse yourself from the situation.
- If appropriate, share any information or insights about your behaviour.
- This is a tricky one but ask yourself honestly if you are being held back by any biases you may have about the person or the issue.
- In the first instance always see if you can resolve the issue directly with the person, however if this is not possible, then talk to your Manager or Human Resources about it. Before doing so, have a think about what sort of outcome you would like and be prepared to meet the person again to openly and honestly sort out any differences.

Working in the male domain

Television is changing. There are now more women in senior positions, but sometimes it just seems so slow and the boy's club still seems so persistent.

Out in the wider world of Australian industry, even though most men see women as a legitimate part of the world of work, there are some men who still find it

difficult to work with women as colleagues or equals. And the world of television is no different.

So what do you do if you just happen to be working with one of these men?

- Begin by always expecting to be treated on your own merits and also treat him on his merits.
- Always be the best you can at your job and, if you're concerned about a difficult male manager not seeing your best as worthwhile, when you've done a particularly good job, report on it in writing.

- Make sure you have a mentor.
- Your networks will be important to you. Really work hard on keeping up your contacts, so even if he doesn't pass on all the information, you'll still know what's going on.
- Behave professionally. Don't think of using your sexual attractiveness as a promotion strategy - it won't work in the long term.
- Use humour to boost rapport but never engage in sexist jokes or put downs.
- Avoid criticising the opposite sex at work. Constant criticism will detract from good working relationships and effectiveness.



Working in the male domain

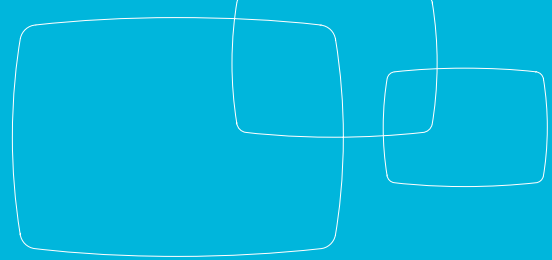
Deb Stewart is the Supervising Producer of Entertainment at Fox Footy Channel. Her work in the television industry has included entertainment shows like *The Weakest Link*, *Tonight Live* and John Farnham's *Jack of Hearts Tour & Concert*.

The irrationality of prejudice:

I work in the male dominated area of sport and often think the prejudices I encounter must be similar to those of a male midwife. Some women will think it's great he's there and others will think it's just ridiculous - what can he possibly understand? Like it or not prejudices exist and sadly, probably always will. Here are a few of the things I've picked up along the way that have ensured not only my survival, but my advancement.

Emotions are messy for men:

- Don't turn your life choices into excuses, eg kids, husbands, weddings etc. I've yet to see a male colleague come into work late, all flushed, telling me that one of their kids was sick. Men don't think or act in those terms. They are problem solvers and not usually emotive. Learn to solve your problems by dealing with the facts.
- Replace traditional female reactions with good people skills. Do People Management courses. I learnt more about managing people and handling situations from a week-long course designed to help head chefs cope with the heat in the kitchen, than I had learnt in the work place.
- Learn to negotiate effectively and, most importantly, learn to deal with your inherent female responses and understand where they are coming from. How do you react to feelings of intense unfairness and frustration? You probably cry whilst a lot of men would get angry in the same situation.
- Recognise when thinking switches to emotional reactions, ie tension, panic, fear and never do or say anything when you are in that moment. It's better to remain silent and let the moment pass. This gives you back control of the situation.
- Learn to use silence effectively. Women often feel the need to fill silences but they can be powerful when left. Men will tune out if there is what they consider too much conversation.
- Maintain a healthy, happy life away from work. This will transcend into your working life and help you remain objective and therefore practical rather than emotional. Men are often uncomfortable around displays of emotion and see them as weakness.



Your view of you:

- Refuse to allow yourself to accept a man's view of yourself. A lot of men see female employees as 'girls' and dismiss their careers by refusing to take them seriously. Don't let him be your mirror, be your own.
- It is very female to apologise or feel guilty for things that were not necessarily your doing. Learn to disassociate and be objective as well as practical.

Luck:

- Is it luck to get the job you have aimed for? Is it luck when it leads to the next step? I doubt many men would think that way but women often look for any reason other than their own ability when things go well. Women read horoscopes, go to fortune tellers, all things that suggest life's about fate or luck.
- Men are more competitive, they enjoy winning and use loss as motivation. Celebrate your achievement.

Examples of working with men:

- I worked beside a director as his assistant for a year. He barely spoke to me, only grunting greetings and orders. I wasted a lot of time believing I was inadequate and then found out he was going through a bitter divorce. He didn't like women at the time. It was nothing to do with me apart from my gender.
- Two producers had their wives working with them as part-time assistants. The women were very qualified for their respective jobs. The men joked with each other, saying perhaps it wasn't good for couples to work together. I suggested that perhaps THEY should both look for alternate work and solve the dilemma. They were taken aback at the thought; it hadn't occurred to them that they were replaceable.

Overall, I have found working in a male dominated domain both challenging and rewarding. It has encouraged me to toughen up in both a creative and business sense.

Dealing with office politics

Having a mentor is useful and it's important to choose one who has a real know-how of the inner workings of the company. That's how you really find out about the office politics.

Whenever people get together, there will be politics. And television is no different.

Politics at work is about power and interpersonal relationships. Power is about being able to influence - the way money is spent, the way others behave and how work is done. Influence is something you'll need if you're going to effectively manage your career.

Being aware of politics at work is also about knowing who has the power. Often power comes from coalitions and alliances with others. Although these groupings are often changing and reforming, it's important to be aware of them if you want to understand the politics of your workplace.

And if you understand the politics of your workplace you'll be more able to influence events rather than become a victim of them.

A successful politician:

- anticipates needs and events
- understands alliances
- is objective
- knows who the key players are
- knows what the key issues are
- knows whether the organisation supports them.



Dealing with office politics and powerful people

Corallie Ferguson is General Manager for Seven Queensland.

I found another term for politics - **mugwumpery**. It kind of suits, don't you think?

I'm a firm believer in being aware of but not involving myself in organisational politics as much as possible. This doesn't make it go away of course, but I have experienced quite a depth and range of it over the years and have found the more you get involved, the less work you get done!

Television is a very fast environment and, thankfully, there isn't much time for people to get too involved in politics. In my television career, I've been exposed to some very savvy professionals. I've also had the added dimension in a recent role with Imparja Television gaining an understanding of Indigenous politics, which can be incredibly subtle.

There are really only two types of organisational politics - subtle and sledgehammer. We can all identify with sledgehammer because it's so easy to detect. Most of us have been set up at least once.

Many of the behaviours exhibited in organisations are mistaken for politics so it is important to know the difference.

Pointers to overcome organisational politics:

- If you are a straight shooter to begin with, you're almost there.
- Have open, clear communications so there is no confusion over the message.
- Follow up with written communication if there is a chance the message will be misconstrued.
- Show genuine respect to people at all levels of the organisation.
- Never underestimate the power of politics.
- Have awareness, but ride over the top of it if you can.
- Accept that some people cannot operate unless they play this game.
- Don't allow yourself to be manipulated or convinced to do things you would normally not do.

Powerful people are no different to you and I. They deserve your respect but there is no need to fall all over them. I remember many years ago writing to a very powerful person to ask if he would become my distance mentor. He was flattered and accepted! I was completing my MBA at the time and this person became one of my strategic experts in a very important assignment for which I gained a Distinction.



Managing up

I think my next step will be to talk with my manager about further learning.

Wherever you are in your work/life in the television industry you will need to learn the key to managing up. Effectively managing up is important as your manager probably has more impact on your work activities than anyone else you work with.

If you want success and job satisfaction then an effective working relationship is vital - and it's as much your responsibility as your manager's.

So what can you do if there are problems in managing up.

If your manager is vague or procrastinates:

- Ask for clarification... often!
- Help your manager help you with projects and decisions. List several alternatives, rank them and then ask what your manager thinks you should do next.

If your manager is a pessimist:

- Don't reinforce negativism or allow your manager to draw you into arguments.
- Listen to your manager's concerns and acknowledge those that are constructive. Inject a dose of reality where necessary.
- Discuss the worst-case scenario and how you could handle it to show that the problem is really not that bad.

If your manager is difficult to find when you need information, an approval, or a decision:

- Plan ahead to avoid delays.
- If that doesn't work, discuss the problem with your manager.

If your manager is a poor communicator:

- Be patient and draw them out with open-ended questions.
- Listen carefully and don't interrupt.

If your manager is incompetent:

- Don't waste time pointing out shortcomings - they probably don't care anyway.
- Keep communication brief and to the point.
- Always clarify what your manager wants and then develop a plan.
- Solve your own problems and don't wait for your manager to put out the fires.
- Work out a way to make sure that other influential people at work know about your successes and good ideas.

If your manager doesn't give feedback:

- Ask for it - ask what your manager liked about your latest project and how you could have improved.

If your manager is a workaholic and demands long working hours:

- Help them measure your work by results, not hours worked.
- Manage your own time well.
- Talk about your life away from work occasionally to show that this is important to you.



Managing a good relationship with your boss

Beck Barnett and Fiona Robertson are Legal Counsel with the Seven Network and they share the same boss.

The good working relationship we have with our boss starts with having a good boss, but following these guidelines can also go a long way to making it work:

- Understand each other's **expectations** in relation to instructions and deadlines and ask directly if they are not apparent. It's no point wasting time on 'not knowing' what needs to be done! Expectations should be well communicated and discussed so they are clear to both parties - it helps if they are objectively measurable, and they should be reasonably achievable.
- Even if your boss is not a terrific communicator, you should never underestimate what they need to know and how often they need to be informed. Communication should be a two-way street so make sure you are available for them to talk to as well. You should also aim for **communication and feedback to be ongoing**. Don't save up all your comments and suggestions for the annual review!
- **Understand your boss's communication style**, and fit in with that so that work can be discussed effectively. A boss who likes to discuss things as they come up will not respond well to saving up all matters for a long weekly meeting. On the other hand, a boss who likes his or her quiet time does not appreciate being interrupted on a continual basis. It can often take some time to strike the balance here, as all bosses are different.
- Get to know the boss's **written work style** and adapt your work to this style. If you ignore their preferences, they will get agitated before they have read one word of your work. If your boss has little idiosyncrasies (like an obsession with proper use of bullet points!), check these points before giving them your work.
- **Manage your boss's time**. Be prepared for follow on questions before you give them information. If you think that a certain point could be important, don't leave it out just because you were not specifically asked for it. It shows initiative if you raise it, and more importantly it saves time. If you have to see them about a problem, think about possible solutions before you ask the question of your boss and present those solutions when you raise the problem. Again, this shows initiative, may save the boss' time, and some bosses love the opportunity it gives them to show you just how smart they are!
- **Show an interest** in each other's lives and have mutual respect for each other's differences, as this will make each day that little bit more human and enjoyable.
- Keep your relationship with the boss as direct a relationship as possible - between you and them. Remember that every point of direct contact you have with the boss is crucial to the ongoing relationship you are building so don't avoid it or have others do it for you.
- **Accept correction** and/or constructive criticism graciously. It's all part of the learning curve.
- **Be ready and available** to take on all work however challenging (and however mundane!).
- And finally - it's always good to remember that one part of your job is to **make your boss look good to their boss...**

It's a two-way street, but if your boss practises these things and so do you, your day-to-day working life will be smooth and enjoyable. Ours is!

Taking some time out

Take a break... have a holiday - it gives you some time to think.

Managing your own career in television is sometimes a hard call. There are times when you will need a break. If you're working in an organisation make sure you take your holiday entitlements - you'll be a better worker for having that time out. And if you're working for yourself you need to take some time out too. Do the things you enjoy with the people you love and you'll find that you'll come back to work refreshed.



Having a fulfilling professional role that allows a happy balance with family life is ultimately the best career move of all

Fiona Crawford is the State Editor for News and Current Affairs for the ABC in Queensland. Fiona spoke at the Women Working in Television networking lunch in July 2003.

When I first came to the ABC 12 years ago, a colleague dutifully warned the newsroom that they should watch out for me. I was, she said, so ambitious I'd walk over my Grandmother's grave to get to where I was going. I'm happy to say my Grandmother's still alive, but the comment amused me for a couple of other reasons. I was actually genuinely thrilled to have a full-time job after a period overseas, but disconcerted by the obvious discomfort that many people have with ambitious women. But mainly it made me laugh because it assumed I actually knew where I was going! I can honestly say, I've never had a career plan and, like many journalists, have spent my working life pursuing areas of interest, and moving jobs for mainly personal, rather than professional, reasons.

My career path has largely centered on skills acquisition and development. I was awarded a cadetship with a newspaper, and completed several years reporting for newspapers before wanting to work overseas. I used my journalism knowledge to get PR jobs for the Australian Government in Japan and Canada, before returning home to a job with a commercial television station. I spent several years there reporting and presenting, before moving into the bulletin producer's chair. It was the role I enjoyed most because of the unique, daily range of challenges it involved, and rather than consciously deciding to pursue this as a career move, I spent many years in the role, simply because I enjoyed it so much. However, there was always an element of curiosity about other career options, particularly management, with many parallels between program producing and staff management. So I suppose it was a natural progression to move into the State Editor, or News Director's role. I applied for my current job three times before I was successful, but honestly didn't feel too shattered when I missed out, because of my level of job satisfaction with daily news production.

I've been State Editor for nearly three years now. And I've received many offers to take my skills to Sydney in comparable, and more challenging, positions. However for personal reasons, I'm tied to Brisbane. I'm a single mother of twin seven year olds, whose father lives and works here. He has regular access, including spending most Tuesday and Thursday evenings and a day every weekend, with them. A move interstate would clearly rule out this very amicable arrangement. And as Fraser and Lachlan's happiness/health are the most important things to me, I'm more driven by job opportunities which allow me to fulfil my parental obligations, than steadily climbing a career ladder, where the professional and financial rewards would almost certainly be greater. If my family is not happy, I can't be. My current job also allows me a very flexible working arrangement. I have a computer at home, am always contactable by mobile phone, so am able to work from home regularly. I usually pick up the boys from school at least two days a week, and while they do their homework, I can usually work through some emails. I also work weekend days when the boys are at their dads, which allows me to 'flexi-time' during the week without the usual attendant guilt.

So strategies for future career moves really centre on improving my professional satisfaction here, and reviewing my job to ensure I'm still learning and developing. Networking is an important part of that but very difficult for a single working mother. Most evening or breakfast functions are difficult to attend without substantial childcare costs. The same goes for any professional training and study opportunities. Unless they can be contained within business hours, they come at substantial cost.

I think I've learned to heed the call of job satisfaction and accept that the top job might not necessarily be the one that makes me happiest. And I've accepted that having a fulfilling professional role that allows a happy balance with family life is ultimately the best career move of all. That's what I tell people who ask for advice on managing a career. It's not a simple linear route up, there are lots of interesting byways and detours that ultimately make the journey much more interesting and fulfilling than the often overrated destination.

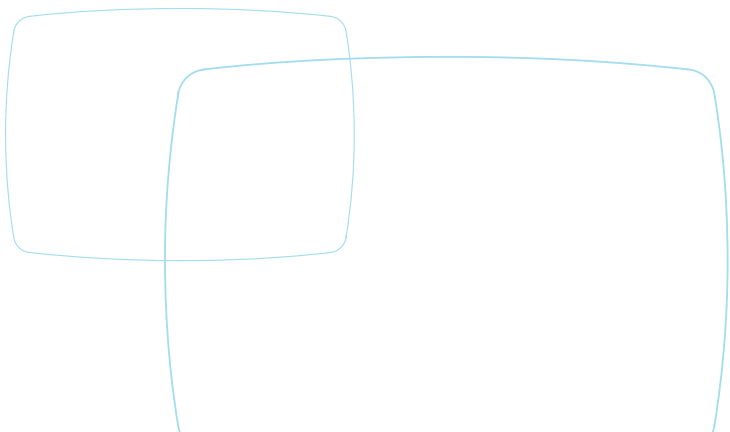
take some action...

Some quick questions to ask yourself about living within the culture of television

- Can any of my work tasks be completed more efficiently and in less time on the job?
- What are the politics at my workplace - who has the hidden power as opposed to the more obvious power?
- How long is it since I have had a break?

Some steps to take

- Find a daily planning system that works for you and keep a daily 'to do' list - make sure you cross off tasks as you complete them. This will give you a feeling of accomplishment.
- Improve your support network. Keep in touch with family or friends who you can rely on if you need help with balancing your work and family.
- Plan a holiday.



7 Where to next?

You're now brim full of ideas about things to do and places to go. Hopefully you've developed your networks, have a mentor in place and your work/family balance is less of a struggle and more a juggle.

You now want to finesse the final stage of your career management plan. You want to actually get out there and show the world that you are in charge - that you've taken control and you're actually managing your own career.

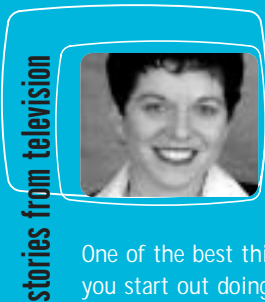
Putting it all together

It is important to recognise a career opportunity when it arises. You need to keep an open mind for that because opportunities often appear in a form you may not have thought about, or from a direction you may not have considered.

In order to reach your full potential in your television career, boost your value as an employee, keep your great job and end up where you want to go you need to be very smart and strategic.

The following tips will help you:

- Try to pick up three new skills, experiences or responsibilities every six months. Work in project teams with new people, get as much training as you can and see if you can temporarily swap jobs with someone else in your organisation.
- Move away from what's comfortable and familiar - take some risks.
- Be strategic. Find out what are the really important trendsetting programs or projects in your organisation and in the television industry - try to work in these areas or if you can't, at least keep up with what's going on there.
- Keep a file on your successes - include details of major projects and accomplishments - and mention them to your manager occasionally.
- Listen to what others say about you. Keep an ear open for what your competition is saying about you or your organisation - you can learn a lot from this.
- And above all remember the importance of flexibility... your career plans are not fixed. Things change as you move along. Remember to re-evaluate your goals and strategies regularly.



Everything is not set in stone...

Deanne Weir is Group Director, Corporate Development and Legal Affairs at AUSTAR. Deanne spoke at the Women Working in Television networking lunch in September 2003.

One of the best things that I have learned over the years is that your career is not set in stone. Regardless of what you start out doing, there will be many things which come along, some quite unexpected. As long as you are open to new directions, opportunities will abound.

After having studied or worked for a long time to achieve a particular qualification or goal, an expectation is often created that you then have to 'be' what it is that you have qualified for. But in this area, the cliché that 'life is a journey, not a destination' is very accurate. What you have learned to do is important, but even more important is how you use that learning to do what you want to do. Be prepared to look beyond the box that you or other people might put you in and make sure that you keep moving towards what you want.

To get there, you might end up taking a couple of steps that others consider to be 'sideways' or even 'backwards' steps; but it is all relative depending on what your own goals are. You may take a different role which pays less or has lower status because there are skills you can acquire, experiences you can have, or contacts you can make which will be useful to you longer term. You may want to take risks which other people question, but the eventual reward may be high. Make sure that you take any such steps on your terms and for the period of time acceptable to you. There is always compromise and prioritisation involved - the key is finding a balance which works for you and then being positive about it.

Flexibility is also critical given today's market. Projects fail, companies downsize, mergers happen; in the process, extremely talented people can end up looking for new roles. If you are managing your own career, and keeping yourself open, this can be an opportunity.

Along the way, make sure that you take the time to establish relationships. Networking might be an overworked term which some people can be cynical about, but it is really just another way of talking about something which women do very well in their personal lives... establish connections and friendships with diverse people. In a relatively small market you will keep running across the same people. Developing relationships is important for the present as well as the future and, more importantly, is the most fun part of what we do. Spend time with positive people and take the time to find out how other people manage their lives.

Looking at all the options

Believe in your own ability. Take risks. But first make sure you do the homework.

When you come to working out what you want to do next you'll need to look at all the options. You've done some planning, gotten to know yourself, your skills and your opportunities a little better and now you know that there are lots of options available to you.

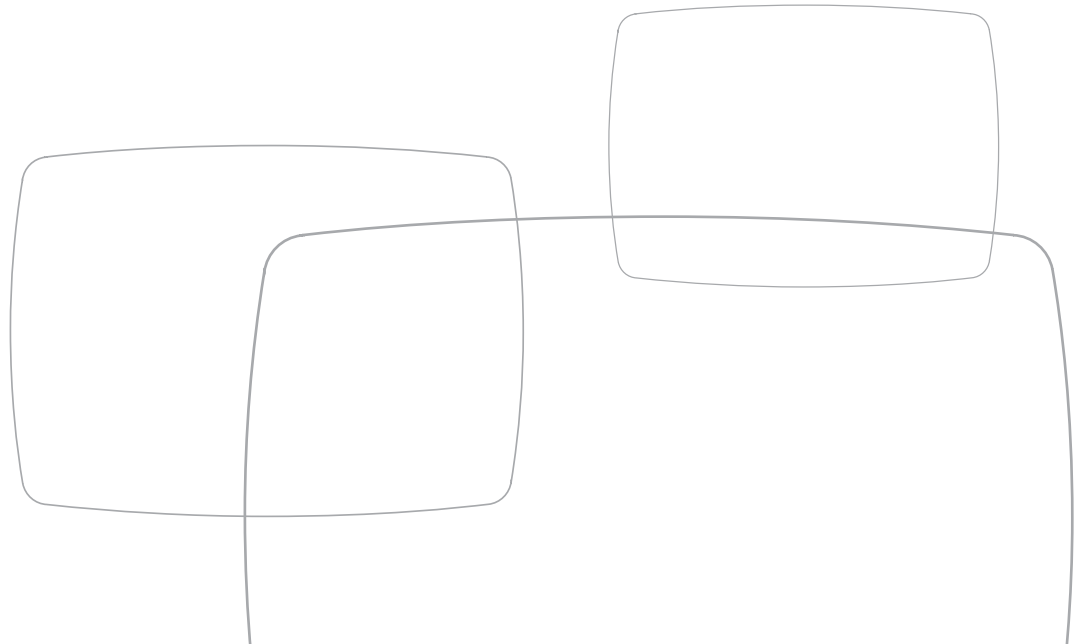
These might include:

- staying where you are for the time being
- considering a career change

- looking for a promotion
- moving around the organisation and perhaps advancing without a promotion
- changing jobs.

Or perhaps you might try working in a completely different way. You might be interested in moving into independent production, you might try working as a freelancer or you might like to try working in a more flexible way, for example working part-time.

The following case studies profile three women who have made a success of working in very different types of ways in television. These might also work for you.





Living in fixed-term contract land

Jacinta Dunn is an Associate Producer and is currently working at SBS.

Welcome to fixed-term contract land... Did you bring your ruby slippers? Good, you'll need them. Now, pop them on and follow the yellow brick road until you find your career goal. Go carefully my pretties, no-one said it was going to be easy, but take heed, there are many who have gone before you.

If only a good witch had told me how 'those who have gone before me' have managed. The thing is, the good witch probably had no idea - because, like East Timor, fixed-term contract land is a (relatively) new country where rules, rights and regulations are still being fashioned.

In fixed-term contract land, managing your own career seems impossible but there are ways you can take control.

For a long time, I thought my career was in the hands of someone else - a higher power, like the Wizard of Oz himself. When I was a little girl, I was taught you had to 'work your way up' and 'prove yourself' so I was in the habit of saying 'yes' to any sort of work in order to get experience. I've since learnt that you can say 'yes' once too often.

For a long time I took jobs that I knew I was overqualified for. I just couldn't seem to break through to something more senior - something I could really get my teeth into - because, when you're on a fixed-term contract for 'project work', there is never enough time for assessment and reflection. Rarely do colleagues give you 'feedback' and you're constantly reminded that 'you're only as good as your last job'.

With every new contract, there's a new beginning. Now, with this - there are pros and cons. On one hand there is flexibility and 'freshness'. On the other, there is no continuity in terms of the overall contribution you make. Benefits like maternity pay and long service leave are out of the question. This is certainly the case when you're moving between companies but it can also be the case within an organisation - even if you've been working there (on short-term contracts) for umpteen years.

Either way, when paying the rent and putting bread on the table are a priority, turning your nose up at a job that you think you're too good for is a big risk. But, believe me, it's a risk worth taking. Saying 'no' to a job I was overqualified for saw me move out of the industry and into another field for a grand total of three weeks. During the third week a telephone call came from a different unit at the same network - they wanted me to come back and work in a job with more responsibility and more money. As TV is what I love most, of course I accepted.

Now that's not a bad result.

So, while I'm still travelling this yellow brick road, I've learnt that taking a risk can pay off. Good luck my pretties.



Independent TV production... the horror, the horror...

Posie Graeme-Evans is Director of Drama for the Nine Network Australia and prior to this position she was the Head of Production with Millennium Pictures where her production credits included *McLeod's Daughters* and *Hi-5*.

Are you a gambler? Or do you like safety?

Which is your style, work-wise?

Be honest with yourself because independent production is not for everyone. It's stressful, tough, financially a pain - and you carry everyone's fears and insecurities on your shoulders. No-one wants to know about your fears...

However, it can also be exciting, emotionally and spiritually rewarding and, if you're successful, pretty damn good for your self-esteem - until you have to pitch the next project!

Whatever your eventual choice, you'll need experience right across the industry to be successful in the long run and, if you're just starting out, working for others in-house or for a large production company provides what you need - someone pays you to live whilst you learn.

If, eventually, you make the choice to have a go as an independent, you might need to think about a 'Producer's Toolkit' - a few things you shouldn't live without:

- Get a good lawyer. Find someone who'll give you reduced rates to begin with because they believe in you. Amazing, but true: it can happen.
- Get together a good set of precedent documents for crew and your key creatives including writers: there's a lot of information in the public domain. The Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS) library, the AFC and SPAA can help you.
- Acquire a basic understanding of rights and copyright. You're going to need to navigate your way around contracts and it's cheaper if you can do preliminary work yourself before getting the lawyers involved!
- Consider joining SPAA as an associate member - get yourself to the SPAA Conference; it's good for networking and finding like-minded souls.
- Subscribe to *Encore*, the Australian trade magazine which, month by month, will give you some basic information about the industry and how it's travelling, key players, what's in production, etc.
- Likewise, buy the *Encore Directory* and maybe the *Production Book*: full of contacts, credits, phone numbers. Invaluable.
- Scrounge copies of other people's trade magazines, eg *Variety*. Again, the AFTRS library might be useful here (*Variety* is very expensive).

- Look critically at TV network schedules. Is there a gap for a project you could create?
- Scrounge ratings and demographic information. Easy to do inside a network, harder outside. You need to know what's working. And, equally, what's not.
- Have a number of projects on the go at any one time, even if they're only one-page ideas. If you can't write/create yourself, look at magazines and newspapers for likely ideas. Ideally you'll need six to 10 projects on the go at any one time, as most will fall over.
- You'll need to understand budgets - so you can do them yourself or have intelligent input (think about short courses at AFTRS, Metro Screen in NSW, the screen resource organisations in other states or access AFC resources).
- If you aspire to be an independent, talk to other independents and consider banding together in an alliance. If you do, make sure the business structure is thrashed out first, put it in writing, get everyone to sign it and make sure it is legally water tight. Remember, though, it can be tough doing business with friends and family so be honest. It's a pre-nup.
- Recognise your own skills and supplement what you don't have. If you don't come up with scripts or write yourself, cultivate relationships with agents with access to writers.
- Buy people drinks at industry events and be prepared to embarrass yourself: walk up to strangers and introduce yourself. Circulate!
- Even if you think you have what it takes in story or concept terms, it's still vital to hone your storytelling and presentation skills. Practise.
- Or, cultivate relationships with script editors/writers who write better than you and can help you.
- If you don't know how already, learn to edit scripts and pictures. Script, script, script is the basis of all.
- In drama terms, learn the skill of auditioning an actor or look for a casting director who accords with your own instincts.
- Attach yourself to rising stars - cast, directors, writers, other producers.
- Be generous and give of yourself. Give of your time. Help others, they may help you.
- If you promise to do something - do it.
- Don't make excuses if you stuff up. Apologise and get on with it.
- Remember you're doing it because you love it. Don't do it if you don't love it because it will kill you!



Having a balance in all areas

Julianna Poli is a Marketing and Promotions Executive at Seven in Brisbane.

When I was offered the opportunity to job share with a colleague who had returned from maternity leave and wanted to work part-time, it was a difficult decision. Did I want to step up into a higher position with a bigger salary packet, or stay in the same position, forego my full-time salary, work three days a week and steal some time back for me? At that time I did what I felt was right for me. I suppose the decision hinged on my belief that to have a happy and healthy life you have to have balance in all areas. You have to have a 'pass mark' in each category. There's no use spending all your time in a fantastic career, but having poor health and neglecting home and family life. Sooner or later, that imbalance will impact on your job and create a career landslide.

I have been asked many times why I would possibly want to work part-time when I don't have children. What do I do with all my extra time? So I guess I should ask what you would do. Perhaps you would take up that hobby you've been meaning to start for years (like learning a language), focus on improving your fitness and health, do all those chores so that when the weekend comes you have more time to spend with family and friends, perhaps take on a project (like renovating a boat) or dabble in some freelance work to broaden your skills or polish certain talents.

I am also asked if I am less 'career-focused' now that I work three days a week. Not at all. In fact, I have more time to digest information and think about projects and more time to think about my career. I am probably more confident, clearheaded and generally happier. There are many men and women my age who tell me they would like to change their working lives. I think the days are gone when we idolise those who work 12 - 14 hours a day, never take holidays and don't have anything in their life but their job. Do we really respect them as people and trust them as decision makers when they are so physically, mentally and emotionally out of whack?

Already I have had an exciting and diverse career from journalism, PR and publicity, to marketing and promotions. I have travelled extensively overseas and this never fails to provide me with a sense of perspective and richness in my life. I suppose working part-time is just one of the many experiences I hope to have in my career and in my life. There are times when I crave the bigger salary packet and the bigger challenges. I suppose when I no longer give my career a 'pass mark', when I no longer sit with a glass of wine in my hand at the end of the week and say 'I've got a great life' (in all respects) then I'll know it'll be time to make a change.

In managing my career so far:

- I have never let fear or ego manage my career, ie I have never accepted a position purely for the status if I didn't truly want or believe in the role. I have never let fear prevent me from trying something new or stayed in a job where I wasn't happy for fear I wouldn't find something else.
- Feeling valued in your position is important. This means different things to different people - whether it's getting a pay rise, praise or having your decisions and viewpoints improve or change the business.
- Mentors are vital. It's important to respect and admire your colleagues and it's even more beneficial to have someone who you aspire to be like, who you can learn from and who challenges you.
- Don't do something you hate for years on end just because you're 'good' at it. It's easy to be pigeonholed when you're good at a particular job and hard to move into other areas which you may be more interested in. Always follow your dreams.
- You either have lots of time and no money, or lots of money and no time. This is like a swinging pendulum throughout your life. But you have to ask yourself what's important to you at the moment.

Getting ready for your next step

How do you take the next step: how do you move on? It is my experience that it is never by the straight and narrow, very rarely by the tried and true and very rarely by the front door.

Is your next step getting that job, getting that particular project finished or getting the go ahead on that great program idea? Or is your next step running the company or the network or getting your work/life and your home life in balance?

All of these are terrific milestones. Congratulate yourself at every milestone you achieve. You need to keep them in view and you need to keep them on the agenda.

You're getting ready for your next step when:

- You've worked on a career plan for the next three months, six months or even twelve months. You've written it down and worked out your strategies for getting there with your mentor and others who are important to you.
- You can confidently explain your plans for getting to your next step with your mentor, career coach or significant other.
- You have identified the skills you need to improve, where and from whom you're going to get assistance.
- You have started on improving the skills you need for your next step.
- You've worked out some milestones along the way and thought about how you'll celebrate achieving these.

Congratulations - because of the thought and planning you've put in you now have a clear career action plan. You're ready for your next step!



The next step...

Lisa Wood is the Manager of Staff Development and Training for the Technology and Distribution Division of the ABC.

The next step should always be part of your long-term career progression plan that identifies where you want to go and how you will get there, and it should be considered soon after becoming settled in your current role.

I believe it is important that the next role you undertake is one that lays the platform and foundation for the following position you have identified in your plan. Along with the experience gained in your current position it is important to identify what is required of the 'next role' so that when the opportunity arises you develop your skills, abilities and experience levels to be the right match.

It may be necessary to undertake relevant professional development programs or seek opportunities to gain additional experience and exposure to ensure you meet or hopefully exceed the requirements. It is also important to position yourself where possible as the successor to the role, and, at the same time, gain further insight to the range of responsibilities required by offering to assist the current incumbent with some aspects of their duties, along with standing in for them when they are on leave etc.

'Shadowing' this person, if they agree, is also an excellent opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the role as well as sometimes meeting their peers. Having the right mentor or mentors is a very important aspect of the plan as their guidance and assistance can make the difference in obtaining the next position by helping you to be well prepared for and conducting the best interview.

Some people look for their next step up from internal postings or external advertisements, and select a job that sounds interesting or appealing rather than identifying their long-term goals and planning accordingly. As plans don't always work out despite the best intentions, it pays to remain flexible and constantly alert for other role options along with revising your career plan to accommodate changing circumstances - be they career or personal ones.

The main thing when looking for your next step is to identify a position which you have a strong desire and passion for, along with a challenging role which you can enjoy and achieve some personal development whilst making a positive contribution to the organisation.

Turning it all into success

It's no use just writing down your goals and then putting them in a drawer somewhere and forgetting about them. You need to make your goals realistic and keep them in the forefront of your mind.

stories from television



Considering all the options and turning them into success

Ros Tatarka is an independent producer who has worked extensively both in Australia and the UK. Ros set up her own production company CreatEve Pty Ltd to actively develop a diverse slate of projects including feature films, television drama and documentary. She has recently taken up a fixed-term appointment as General Manager, Industry Development & Investment at Film Victoria.

At each major crossroad in my career I have always had two options, both of which have been challenging and exciting, and the decision has always been a very difficult one. I believe in trusting your intuition. After all the agonising, spending every waking hour trying to figure it out, all the lists you write weighing up the pros and cons of each job, deep down you know which direction you want to take; you know which is the right path for you.

It is also very important to recognise a career opportunity when it arises. You need to keep an open mind because opportunities often appear in a form you may not have thought about, or from a direction you may not have previously considered.

How do you turn your options into success? I think it takes a lot of hard work. Everybody has their own way of dealing with the job. For me, it's usually very long hours. For example on *Good Guys, Bad Guys* I would get up everyday at 4am to be at the office by 5am, just so that I could have a few hours before the phones started ringing to do some concentrated work. I'd achieve a phenomenal amount of work in those hours.

I was very lucky that I had a mentor in Roger Le Mesurier, who encouraged me to gain experience in areas where I had none. He was very generous with both his time and his knowledge and he gave me the confidence and the authority to do the job I needed to do.

Choose the jobs you feel passionately about because that commitment makes it so much easier to do the work. Be enthusiastic, have fun and be willing to admit when you're wrong. Listen to the people around you. In a busy day, it takes a conscious effort to stop and spend time with the people you are working with. Take time out with your team; let them know you're accessible.

Don't be afraid to rock the boat. This is important, particularly for women. There have been times when I have worried about whether taking a stand on a particular issue would put me in an untenable position, but you have to take a stand on the things you really believe in. Ask for what you want instead of waiting for permission because often that permission won't be forthcoming.

Finally and most importantly, I feel you need to keep a balance in your life, to try to keep work in perspective. One of my little tricks whenever I become too involved in something that starts to take over my life, where I am thinking of it every minute of the day, is to pull focus as if pulling focus on a camera. If I can put the problem into perspective, if I can see it within the big picture, it becomes much, much smaller, much less of a hassle, and eventually it disappears.

take some action...

Some quick questions to ask yourself when you're looking at where to next

- Am I fully committed to managing my own career?
- Have I got an action plan in place?
- Do I need to enlist some additional assistance - a career coach, a mentor, my manager, my networks, the organisation's Human Resource department?

Some steps to take

- Write down your action plan.
- Update your resume.
- Tell your manager what you really want to do and ask them for some help and feedback.
- Take action on that business, project or program idea you have had for so long.

Now you're all prepared and ready to get out there and **manage your own career!**

8 Useful contacts and resources

You don't have to always do it all yourself - effectively managing your own career in television means drawing on all the assistance that is available.

The assistance that might be available in your workplace

Each television industry organisation will provide some level of support to you in managing your own career; however the range and type of career support resources will vary according to the organisation's size, emphasis, history and workplace demographics.

The following provides a brief synopsis of the resources provided by the organisations involved in Women Working in Television and should not be seen as exhaustive. For further details on specific career assistance you should contact your organisation's Human Resources representative.



The Seven Network assists employees with managing their own careers by offering the following initiatives:

- Access to SNAP (Seven Network Assistance Program) a free, professional, confidential counselling service for all Seven employees and their immediate families.
- A sophisticated review and feedback process that is conducted online, assisting in further opening up lines of communication between staff and their manager and also providing an avenue for an active succession planning process.
- Permanent part-time and job-share working arrangements when assessed as practicable.
- Unlimited paid sick leave and carer's leave in the event of illness, medical conditions, household or childcare emergencies, subject to satisfactory evidence being provided when required.
- Access to online learning for IT packages and external training courses provided when appropriate for employee development.

- Flexible working hours within the 19 day, four week cycle for 38 and 45-hour shift workers. Shifts ranging between six and 12 hours.
- Paid leave for the first six weeks of maternity leave taken by an employee giving birth, who has been continuously employed by the Seven Network for twelve months or more.

Employees of the Seven Network are encouraged to contact Employment Services for further information about any of the above initiatives.



The Nine Network Australia assists employees to take control of their own career through the following initiatives:

- A Career Management Program which encompasses guides and workbooks for individual use, confidential on line career management website (in addition to our ongoing Employee Assistance Program), a career library and Career Directions workshops. The following Guides and Workbooks are available to Nine employees:
 - *Career Management: Whose Responsibility?* - explains aspects of the new world of work and answers many questions about important career issues.
 - *My Career, My Life, Myself* - this workbook helps you review your work/life situation, think about your development and plan for the future.
 - *Planning for Me!* - this workbook assists in making a detailed evaluation for career and life choices.
 - *Personal Development Catalogue* - catalogue of resources available from the career management library. Staff from across Nine can borrow these resources from Human Resources.
- A Mentoring Program has been developed to support staff career development. Mentoring provides a development avenue for those who want and need a 'career friend'. A number of employees are currently involved in Nine's Mentoring Program.

- A Performance Feedback Process (PFP) has been carefully designed, in consultation with managers and staff, to fit Nine's culture and encourage career development and training activities. This positive approach to performance feedback is completed as a cooperative exercise by managers and staff on an annual basis. An annual training plan is developed from individual training and development needs identified in the PFP. Training is funded through a Network Training Budget managed by Human Resources.
- An Education Assistance Program has been established to provide financial or other support for permanent staff wishing to undertake an approved and relevant course of study at a recognised educational institution. More information under 'Policies' on the Nine intranet.
- A Learning and Development Policy has been established to promote ongoing, job relevant learning for staff. The *Learning Resources Guide* outlines training courses that may be available as in-house courses, or through preferred training providers, in order to meet the training needs of staff. More information is available under 'Policies' on the Nine intranet.
- Permanent part-time and job-share working arrangements when assessed as practicable.
- Six weeks paid maternity leave for permanent employees with 24 months continuous service.
- Internal advertising (on intranet and noticeboards) of the majority of internal vacancies to provide staff opportunity for career changes and promotions.
- Nine funds a number of scholarships/internships for news/production graduates. Nine is currently in the process of restructuring the graduate/trainee program with a view to increasing the representation of graduates/trainees within Nine's staff establishment. This is part of a continued focus on succession planning.

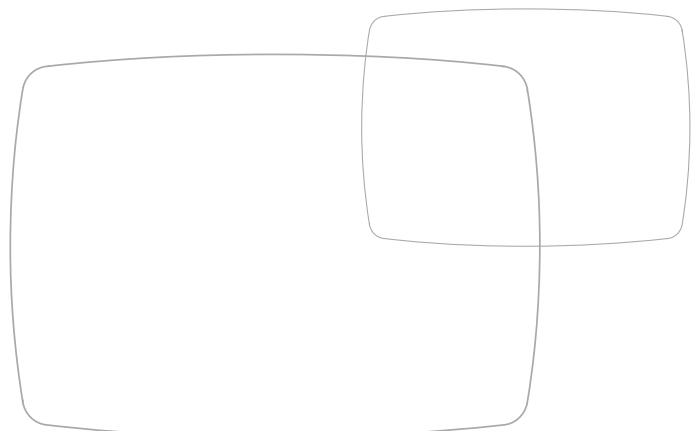
Employees of Nine are encouraged to contact Human Resources for further information about any of the above initiatives.



Network Ten assists and encourages employees to manage their own careers through the following initiatives:

- A Tertiary Study Policy which offers study leave, examination leave, reimbursement of course fees and text books and materials.
- A Training and Development Policy, which focuses on building capabilities, skills, knowledge and abilities to meet Network Ten's business objectives. Human Resources have a number of training resources.
- Advertising the majority of vacancies internally so that staff have the first opportunity for promotions and career changes.
- 360 degree feedback surveys for Managers which focuses on their ability to lead and develop employees.
- Open consideration and support for permanent part-time, job-share and flexible working hours wherever possible.
- Six weeks paid maternity leave and one week paid paternity leave.
- An Employee Assistance Program where staff can access a free and confidential counselling service - whether it be for career or personal issues.
- A performance management system designed to focus on team and individual achievement.

The Human Resources team is always available to advise and support - this may include the facilitation of external consultants, coaches, mentors and so forth.





- The ABC has long been recognised as the trainer for the industry. The ABC has always taken on trainees. From the mid 60s to the mid 80s the ABC employed close to 100 operational and technical trainees. In 2003 there were trainees across many areas including radio, television production, new media and news and current affairs.
- In 2001, the Directors of the ABC made a commitment to spend a minimum of two percent of the salary budget on training and development for staff. This is a major commitment and in a time where money is tight it is an acknowledgement of the value the ABC places on developing people.
- Individual training needs are identified as part of the Performance Management System. These individual needs are linked to Divisional Training Plans, which in turn are linked to Divisional and Corporate Plans. Need is identified both 'top down' and 'bottom up' and training activities are scheduled to address the needs.
- The ABC has been a Registered Training Organisation since 2001. The main area in which accredited training is delivered is qualifications from the Film, TV, Radio and Multimedia industry training package. In 2003 over 200 staff were enrolled in ABC accredited training programs.
- The ABC develops the skills of frontline and middle managers through the delivery of Diplomas and Certificates of Front Line Management. A Senior Management Development Program is currently being piloted for senior managers.
- A range of Scholarships is provided for ABC staff, including the ABC Indigenous Staff Scholarships, the Andrew Olle Scholarship, the ABC British Chevening Scholarship to the Reuter Foundation Program in Oxford, ABC Executive Scholarships and Women in Engineering Scholarships.

For further information about ABC career management initiatives contact the local State Training Coordinator.



SBS provides the following assistance with career management:

- Flexible Working Hours Agreements under which an employee (subject to operational requirements) may be given approval to: work their normal hours in any combination up to a maximum of 12 hours per day and an average of 76 per fortnight (or part-time equivalent); take an additional six weeks of leave (unpaid) per year with a reduced fortnightly salary being paid over the full year; work their rostered hours at alternative times agreed by SBS.
- Home-based work arrangements under which an employee can work some of their hours from home.
- An employee undertaking an approved course of study may be granted leave without pay to undertake full-time study. Part-time students may be granted paid leave of up to eight hours per week to undertake study. The eight hours may be pooled and a longer period of paid leave may be granted for study purposes. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employees may be granted up to 13 hours leave per week to undertake study. In addition, paid leave may be granted to travel to and from, and to attend, compulsory examinations and assessments held during an employee's normal working hours.
- An employee undertaking an approved course who does not want to apply for leave without pay for full-time study, or paid weekly leave for part-time study, may apply for reimbursement of costs associated with their study up to \$2,000.
- Part-time work - an employee may apply to work part-time for a period of up to 12 months.
- Maternity leave - an employee who becomes pregnant is entitled to 12 weeks leave on full salary or 24 weeks at half salary (after 12 months service) and up to 52 weeks unpaid leave. The unpaid leave can be taken at any time within two years of the birth of the child.

- Adoption and fostering leave - an employee who adopts or fosters a child and who is the primary care giver may be granted up to 52 weeks unpaid leave to be taken within two years of the adoption and six weeks paid leave around the time of the adoption.
- Spouse leave - an employee whose spouse gives birth may be granted up to 52 weeks unpaid leave to care for the child within two years of the birth and one week of paid leave around the time of the birth.
- SBS has an on-site child care centre for pre-school children. Fees for the centre can be paid through salary sacrifice arrangements.

For further information contact SBS Human Resources.



ASTRA on behalf of the Subscription Television Sector.

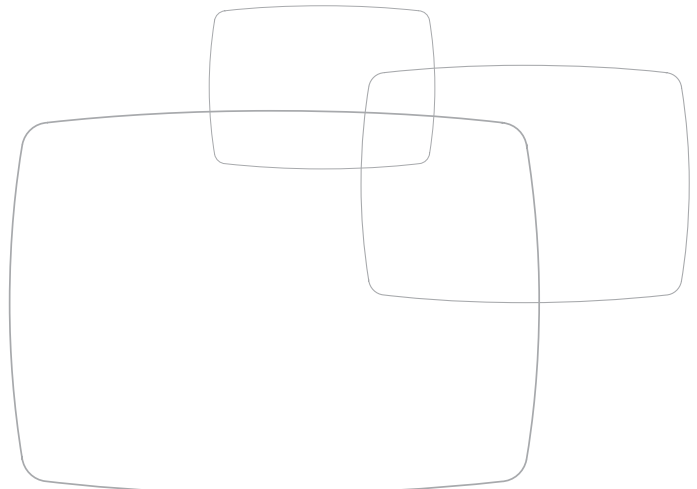
Career assistance available across the Subscription Television sector covers a range of specific programs attached to each of AUSTAR, FOXTEL and OPTUS and relevant channel entities.

Such assistance across the subscription television sector includes:

- Access to training programs - this may include product/procedure and general skill training aimed at assisting employees to perform in their current role to maximum ability. Management training programs may also be provided. Topics could include presentation skills, leadership, selection interviewing methodology, performance management, time management and other general management principles. Leadership programs may also be offered to leadership teams. These include business acumen skill development, 360 degree feedback processes and symposiums on topics of interest, including negotiation skills, operating styles and project management.

- Educational Assistance Programs may be provided - employees request assistance, both financial and time, to pursue external studies. These studies would usually relate to the employee's current position, or to a development plan for future positions. Traineeships may also be available.
- Career assistance - Human Resources staff may provide career counselling or assistance with interview techniques. High potential employees may also be referred to external career counsellors to assist in career decision making.
- Employee Assistance Services may also be provided to employees free of charge. These services extend to either work related issues or personal problems. Employees may either access this service via telephone or referral to a psychologist for a one-on-one session. Manager Assist Programs may also be provided to managers who require assistance in dealing with particularly difficult employee situations.
- Human Resources policies and procedures, available assistance, training programs, secondment and exchange programs, feedback forums and internal vacancies are all communicated through relevant websites and staff newsletters.

For further details of specific programs and assistance please contact the Human Resources staff at your workplace.



Resources and further reading

The resources set out below provide further information on how you might go about managing your own career. All have been useful in the research and writing of this booklet. If you want to find out more, then these are the books you might read:

Working Networks - a practical guide to networking in television

Women Working in Television,
Australian Film Commission, Australia 2002
Download free at:

www.afc.gov.au/newsandevents/afcnews/skills/wwit/newspage_32.aspx

Visions of Balance - juggling family with work in television

Women Working in Television, Australian Film Commission, Australia 2001
Download free at:

www.afc.gov.au/newsandevents/afcnews/skills/wwit/newspage_32.aspx

Shared Visions - Women in Television

Edited by Annette Blonski
Australian Film Commission, Australia 1999

Ancona, Paula

SuccessAbilities! 1,003 Practical Ways to Keep Up, Stand Out, and Move Ahead at Work
JIST Works Inc, Indianapolis 1998

Career Management - whose responsibility?

Nine Network Australia under license from Worklife Australia Pty Ltd, Australia 2001
see www.worklife.com.au and www.careermastery.com

Carr-Ruffino, Norma

The Promotable Woman: 10 Essential Skills for the New Millennium

The Career Press, New Jersey 1997

Henderson, Robyn

Dare to Dream - self-esteem and confidence building for busy women

Networking to Win, Australia 2002
see www.networkingtowin.com.au

Henderson, Robyn

Networking Magic - 366 Hot Networking Tips
Networking to Win, Australia 2001

Kirner, Joan and Rayner, Moira

The Women's Power Handbook
Viking, Penguin Books Australia Ltd., Australia 1999

Markel, Ruth and Faulder, Carolyn

Moving Up: A woman's guide to a better future at work

Fontana Paperbacks, London 1987

Mercer, Leanne

Take 40 - what turning 40 means for a woman today
Macmillan, Australia 2003

Morgan, Geoff and Banks, Andrew

Getting That Job - How to establish and manage your career in the new millenium

HarperCollins, Australia 1999

My Career, My Life, Myself

Nine Network Australia under license from Worklife Australia Pty, Australia 2001

Nelson Bolles, Richard

What Color Is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers

Ten Speed Press, California 2001

Planning for Me!

Nine Network Australia under license from Worklife Australia Pty, Australia 2001

Sheerer, Robin E.

No More Blue Mondays - four keys to providing fulfilment at work

Davies-Black Publishing, California 1999





About Women Working in Television

Women Working in Television is a cross industry partnership between the Australian Film Commission and the five free-to-air television networks, the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA), Commercial Television Australia (CTVA) and the Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA).

The Big Picture - managing your own career in television is the fourth publication from Women Working in Television.

Other publications include:

Working Networks - a practical guide to networking in television

The 2002 Women Working in Television publication is full of case studies and helpful hints about how to build and improve your networks.

Free download at http://www.afc.gov.au/newsandevents/afcnews/skills/wwit/newspage_32.aspx

Visions of Balance - juggling family with work in television

Published in 2001, and aimed at women and men working at all levels of the television industry who are looking to juggle the often competing demands of work and family responsibilities.

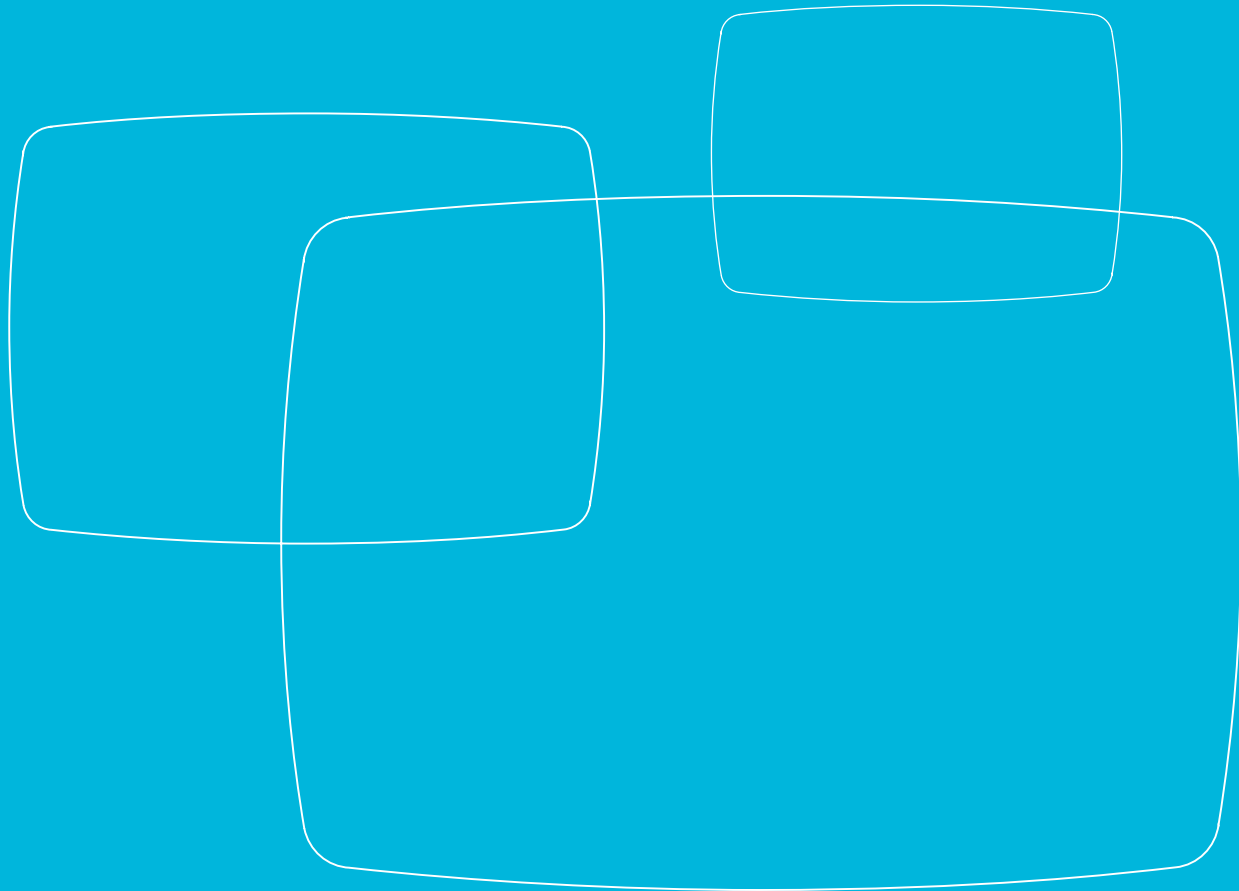
Visions of Balance was awarded the Innovative Initiative Award as part of the 2002 National Work and Family Awards.

Free download at http://www.afc.gov.au/newsandevents/afcnews/skills/wwit/newspage_32.aspx

Shared Visions - Women in Television

Published in 1999, *Shared Visions* is a collection of interviews and personal anecdotes from women working in television.





the BIG
PICTURE
managing your own career in television