

## Cool!

In preparing to write some notes on the conference, I was looking for a word beginning with C to describe it – nothing better than an alliteration for a headline!

And the only one I could think was *COOL*. It wasn't quite what I had in mind – thinking more in terms of wonderful, fantastic, or even amazing. But, it was cool! There was a very positive vibe in the room, we had great speakers and facilitators, and plenty of opportunity to network.



Did we get it right 100%? Not quite. But the survey results were very positive

To give you some idea of the feedback, the following is a snapshot of the survey results.

- Overall value of the program to you professionally – 98% rated this as *Excellent* or *Very Good*
  - Overall rating of speakers/presenters – 100% rated this as *Excellent* or *Very Good*
  - Relevance of topics covered – 98% rated this as *Excellent* or *Very Good*
  - In relation to how well the conference met its objectives of:
    - Increasing your knowledge and skills
    - Providing networking opportunities
    - Providing inspiring speakers/presenters
    - Providing an insight into what makes a successful business partnership
- 100% of respondents rated each of these as *Very Well* or *Well*
- In response to the question, *If another conference was organised for regional office professionals, would you attend?*, 80% agreed they would attend and 17% said they may attend

In planning the conference, we not only wanted to provide a high quality program but also wanted to make it accessible and affordable for office professionals in our region. We think we achieved that.

The support from our sponsors was also an important factor in the success of the conference. Thanks are extended to Boltons, City of Ballarat, Federation University Australia, Telstra Countrywide, Central Highlands Water, and United Way.

## In Brief

### Happy holiday, Rana

Planning Committee Member, Rana Stollery, is heading off on a six-month round Australia trip with her family.

Safe and happy travels, Rana. We look forward to hearing about your journey when you return.

### Wanted!

**Are you a born organiser with lots of ideas and enthusiasm?**

If so, you may be interested in joining the Connect Networking Planning Committee.

The Committee meets for an hour each month, normally on a Tuesday.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity in more detail, please give Gayle a call on 5332 1240.

Expressions of interest should be sent to Gayle Adams ([gayle@committeeforballarat.com](mailto:gayle@committeeforballarat.com)) by 19 May.

### Contributions welcome

*Connect* is published four times a year – summer, autumn, winter and spring!

To keep the newsletter interesting and one you want to read, we welcome your suggestions (and contributions) for future editions. Contact Gayle on 5332 1240.

# CONNECTING CONFERENCE 2017

Like many great events, the Connecting Conference evolved from an idea raised for discussion by a Connect Networking Planning Committee member and resulted in an opportunity to provide a high calibre conference for regional office professionals.

Our Planning Committee morphed into the Conference Planning Committee. We set ourselves goals, embraced the challenge and the journey began.

The support from our sponsors, high calibre speakers, presenters, organisations, colleagues and community was prodigious.

After an enormous amount of meticulous planning, the conference day arrived!

There was a really positive vibe in the Conference Centre and our attendees appeared to be engaged with our speakers from the onset.

While I had not met a number of our speakers previously, I must admit I was inspired by their personal journeys to success.

An early task was set for all conference attendees to meet 10 people they had never met before by the end of the day!

This initiated some great networking and it was very rewarding to talk to so many people from such a wide range of organisations.

As a planning committee member, my observations on the day were incredibly positive and I felt that if everyone could take something meaningful away from the day, we, as a committee, had succeeded.

*Anne McConnell, Conference Planning Committee*





More photos from the conference can be found at <http://www.connectnetworking.com.au/connecting-conference-photos.html>

## Ideas for the next conference!

The survey provided lots of useful feedback including some great suggestions for the next conference (or two!). These included:

- Dealing with difficult people
- Interpersonal relationship building
- More networking
- HR related topics
- Another panel session
- More on emotional intelligence
- Leadership and managing staff
- Local industries that have gone global
- Topics that reflect changing nature of EA/PA role
- Minute taking
- Time management
- Goal setting
- Performance reviews
- Communication skills
- Managing stress
- Personal branding
- Working with the media
- How to present a case for a salary increase
- Ideas for greening your business
- More on social media applications
- More inspiring female speakers
- Understanding body language
- Outlook tips and tricks
- EA success stories
- Work life balance
- Navigating change

## Trace steps down

After a hectic twelve months juggling busy work and community commitments as well as organising the Connecting Conference, Trace Rayner has decided to step from the Connect Networking Planning Committee.



### A big thank you

The Planning Committee extends its thanks to Trace for her fantastic contribution over the past three or so years. The Committee will miss her enthusiasm, her commitment, her left-field thinking and her willingness to put in the *hard yards*.

We look forward to seeing Trace at our Connect Networking events where she can now sit back, relax and enjoy the events (no tasks to do on the day!).

## Elements of *good writing*

Good writing should be:

<b>Clear</b>	<b>Simple</b>
<b>Fresh</b>	<b>Accessible</b>
<b>Natural</b>	<b>Active</b>

Simple enough. But what does that mean?

**Clear:** Think through what you want to say, plan a structure, then say it as simply as possible.

**Simple:** Cut out anything superfluous. Split text into small sections, using short words, sentences and paragraphs, and bullets and numbered points.

**Fresh:** Avoid euphemisms, clichés, vague quantifiers, repetition, unnecessary detail, heavy punctuation and complicated constructions.

**Accessible:** Avoid jargon or explain it when you must use it. Use familiar, everyday words that readers will understand.

**Natural:** Write for an individual, not an audience. Consider how your writing would sound if you read it aloud to a colleague.

**Active:** Use the active rather than the passive voice. In the active voice, the subject of the sentence does the action described. In the passive voice, the subject receives the action. Sentences are generally shorter using the active voice.

Passive: *It was agreed by the Chief Executive that Friday would be a holiday.*

Active: *The Chief Executive agreed that Friday would be a holiday.*

## Register Today!

Don't miss Connect Networking's next event on 18 May. See details below and to the right

CONNECT NETWORKING

# USING IMAGES TO ENHANCE YOUR MESSAGE

A Workshop with Noelene Gration  
Ascend Public Relations and Communications

Overview of image creation software as well as tips for effectively using images in business communication

**Thursday, 18 May**  
**12 noon - 2 pm**

Barry Room, Federation University Lydiard Street Campus

\$10 pp incl lunch      RSVP: 10 May 2017 (Gayle 5332 1240)