

Next phase of life for Terri and Cheryl

Exciting times ahead

Two Connect Networking stalwarts are now enjoying a new challenge – that of retirement. Both Terri Miles and Cheryl Luscombe have been great supporters of and contributors to Connect Networking since its establishment late in 2011.

Terri retires after 21 years in the job

Terri Miles, former EA to Andrew Rowe, CEO Ballarat Health Services retired from her position in early July 2015.

After 21 years in the job, Terri is leaving with mixed feelings.

She will certainly miss the hustle and bustle of the hospital environment but she is also looking forward to spending more time with her family (particularly the grandchildren), travelling, her hobbies and having the time to have a leisurely read of the paper in the morning over a cup of tea.

Terri pictured at her last Connect Networking event at the Provincial in May 2015



A Trip to Europe for Cheryl

After 25 years at BGT, Cheryl Luscombe is also retiring. Cheryl's first retirement activity is a trip to Great Britain and Europe including a cruise down the Danube and Rhine rivers – just perfect!



Committee for Ballarat at the Feb 2014 event.

Cheryl is looking forward to spending more time with the family, her grandchildren (and with a new grandchild due shortly), travelling, playing lawn bowls, and doing some volunteer work.

About three years ago, BGT named a room after Cheryl for her contribution and commitment to the organisation – this was a great honour and it means she will always be a part of that organisation.

Cheryl (right) pictured with Judy Verlin, Chair

Both Terri and Cheryl have enjoyed being part of Connect Networking – the variety of guest speakers, the professional development sessions and the networking.

And we have very much appreciated their participation and contributions.

In Brief

Dates for your diary!

Connect Networking events for the rest of 2015:

Tuesday, 25 August

Thursday, 19 November

Events will be scheduled at lunch times, normally from 12 noon to 2.00 pm.

Recent appointments

Congratulations to:

Belinda Bailey, PA to the CEO at Ballarat Health Services

Sue Ogilvie, PA to the CEO, Ballarat Group Training Services (BGT)

Farewell and thanks

As Faye Shepperson has now embarked on a new career journey, she has tendered her resignation from Connect Networking and its Planning Committee.

A member for two years, Faye has made a wonderful contribution to the group (and you can thank Faye for our Christmas in July both this and last year).

We will miss Faye's enthusiasm and willingness to roll up her sleeves and get things done.

Thank you, Faye - and best wishes for the future.

Contributions welcomed

To keep the newsletter interesting and one you want to read, we would welcome your suggestions (and contributions) for future editions.

We plan to publish four editions a year (summer – February, autumn – May, winter – August and spring – November).

Please email your thoughts and/or contributions to

gayle@committeeforballarat.com.

Diversity of Offerings

Connect Networking continues to offer an interesting range of events for its members, with Sharon Knight MLA as guest speaker in May and then a session on Social Networking and Event Management in July.

An interesting journey

At our May event, Sharon Knight MLA, member for Wendouree and Parliamentary Secretary for Human Services, shared with the group her journey from young single mum to social worker to member of State Parliament – an inspiring journey.



While supporting her three small children, Sharon studied at the then University of Ballarat and completed a Bachelor of Social Work and an Advanced Diploma in Business Management. She worked in the health and community sectors and in the office of Federal Member for Ballarat, the Hon Catherine King, before joining State Parliament.

Sharon's deep commitment to her community came through strongly in her presentation, as did her belief in the importance of community leadership.



The event was held at the Provincial Ballarat and a brief presentation by owner, Darren Fraser and a tour of the building, providing Connect members with an opportunity to see what possibilities the venue offered for their organisations.

Social networking and event management

Connect's July event was a professional development session over two hours at Federation University's historic SMB campus.

The WOW Factor

The first session on Event Management was presented by Shiree Pilkinton of Pilkinton Productions. It was fascinating to hear about Shiree's experience in Australia and overseas running events and festivals. As with all events, whether large or small, planning and preparation are the keys to success and Shiree took the group through tips for managing events, and some pitfalls to be aware of. No matter what the event, always aim to have a 'WOW' factor.



Brave new world

The second session took us into the wonderful world of social media. We all know about Facebook, youtube, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter for our personal interests, but do we really know how they can help to promote our business, and what do we promote on which platform?

Averill Deans, the Social Media Coordinator at Federation University, helped us to make some sense out of it all and why even those of us who were born before 1970 should get on board and embrace all this new technology. Millennials, memes, HootSuite and hashtags. Oh yes, it's all clear now...!



TALKING ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA ...

Following are a couple of links to TED Talks relating to social media.

<http://www.ted.com/watch/ted-institute/ted-bcg/del-harvey-protecting-privacy-at-twitter>

http://www.ted.com/talks/jon_ronson_what_happens_when_online_shaming_spirals_out_of_control

MAJORING IN MINOR THINGS



If you're like me, you'll agree that one of the things that makes you a good EA is attention to detail; dotting the i's, crossing the t's, checking grammar and spelling on email and other communication (and yes, I use full words and punctuation when texting),

figuring out in advance what might go wrong and putting measures in place that ensure it won't go wrong. Generally making even short tasks take a long time! It's a personality trait that is a strength but that can also become a downfall. I do a great job, but I can take too long doing it.

So every now and then, I have to sit myself down and give myself a good talking to.

80/20 Rule

You hear a lot about the 80/20 rule – in this instance it means that the majority of any task is usually achieved in 80% of the time spent on that task. The remaining 20% of time is spent getting it “ju-ust right”. Which might be great if you're making porridge for Goldilocks' visit, but when you have a lot of tasks to get done in a day, you simply can't afford to spend too much time on any one.

Take a moment to ask yourself:

“What is the best use of my time?”

“Am I the only one who will notice this?”

“Does this get the message across?”

“Will this matter in five years?”

Of course, some work necessarily has to be perfect, but does everything need to be? Keep an eye out for time-saving strategies – templates for common tasks so you're not reinventing the wheel, for example. And remember, some things just don't need to be done at all! Have you ever got to year's end and gone through your pending tray? It's amazing how many things didn't get done and didn't really matter.

So, be gentle with yourself; don't stress about your workload; prioritise it and do the best you can without going overboard.

Of course, the opposite of this problem is the person who rushes through every task, paying no attention to detail and possible consequences. Sure they get the job done quickly, but not done well.

I guess the answer is, as in all things, finding your balance. Finding the level of accuracy and detail that gives you a finished product you can be proud of, and that gives you enough time to get done what needs doing.

Trace R

Excel at Excel?



After our August session, you will!

The August Connect Networking event will be held at Ballarat Group Training (BGT) on Tuesday, 25 August 2015 from 12.00pm to 1.50pm.

The topic will be Microsoft Excel® **“Everything you ever wanted to know, but had no time to learn”**.

BGT's CEO Garry Doyle, an Excel guru, is working up the program, but there will be plenty of time to bring your own questions.

Excel is a program we all use, but do we make full use of its many and varied capabilities? This hands-on session (in BGT's teaching lab) will provide lots of information and you will have the program open and running right there in front of you, so it's an ideal learning environment.

More information will be provided when the invitations are issued, but please keep the usual lunchtime spot on 25 August free. It's going to be an extremely worthwhile professional development session.

THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENT Getting it right!

Some words in the English language can cause some confusion. *Principal* and *Principle* are two such examples!

Principal versus Principle – they are pronounced exactly the same, but have different meanings.

Principal can be used as either a noun or an adjective.

It is mostly used as a noun – for example, the principal of the college or school.

Used in its adjectival form, it means "most important" or "main" – for example, the principal character in a novel.

Principle is only ever used as a noun and means a standard or a rule, or the fundamental basis of a system of thought or belief. For example – the principles of democracy.

Organisation is the key

BEING A SUCCESSFUL EA/OFFICE PROFESSIONAL

If there is one skill any good executive assistant EA/office professional should have, it's organisation. People will depend on you to make sure tasks are carried out on time and to the highest standard, which is only going to be possible if you know how to prioritise them.

Being more organised can lead to all sorts of benefits, not least because you'll face less stress and might even find your work-life balance is rectified. There's also a chance you might be able to leave the office on time, allowing you to participate in more of the activities you enjoy.

Here are some ways in which you can optimise your time and be a more effective EA in 2015.

Write a schedule

Once you know what tasks you will need to complete over the course of a day, put them into a schedule. This will help focus your attention and make sure you don't overlook anything.

Remember to factor in some time for any unexpected jobs you might be required to complete. Your boss might suddenly expect you to draft a letter or schedule a meeting for that afternoon, so if you have some time spare, you can make sure it gets completed.

Give tasks your full attention

While multi-tasking can undoubtedly be a benefit when you're an EA/Office Professional, in some cases it won't help you get jobs done any quicker.

Giving one job your undivided attention will ensure it is completed faster, meaning you can move on to something else. This will also ensure everything gets done to the highest possible standard, which is another skill any EA/Office Professional should be keen to master.

Delegate if necessary

There's a limit on how much work you can physically complete within a day, so if it looks like you're going to struggle to meet a deadline, don't be afraid to delegate.

Be careful only to do this when other members of staff have the time or expertise needed. If you send them work and it's not completed to the required standard, it will be you who has to take responsibility.

Keep distractions at bay

It's all too easy to become distracted at work, which can present a considerable barrier to your organisational skills. Whether it's checking your personal email account or chatting to colleagues over a cup of coffee, there are too many opportunities for not getting work done.

Remove yourself from situations that are likely to present a drain on your time and you could find there are more hours to get work done. This isn't to say you shouldn't stop for a break now and again - **this is important for keeping yourself motivated.**

Edited version of article from *The Executive Assistant* (on-line, May 2015)

NEW BRANDING FOR CONNECT

Following the change to the Committee for Ballarat branding, Connect Networking has updated its look.

You may have noticed our new banner at our May and July meetings (see below).

Thanks to our wonderful Connect models for taking part in our photoshoot and for allowing their photos to be used on our promotion material.

an initiative of... committee for ballarat thinking ahead!

connect networking

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