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# Today's Manager

## Working for a Cause Social Entrepreneurs Use Adventure to Do Good

- Case of the Surprise Retrenchment Operation
- Organisational Structure and Management System



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# Bridging the Resilience Gap

## Part Two



By Paula Marcondes

**RESILIENT** people possess paradoxical personality traits:

They approach negative emotions rationally from a problem-focused perspective rather than overreacting, and at the same time, are able to focus on positive emotions rather than stress.

They are competent at building strong support networks, and at the same time, possess defined inner psychological spaces.

They are realistic about the limitations and challenges being faced, and at the same time, know that they can control or influence what they do to ensure that things work well.

They are adaptable and flexible, and at the same time, have very deeply rooted values that allow them to be intensely involved in activities related to their commitment or to find meaning.

They actively engage in finding solutions to challenges affecting self in intense goal-driven and high-energy ways, and at the same time, can express their feelings in healthy ways.

According to psychologist Paul Wieand, founder of the Center for Advanced Emotional Intelligence, it is the paradoxical nature of their personalities that helps resilient individuals navigate more easily through adversity, complexity, and change.

Viktor Frankl, the Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist who survived the concentration camps during World War II, developed the concept of Existential Analysis—a psychotherapeutic method of finding meaning in all forms of existence, even the most despicable ones—while in a concentration camp. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning* (1963) he wrote: "What man actually needs is not

The need to build resilience at global, country, organisational, and individual levels is a real need if all these players are to thrive in the face of uncertainty, chaos, and adversity. Part Two of this article looks at the awareness, communication, and transformation process.

a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for some goal worthy of him. What he needs is not the discharge of tension at any cost, but the call of a potential meaning waiting to be fulfilled by him."

Dr Al Siebert, author of *The Survivor Personality*, met Frankl in 1958. He was struck by how happy Frankl was and mentioned that Nietzsche's statement "that which does not kill me makes me stronger" inspired him to stay alive.

### Measuring Resilience

What is the opposite of resilience? Anne Deveson, an Australian writer, broadcaster, and filmmaker suggests in her book *Resilience*, that resilience is "a life force that promotes regeneration and renewal".

There is scientific evidence to indicate that Deveson is right. Recent research identified how resilience exists in the body and brain, and it shows that resilience is a result of adaptive changes at neurotransmitter and molecular levels that "regulate reward, fear, emotion reactivity, and social behaviour, which together are thought to mediate successful coping with stress."

I prefer to focus on the fact that when we are resilient we are able to develop, and when we are unable to develop, we are stuck. Therefore, the opposite of

resilience is being stuck—for the lack of a better term. Being resilient and being stuck are at the opposite ends of the ACT Resilient Development Scale.

A resilient state of being is in essence about love—not the lovey-dovey kind of love we see in romantic movies, where someone outside the self is receiving the love—but the kind that is about courage, trust, and hope that exist inside the self.

In this state of being one experiences growth, transformation, even healing as in the case of physical and psychological resilience, without drama or trauma and a high level of energy as a result.

A Stuck State of Being is in essence about fear. It, therefore, naturally promotes drama and trauma. In this state of being one experiences avoidance, hesitation, procrastination, denial, blame, justification, and exhaustion as a result. Interestingly, Dr Steinhardt defines fear as being false expectations about reality.

### Awareness, Communication, and Transformation Process

We follow the awareness, communication, transformation, ACT, process when assisting individuals and organisations to build resilience.

In the awareness stage, we work to uncover and determine existing resilience gaps. This is the first step when work-

ing with organisations and individuals to build resilience.

In general, resilient personality traits translate into observable and quantifiable behaviours (see Figures 2 and 3). We conduct individual, 360-degree assessments and organisation surveys to identify the occurrence of resilient behaviours or the lack of it.

We then plot the results in the ACT Resilient Development Scale and by doing so we are able to measure an individual's or an organisation's level of resilience, identify work groups or departments that might be risk areas, and determine what the specific resilience gaps are.

In the communication stage, we agree with the client on the strategies to be implemented and customise interventions that have the highest likelihood of succeeding to bridge existing resilience gaps. The ultimate goal is to assist in the creation of a resilient culture.

These strategies involve executive coaching for managers and leaders and training programmes in areas such as:

- Emotional intelligence,
- Physical health and fitness,
- Mind training through meditation,
- Problem solving and decision-making,
- Interpersonal effectiveness,
- Creative thinking,
- Time management and prioritising,
- Stress management, and
- Change management.

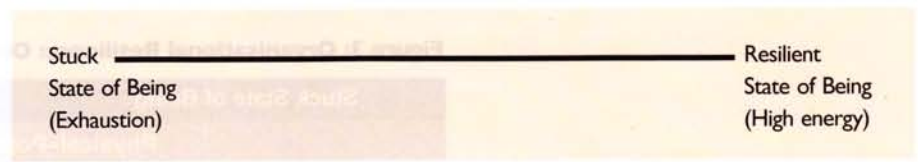
In the transformation stage, we work with clients on:

- Building actual skills and capabilities,
- Monitoring results,
- Formalising policies and systems that support a resilient culture, and
- Developing sustainable business strategies.

### Being Human is Ultimate Strategic Advantage

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, once said that "love and work are the cornerstones of our humanness". Unfortunately, our humanness has been stripped out of work since the Industrial Revolution. Although the Industrial

**Figure 1: ACT Resilient Development Scale**



**Figure 2: Personal Resilience: Observable Behaviours**

Stuck State of Being	Resilient State of Being
<b>Physical</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self neglected—frequently absent, prone to illness, workaholism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good care of self—diet, exercise, sleep</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space—clutter, mess</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space—clean, organised</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low productivity level—procrastination, going through the motions, seem busy, lack of self-management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High productivity level—decisive, strategically engaged, self-management</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediocre output or perfectionist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality output</li> </ul>
<b>Mental</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim mindset—blame, justify, denial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning mindset—curious, playful, adaptable, response able</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed to change, mentally disengaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to change, mentally engaged</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotion-focused—erratic thinking, optimism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem-focused—rational, positive realism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclear priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear priorities</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low EQ</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High EQ</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotionally detached</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotionally engaged</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak support network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong support network</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prone to emotional outbursts—fearful, insecure, hesitant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calm and assertive—secure, confident, hopeful</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low pride in self and work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High pride in self and work</li> </ul>
<b>Spiritual</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of balance between home, work and personal aspects of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance between home, work and personal aspects of life</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of self-awareness, erratic mind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-aware, trained mind</li> </ul>

Source: Paula Marcondes

Revolution is long gone, we can still find some of its residues impregnated in deep layers of the international business culture of today.

People, even from Generation Y, are still being indoctrinated that what it takes to stand out at work and climb the ladder of success is being competitive, putting

in long hours, being accessible outside office hours, and prioritising the job over family, fitness, friends or volunteer work. Till recently workaholism was seen as a virtue instead of the serious malady that it truly is.

Organisations and managers have reinforced these ideas because they have

felt the pressure to produce ever higher profits and shareholder returns quarter after quarter. However, we must ask ourselves at what expense and to what level of success has this paradigm helped us?

The existing resilience gap and phenomenal stock volatility of the past few years are clear symptoms that we have not been as successful as we had thought. As Hamel pointed out in *Harvard Business Review* Webinar, 28 July 2011, the management model in most organisations was designed for large organisations to be efficient at scale, not to address the ways humans work best. He believes that today's social media technologies offer an alternative and that it is now possible for organisations to be fit for the future and for human beings.

So does McFarlane, former CEO, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd, who believes that "we are now firmly in a new age where spirituality, humanity, and community will matter much more. In such a world, enriching the vital spark, or soul of the company becomes the real agenda for our future leaders, together with masterminding the engagement of our communities with the wider community."

Bringing the human back to how we do business has been my mission since I became a consultant in 1997. It is stronger than ever before. It is possible to change the world individual by individual, leader by leader, organisation by organisation as we work to build more wellness, sustainability, and resilience. ✎

#### Reference

Adriana Feder, Eric J Nestler and Dennis S Charney, "Psychobiology and Molecular Genetics of Resilience", *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 10, 446-457 (June 2009)

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**Figure 3: Organisational Resilience: Observable Behaviours**

Stuck State of Being	Resilient State of Being
<b>Physical–Political Resilience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People:</b> High levels of absenteeism, presenteeism*, workaholism, turnover</li> <li>• <b>Space and Systems:</b> Clutter, mess</li> <li>• <b>Productivity:</b> Low response time</li> <li>• <b>Output:</b> Mediocre or blind focus on perfection, focus on optimisation</li> <li>• <b>Resource Management (Capital, Talent):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invested in 'what is' (current offerings)</li> <li>• Inability to divert resources quickly</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People:</b> Low levels of absenteeism, presenteeism*, turnover</li> <li>• <b>Space and Systems:</b> Clean, organised</li> <li>• <b>Productivity:</b> High response time</li> <li>• <b>Output:</b> High quality</li> <li>• <b>Resource Management (Capital &amp; Talent):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversified, invested in 'what could be' (small-scale strategic experimentation)</li> <li>• Ability to divert resources quickly</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Mental–Cognitive and Strategic Resilience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Management Mindset:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inward focus—best practices</li> <li>– Denial, nostalgia, arrogance</li> <li>– Creativity seen as being outside the "main business"</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Change Management:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reactive—episodic and crisis-driven (revolution)</li> <li>– Difficulty in reinventing business models and strategies as circumstances change</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Strategy:</b> Grand strategies or apathy toward the nonconforming and deviant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Management Mindset:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Outward focus—emerging opportunities, incipient trends</li> <li>– Realistic about limitations and weaknesses of business models</li> <li>– Provides platforms for staff to create</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Change Management:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Proactive—continuous and opportunity-driven (evolution)</li> <li>– Ability to reinvent business models and strategies as circumstances change</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Strategy:</b> Institutionalised broad-based strategies and systems that support innovation</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional–Emotional Resilience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of passion—unclear, dubious mission</li> <li>• Change is associated with problem—trauma and paralysis analysis</li> <li>• Climate of fear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passion—clearly defined mission that employees believe in</li> <li>• Change is associated with opportunity—growth and dynamism</li> <li>• Climate of excitement</li> </ul>
<b>Spiritual–Ideological Resilience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Old-Fashioned Management Paradigm:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Struggles to find harmony between efficiency and exploration of new strategic options</li> <li>– Company seen as financial construction of land, labour and capital</li> <li>– Lack of focus on sustainability and wellness</li> <li>– Pressured to overproduce and short-term focused</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dehumanised systems and policies—staff seen as human resources</li> <li>• Individual mission not aligned with organisational mission</li> <li>• Staff seen as human resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enlightened Management Paradigm:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Embraces paradox between efficiency and exploration of new strategic options</li> <li>– Company seen as a community interdependent with other communities</li> <li>– Focus on long-term growth</li> <li>– Sustainability and wellness recognised as competitive advantage and source of shareholder value</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Humanised systems and policies—staff seen as stakeholders</li> <li>• Individual and organisational missions can be aligned</li> <li>• Staff seen as human investments and stakeholders</li> </ul>

Source: Paula Marcondes

\* Phenomenon in which employees are at work but are not as productive due to stress, depression, injury, illness, or burnout.