



Refirement eZine July 2009

The death of Michael Jackson has caused global reaction around the world. I was surprised when they mentioned that he was 50 as I always assumed his age was more in line with my children than my own. Our ideas and frameworks about how the world operates are formed when we are in our formative stage of life (the first 10 years). Most of our children grew up hearing Michael Jackson's music and hence the reason he is an X generation icon and not a Boomer icon. The second thought for me is that this hugely talented man led such a sad life. What needs to happen for us to value who we are and use our God-given talents and make the most of life around us?

I have been in Europe for the past two weeks visiting friends and family. The recession is evident on the streets of London. There is much talk about working longer and re-thinking retirement. The real challenge is to try and manage this process taking into account what you want out of life and to ensure that you map your own future. To do this you need to ask yourself some real questions and know who you are and where you are going. It is always a good idea to attend a workshop that may help you on this journey. See this newsletter for the NEXT CHAPTER workshop that will help with that process.

The other two workshops on offer at the moment are for grandfathers and those interested in improving their social media skills. Please read more details if these may be of interest to you.



Enjoy the latest article written by [Pete Laburn](#).

I was privileged to attend his week-long leadership course called [Ubuli Nobuntu - Leading with Humanity](#) this past month. It has opened my eyes to the wonder and beauty of our nation and the tasks that need to be addressed at a leadership level to help bring about change in our nation. I challenge you to question how you are using your skill set to help with this process. We live in a beautiful part of the planet, filled with diverse groups of interesting people, many who may need the hand of a willing experienced person to help them reach their own destination. Why not question this in your life? We all have skills and can help. This needs to be done with understanding of humanity and an open heart willing to walk the journey with another human being.

Warm Regards

Lynda Smith

I have been requested to look for 6 specialists in the engineering/manufacturing sector who may be able to help with a project of benchmarking in the steel and foundry sector. These will be spread out countrywide mainly in the areas around South Africa where these industries operate. Please send me the names of anyone who may be interested in a project of this nature.

Workshops on offer

The art of Grandfather Stories - 11th July

Social Media Simplified - 9th July

Your next chapter - 11 Aug , 22 July and 6 Aug

Boomers could cushion the effects of the global skills crisis

Pete Laburn

Countries such as the US, UK, Europe, India, China, South East Asia and Australia have all reported a worsening shortage of qualified personnel including engineers, health care professionals, information technology workers and tradesman. By 2012 two-thirds of the maths and science teachers in Western countries are scheduled for retirement, and as close as 2010 the US is reported to be short of 6-million talent workers, including more than 85 000 physicians.

The problem will worsen by 2020 when 70-million Baby Boomers will have exited the work force – and been replaced by only 40 mill Gen X and Millennial generation workers. A recent Indian Management Association study suggests the global skills shortage to have reached between 32 – 39 million talented workers by 2020, with the US short 17- million workers, Japan short 9-million workers and Germany, France and the UK each short 2-million talent workers by 2020.

Closer to home, South Africa's own mining, engineering and construction sectors, which are experiencing astronomical growth due to high commodity prices and large scale infrastructure development, are limited in their growth prospects due to a lack of technical skills. In addition, leading specialists in the field are saying that SA has a vast shortage of municipal civil engineers, which is putting our water supplies at risk.

Municipalities are employing junior or inexperienced engineers as there are not enough experienced engineers available.

Another factor which is exasperating the situation is that there just is not enough young talent coming into the market to replace the Boomer generation as they retire. This is due to the declining birth rates experienced in Europe over the last 30 years.

These are just some of the examples which highlight the large scale skills shortage facing the world as countries strive to develop and advance. But while most companies compete to attract, retain and excite new young talent in order to take their businesses forward, they should not overlook the Baby Boomer generation (born between the late 40's and

the late 60's) as a vital component which could cushion the impact on companies and markets against the full negative impact of the global skills shortage.

Boomers have skills, knowledge and technical ability that are still hugely needed, and institutional wisdom gleaned over many years of experience. These are assets that companies can utilise during these difficult market times, and that Boomers can provide well past their retirement date. Boomers have always dreamed big and have demonstrated the resolve to work very hard at what they believe in. These are excellent attributes which could be vital to the survival of many corporates as they enlist the services of Baby Boomers with their vast experience to help mentor and train tomorrow's leaders.

While Boomers could be a vital component of any future business strategy to deal with the imminent skills shortage, companies need to be aware that Baby Boomers as a whole are finding the corporate world becoming more complex, demanding and frankly less pleasurable than it used to be. Many are tired of playing to corporate rules and interminable management meetings. Furthermore they are frustrated at having to work with a new generation of young highly mobile staff with little loyalty to the organisations causes, who do as they please and still seem to be in even greater demand. Organisations have a new generation of young talented managers, who have qualifications but not always the experience and institutional wisdom of the Boomers, who have the skills and could mentor younger talent.

It is for this reason that companies hoping to enlist the services of Baby Boomers in the years to come should be flexible in allowing Boomers to contribute and provide their services on their own terms. Boomers need to be released, but not lost. This could mean working flexi-hours, or on a contract basis, which could further decrease costs to the company as they would constitute a variable cost to the company.

Boomers, have worked hard and contributed much. Now is the time for them to leave a legacy. Its time for organisations to let them disengage from the formal corporate world, but encourage them to transfer their knowledge and abilities back to a skills short world. The skills and abilities they love using must drive them, not doggedly hanging on to their turf as they wait for retirement, frustrated at having to do the very things they don't enjoy, but have to.

So Boomers and organizations need to consider a ReFire strategy. Boomers have another 15 – 30 years of working life left, but not in its current form. Organisations have huge skills shortages. Jointly they must create opportunities for Boomers to reinvent themselves and their careers, and maybe our looming skills shortage will not be as severe. Similarly 'ReFire' offers organisations innovative solutions to unlock the blockages in senior ranks caused by change resistant Boomers, and the simultaneous concern over loss of skills and knowledge. The challenge is to 'let Boomers go, but simultaneously keep them'.

A proactive, big thinking approach is needed where organisations need to create a climate of understanding and support for 50-plus Boomers. Similarly Boomers need to signal to the organisation their willingness to retire themselves from formal employment, and become a variable source of skills, knowledge and wisdom, at a variable cost to the organisation.

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Workshop

Your Next Chapter



The Baby Boomer generation will not retire like previous generations. We will be navigating a new path. Come and discover the opportunities and build a new exciting journey for your future. This workshop is for all men and women over 50 and will be 4 hours long.

Date: 11 Aug (Dam), 22 July (JHB) and 6 Aug (PTA)

Time: 08h30 till 12h30

Venue: To be announced

Bookings: Lynda Smith on 082 490 2822

Price: R400

Outcomes that you will take home with you:

Notes and Challenges to help you.

Why is this stage different for our generation?

Discover who you are and what your dreams are.

What career opportunities exist for you?

How can I upgrade my technology skills?

Draw up an action plan.

Build new connections and contacts to help you navigate your future.

The workshops will be kept small to facilitate discussion and learning. Book early to avoid disappointment. **This process can be booked as an internal workshop for companies wanting to educate their over 50 employees.**

