

# Magical Life

March 2008

## More Secrets to Learning Faster and Smarter

Are you one of those people who does badly in exams? Do you find your brain freezes up and you forget everything you've learnt? Perhaps you practice a speech until you are perfect, only to find you can't remember any of it when you stand in front of a group. To overcome these reactions and learn faster and smarter, we need to manage our bodies' reaction to stress.

For example, when we get tense, such as doing exams or public speaking, our brains shut down – they think we are under attack. Remember the old 'fight or flight' reaction? When we get tense or stressed, our brain moves to the mid brain or 'reptilian' part of our brain. Unfortunately for us, the stuff we have learned is stored in other parts of our brain.

The conscious and unconscious sections of our brain is where our knowledge is stored. When our body is reacting to the 'fight or flight' messages, we find it very difficult to access our knowledge.

The answer then is to **relax**.

If you want to do well in exams, public speaking or learning in general, take the time to relax yourself before the event. Have a laugh, watch a silly movie, anything that allows you to relax and access the conscious and sub-conscious sections of your brain. Remember you can relax by taking deep breaths, rolling your shoulders and relaxing your tense muscles. Give it a go – it works 😊

Another thing you can do to learn faster and smarter is to work with your body clock. Some people are morning people (like me – I work really well at 3.30am!), some people are highly effective during the day and others are night owls. If you can do your study/ difficult tasks at the time you are most effective, then you will find yourself learning things much faster and easier.

Now for the one that all my students love: before you sit down to do homework or study for an exam, spend 20 minutes doing something you love; for example, watch TV, read a book, go for a walk. Again this will relax you and put you in the right frame of mind to be able to learn faster and smarter.

Try these strategies – you will be amazed at how much difference they can make to your ability to learn faster and smarter.

In our next newsletter I will be writing about how to improve your presentation skills. Until then, have a magical month!

Danette 😊

## Online Tools for Social Entrepreneurs

Today's youth are interacting online more than ever. This new environment can be difficult for social entrepreneurs to grasp without an appropriate understanding of how new web applications can be used to improve youth engagement.

Michael De Percy and Chris Sadleir lead you through a course designed to assist social entrepreneurs to develop practical online skills to engage with youth in promoting social policy activities.

This course will provide you with the skills to market your activities in an online environment, focusing on increasing awareness of your campaign and also to improve attendance at key events.

This new innovative program will be presented in May. Ring Wendy on 6273 2221 if you would like more details.

## Distance Learning

All of the Magical Learning accredited programs are available via distance learning.

Students can work at their own pace and will have email and phone support and regular tutorials.

Please call Wendy on 02 6273 2221 for further information.

## Managing Generational Difference

There has been considerable focus in recent years on generational differences in our society and how they impact us: as individuals, colleagues, managers, employers and even families.

It's likely the biggest single cause of conflict between each of these generations is simply the differences in personal values and beliefs – after all it's those things that typically influence each of us in the decisions we make and the actions we take.

Most organisations are currently grappling with four generations of workers (labels are not mine!):

- ☺ Veterans (born 1929 – 1949)
- ☺ Baby Boomers (1950 – 1964)
- ☺ Generation X (1965 – 1979)
- ☺ Generation Y (1980 ...)

Much has been written about the Gen Y (or *Millenials*) 'phenomenon', particularly because there is such a contrast between them and Gen X. Some researchers suggest that Gen Y are more aligned with Veterans in their attitude towards work, love, life and play.

So what's the difference, other than age and experience? According to a recent study on issues relating to attracting and retaining employees:

Veterans	Boomers	Gen X	Millenials
Born into/ raised during major war	Largest generation (population) in history	Often had both parents working, hence also known as 'latchkey kids'	Optimistic, confident, sociable, strong morals and sense of civic duty
Self-disciplined, respect the law	Adventurous youth; tend to conservatism in 30s/ 40s	Generation X more resourceful, individualistic, self reliant and irreverent	Comfortable with peers of differing ethnicity
Think a lot about the past	Believed employment was guaranteed	Focus in the workplace on relationships, outcomes, their rights and skills	Expect greater workplace flexibility
Prefer consistency	Job Status and symbols are important	Not interested in long-term careers, corporate loyalty or status symbols	Think DIFFERENTLY to any other members of the workforce
	Promote 'inclusive' leadership, but don't know how to practice it	Easy to recruit, hard to retain	You have to earn their respect

As with any research or survey of this nature, we must acknowledge that not everyone fits neatly into their respective pigeon hole. But it does get you to thinking about just how we relate to our fellow human beings, and perhaps why on some occasions we seem to be completely incapable of getting through to a colleague, or of understanding where they're coming from.

This has the potential to become one of the biggest challenges for organisations around the world, particularly as Boomers gradually retire from the workplace and Gen Xers take on more of the senior management and business ownership roles currently held by Veterans/ Boomers.

While this might all sound like doom and gloom, it's really not. It's a great opportunity for all of us to hone our interpersonal skills: communicating, liaising, negotiating, facilitating, leading, empowering.

What do you think? Is this all a beat-up? A fabricated structure designed to sell more books and newspapers? Or is there some real substance to this for you at work?

Let me know what you think; email me at [grahame@magicallearning.com](mailto:grahame@magicallearning.com).

Have an outstanding life!

Grahame ☺

## Magical People

Michael De Percy and Chris Sadleir have designed the course *Online Tools for Social Entrepreneurs* to assist social entrepreneurs to develop practical online skills to engage with youth in promoting social policy activities. Magical Learning is very excited to present this new learning event and we are delighted to introduce them both to you in this newsletter.

### Michael De Percy

Michael is passionate about lifelong learning and is an active researcher and lecturer in leadership, political science and higher education. Following careers in business, government, the military, the not-for-profit sector, and the higher education sector, Michael brings a broad range of experience to his teaching. He uses an innovative blend of theory and practice and incorporates new technologies to assist people to learn, create knowledge, develop new ideas and lead others in the global business and government environments.

Michael is currently a PhD (Political Science) candidate at the Research School of Social Sciences (ANU), focusing on the deployment of broadband in Canada and Australia. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College Duntroon and his qualifications include a Bachelor of Philosophy (Honours), a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science), a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, a Graduate Certificate in Management, a Diploma of Government Financial Management, an Associate Diploma in Personnel Administration, and Certificates in Vocational Instruction and Warehousing. He has recently published chapters and papers on leadership, citizenship, and the impact of privatisation on the telecommunications industry.

Michael enjoys working with culturally diverse groups and he has experience teaching management programs in Singapore and Hong Kong. He has a particular interest in incorporating cross-cultural communication skills and generic career skills into the curricula.

In his spare time, Michael plays and teaches guitar and works with a variety of student and youth organisations. He is currently producing a documentary and will soon be seen working as a sound engineer for local rock bands.

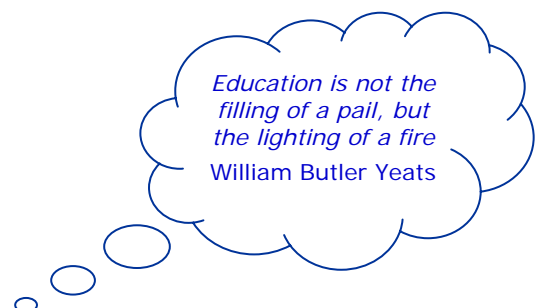
### Chris Sadleir

Chris holds a PhD from the University of Canberra and as a lifelong learner he is fascinated by the way we as individuals and members of organisations learn and apply knowledge – especially when faced with discovering or working with something new.

Chris specialises as an organisational researcher and trainer. His background as a policy developer and analyst in both public and private sectors helps provide effective learning experiences for those dealing with complex work tasks. He regularly conducts training and briefing sessions for visiting delegations from other countries interested in experience with government and public policy in Australia and the ACT.

Chris also holds a Masters of Public Management from the University of Technology Sydney and a Bachelor of Architectural Criticism (Honours) from the University of Adelaide.

In his spare time Chris catches up on book reviews and follows what is happening in the news.



## Accredited Courses commencing April 2008

### 4 April 2008

Certificate IV in Government Procurement

Facilitator: Tarian Dixon

Elective units 7 April – 2 May 2008

Core units 27 June – 18 July 2008

### 11 April 2008

Diploma of Government (Financial Services)

Facilitator: Danette Fenton-Menzies

Full Diploma 11 April – 1 September 2008

Elective units 11 April- 4 June 2008

Core units 28 July – 1 September 2008

### 14 April 2008

Diploma of Government (Human Resources)

Facilitator: Danette Fenton-Menzies

Full Diploma 14 April – 1 September 2008

Elective units only – 14 April – 19 May 2008

Core units 28 July – 1 September 2008

For more information and bookings contact us today: 02 6273 2221, email: [learn@magicallearning.com](mailto:learn@magicallearning.com) or visit [www.magicallearning.com](http://www.magicallearning.com).

## Interesting Web Sites

The Centre for Policy Development, is a new, independent public interest think tank dedicated to promoting alternative voices in Australia's public debate, was launched in May 2007. Their web site is [www.cpd.org.au](http://www.cpd.org.au).

The Centre fosters a diverse, cross-disciplinary community of thinkers, and connects their idea with a wider audience of concerned citizens, policy makers, and the media

In the recent *Insight* March edition there is an interesting article by Daniel Frank on 5 ideas in 5 minutes. The 5 ideas include:

- ☺ **Kiva** – a micro loans portal that allows lenders from developed countries to connect with entrepreneurs from developing ones
- ☺ **Clean Care Feebate** – a fee and rebate scheme which promotes energy efficient cars
- ☺ **Bolsa Familia** – an anti-poverty conditional cash transfer program that provides low-income families with a cash payment on condition that children go to school and get vaccinated.
- ☺ **Food Miles** – a concept that promotes consumer thinking about how much energy is used to produce from 'paddock to plate'.
- ☺ **Sky Trust** – a cap-and-trade carbon emissions reduction scheme where the proceeds from the sale of carbon credits are placed into a trust.

Find out more by subscribing to their website.

## Competition

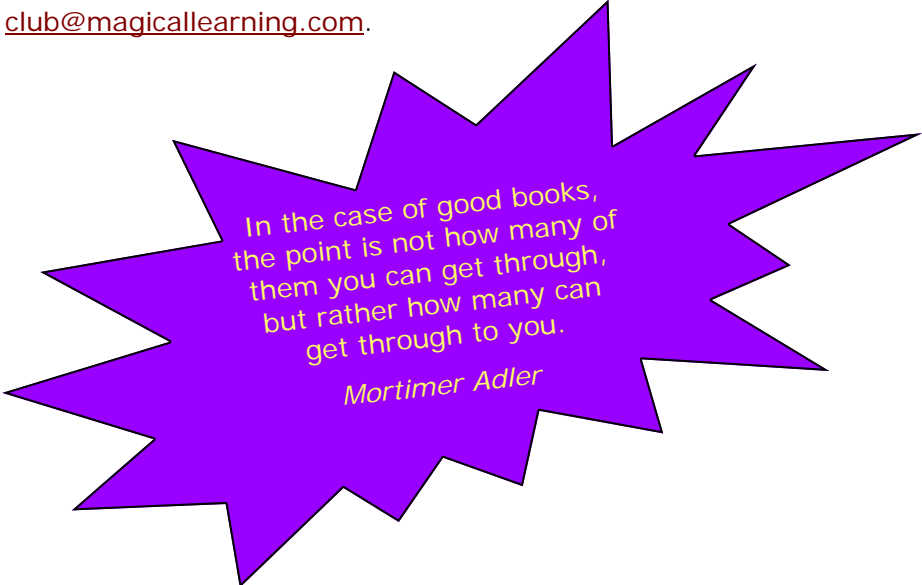
Want to win a \$30 book voucher?

Simply send us a short book or movie review (100 – 200 words). Make the review about a book or movie that has inspired you (the book or movie does not need to be new). Include with your review how many smiley faces you would give it.

Feel free to enter as many times as you like. The competition ends *cob* Friday 25th April 2008.

The winner will be announced in the next edition.

Send your review in an email to [club@magicallearning.com](mailto:club@magicallearning.com).



In the case of good books,  
the point is not how many of  
them you can get through,  
but rather how many can  
get through to you.

*Mortimer Adler*

### Inspiring films

**Amazing Grace** - tells the story of William Wilberforce who worked passionately to abolish slavery in Britain. As Ty Burr from the Boston Globe said in his review last year, "the movie, deeply felt and dutifully inspiring, is also an interesting reminder that England outlawed slavery a half-century before the United States got around to it, and didn't need a civil war to do so. All it took was one extremely stubborn man of conscience..."

**Shut up and Sing** – chronicles the lives of the female country band, The Dixie Chicks, from 2003 to the start of their 2006 tour.

"At the top of their game being one of the most successful bands of all time. However with the US invasion of Iraq about to begin over frustrated worldwide objections about this needless war, one of the Chick vents off the cuff in a concert about being ashamed of US President George W Bush...The film covers the band's effort to ride out the turmoil that would leave their careers under a cloud, but would eventually give them a opportunity to grow as great artist who bow to no one" *Kenneth Chisholm*.



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