

The value of moments

... in creating transformative experiences for business

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The value of moments

Whoosh ... and another year has passed us by. The christmas decorations are already up (again!) and there's still a list of new years' resolutions to deal with. And if you've been wanting to change jobs or even careers well there's always next year.

Within business there are similar signature signals that tell us the world is getting a move on. Whilst life might seem like this continuous journey ... it is not! Not even close. Rather it is a staccato of moments – some memorable and some forgettable.

To get a grasp of life we need to get a grasp of moments. We need to learn to empower ourselves in not only being able to manage moments wherever and whenever they occur, but also in how we plan for and be proactive with moments.

This white paper focuses on the power of harnessing moments within a business context. By moments I am referring to those points of time that cast the spotlight on a particular timeline such as when highlighting a milestone or needing to make a decision – such as the signature signals I mentioned previously.

Wherever you look you'll find that memorable moments are typically those moments associated with value. And this value has a range of currencies, each relevant to focusing and motivating a specific effort. For example, the motivation for creative thinking is typically in seeking the breakthrough idea to resolve a situation, the motivation for leadership is in helping others to succeed and achieve.

Moments also provide a sense of achievement such as when a business might be recognised by the marketplace, colleagues, peers or some other accolade entity. The business steps onto that metaphorical (or real) stage and the applause begins ... all that grunt work was suddenly worth it.

The Selfie brand ambassador

Some things become memorable and recognisable in an instant. And likewise we want to share the moments that form part of these memories.

So what do you get when you have a high profile person with a following of a few hundred thousand fans take a selfie whilst wearing your clothing brand. A marketing moment that is so well targeted it defies the best advertising brains.



Thus creating opportunities for such ‘celebrities’ to be experiencing something in such a way that they want to share it with their fan base is another value of moments – in this example, shareable moments.

	In the field of	The currency of value within that moment
In business	Leadership	Motivation
	Customer experiences	Advocacy and ambassadors
	Creative thinking	Breakthroughs and the Eureka moments
	Problem Solving	Epiphanies – those moments of revelation
	Stories	Climax
In life	Theatre	The applause
	Sport	The Try - The Goal – The Shot - The Medal
	Music	The chants for an encore – The winning album

Challenges of our parallel worlds

We live in parallel worlds that are in paradox. Within some industries opportunities are being presented at such a rate that products need to be launched whilst still been developed. And in contrast there are other industries where activity is moving with a tone of the everyday ... where old world strategies are still being used to manage contemporary change.

This is not to say that the new strategies will remove some of these everyday challenges but they might just make the process that bit more effective and efficient.



Some of these status quo and normative situations can include:

- Disengaged staff
- People lacking a connection with purpose and direction
- People lacking any sense of achievement
- A lack of mindfulness which leads to a lack of focus which leads to missed opportunities
- A lack effectiveness and efficiency
- Lack of connection between business and customers, and between colleagues, and between friends

Moments are a currency that can help shake up the status quo for the better and bring a positive shift in the social norm. Moments are like decision points that can either keep a journey going down the same path or else take it on a life changing tangent.

Deciding between two rights

The need to decide between two rights is an everyday challenge within the business (and personal) world. And potentially an increasing one as we bring ethics, values and into our decision making. Historically a business would make a final decision on purely commercial factors. The only consideration was whether or not the identified decision would make money. But in today's world with an increasing evaluation of corporate and business behaviour, decisions are being influenced by a deeper and wider array of factors.

An example is within the context of Corporate Responsibility. Michelle Allen (Senior Public Affairs and Communications Manager with the Amatil Group) notes that the challenges of corporate social responsibility have changed and it's no longer as easy as just writing a cheque to the first worthy cause that presents itself. Now the choice is between a number of worthy causes each of which are doing the 'right thing' and within a wider context balancing this with the need to be sustainable from a pure business sense.

Such tough choices might also come down to the individual, and how we see ourselves. For example, how would a struggling small business decide between being socially responsible and taking a much needed contract with a company that is known for its lack of corporate responsibility. Does the business take the dollars or refuse the job and possibly go out of business? Are they making the decision on behalf of everyone in that business who will lose their jobs as a consequence?

Within this situation sits a bigger question of how to decide between two contexts that each have merit. On a personal level it might be deciding between attending a key significant business meeting or a graduation ceremony for a loved one. Realising that the decision we make in that moment often defines who we are and the quality of our leadership we have to ourselves.

The experience of decisions

Life defining choices are those successive and proactive choices we make that help cast our character and help influence the life changing choices we sometimes have thrust upon us. These choices help to reveal the truth by which we live and the qualities which continue to motivate us.

If we look to what is happening within the world of social chatter and that of the amplified customer voice, then what is generally shared with gusto are moments, those memorable snapshots of experience that people like to share.

Within the field of customer experiences providing satisfactory service does little to generate these moments. But do something out of the ordinary, something that delights, something that transforms your customer and suddenly you've created a moment worth talking about.

The importance of moments extends beyond customer experiences to a raft of other areas of our business. Within a leadership role it might mean what decisions are being made at crucial moments. Within a public speaking context it might surface in the speakers' reaction when they are challenged by an audience member.

Within an employee position it might nag at the individual who knows that they are just going in circles and sometimes even in reverse and that a career changing moment is required. A hard call needs to be made.

If the past is anything to go by then the future will also be about moments, and how best to craft experiences that create moments. And in particular if you are concerned about how to create inspirational and transformative change for the better.

These decision points and the choices we have are what can propel meaningful change. If we resign to a *fait accompli* that what is presented to us each day is what will remain so, a *que sera sera* of sorts, then we are nurturing negative impact. Do you want business to be the same next year?

We need to move beyond this and even beyond those decisions that lead us back to where we were, we need to blend incremental forward movements with transformative leaps. Moments are like railway platforms where we can either watch life passing us by or else jump off and enjoy the ride.



Moments are like a platform – you can decide to use them for standing on or for jumping off.

The paradox with moments is that they do not only provide life-changing opportunities that are positive but moments that are negative. And this negativity can have a memory that is sticky and hard to let go. We need to know how to recover from those moments that bring us down, those moments when we made a poor decision ... when things went south and opposite to what we wanted, to let go of things we can't change. The power of moments are amplified in these situations when we are able to be decisive and turn them around otherwise they send us into the red zone within the following illustration.

Moments provide us with the opportunity to make a choice that can be transformational. How many people have come back from adversity – how many people are a testament to the saying *'that it's not how far you fall but how high you bounce when you hit the bottom'*.

The value of moments

Moments	Energy	Movement	Impact
Life defining moments	Transformational	Leaping	x10
	Inspirational	Springing	x7
Life repeating moments	Responsive	Circular	x3
	Mechanical	Random	x2
	Passive	Stalled	x1
Life detracting moments	Neutral	Reverse	negative
	Reactive	Downward	negative

Leaders seek to make the most of every moment – they value time and also the impact of how ordinary things at the right time and within the right context can transform people. To capitalise on the power of moments we need to all become leaders – for ourselves as much as for others. As leaders we recognise that moments are a perishable commodity and we can either profit from them or have them depreciate in value as we let them slip on by.

What the moment brings

Being in the moment

It has been estimated that people's minds are wandering 50% of the time from the task at hand, the latter including reading, writing and talking with people. Having a mind wandering for almost 50% of the time can have some serious consequences for workplace productivity.

During these times not only are we being less than effective we are also increasing our potential for unhappiness. In 2010, Patrick Killingsworth and Daniel Gilbert co-authored a paper in proposing that "a wandering mind is an unhappy. Part of this was based on Killingsworth's research at Harvard. Thus this research indicates that there is the potential for psychological harm to your mind if it keeps on with its wandering ways. And I thought daydreaming was good for you!

This brings to the fore the importance of being in the moment. Often used as an improvisation principle or within mediative practices, being in the moment is just as important for business. Being in the moment is genuine because it is spontaneous and you didn't have time to plan anything out of it – you are responding to what is being presented. It is a true reflection of what is going on. So if you communicate in moments you've more of an opportunity to demonstrate a genuine sense of engagement.

Moments bring awareness through reflection

An activity I enjoy facilitating at the start of training sessions is one in which participants form pairs and share something they are proud of with their partner. Their partner then shares this with the rest of the group. The intention with this activity is to set off a positive vibe around self-esteem by recognising what we have achieved and feel proud of (however small or big). It's an opportunity to give ourselves a metaphorical slap on the back and permission to blow our trumpet.

During a recent workshop one lady said she didn't have anything to share. Nothing. Nil Niente. *What about hobbies?* Don't have any? *Sport?* Nope.

And then there was silence before she shared that her life had been raising 4 children as a single mother. Boom! She never saw this as anything more than the everyday but in that moment she realised just how powerful had been her activity over the past 11 years. The reaction of amazement that other people shared provided the reflective space for her to feel a sense of pride (that's what she shared later that day)

The message has landed ... and the learning that comes with moments

When seeking to understand we sometimes need a relaxation of effort or change of context before we suddenly understand and the penny drops, when we have the light bulb moment. Such learnings can be assisted by what are call teachable moments. Those moments when we are able to capitalise on the learning opportunities presented by our surroundings.

Moments and stories

Stories work toward a resolution – a moment when it all falls into place. The storyteller crafts the elements so that they all lead to this moment. If we take this analogy into human achievement what is it that we are working toward? What is the climax of our efforts such that we can bring our work together? Whether this be within the context of tasks, projects or corporate vision.

Pacing to the rhythm of moments

By tweaking how you respond to a moment you can have amplified consequences. For example, in a customer service situation a person can just serve a customer or add a smile at the point of contact when such a smile will amplify positive feelings. In the same way people flirt and share glances at the most effective moment.

A public speaker knows that their audience is subject to the serial effect and that there will be higher periods of engagement at the start and end of their presentation, and to maintain engagement throughout they will need to provide variety of communication strategy/

When we experience moments we focus our emotions. And this makes them a powerful motivator. And experiences have a sense of anticipation so we can feel the positive before the event. Moments bring experience – they bring focus.

Moments can serve as a filter such as those used by respected entrepreneurs such as Jeff Bezos (Amazon) who are not just lucky but who remain committed to the constant improvement. Each moment a new idea or challenge is presented they leverage that moment rather than just let it pass them by.

The lesson for each of us is to not just treat each moment as a blank filter, but rather use the same as a means of seeing the value that is being presented in that moment.

Better conversations

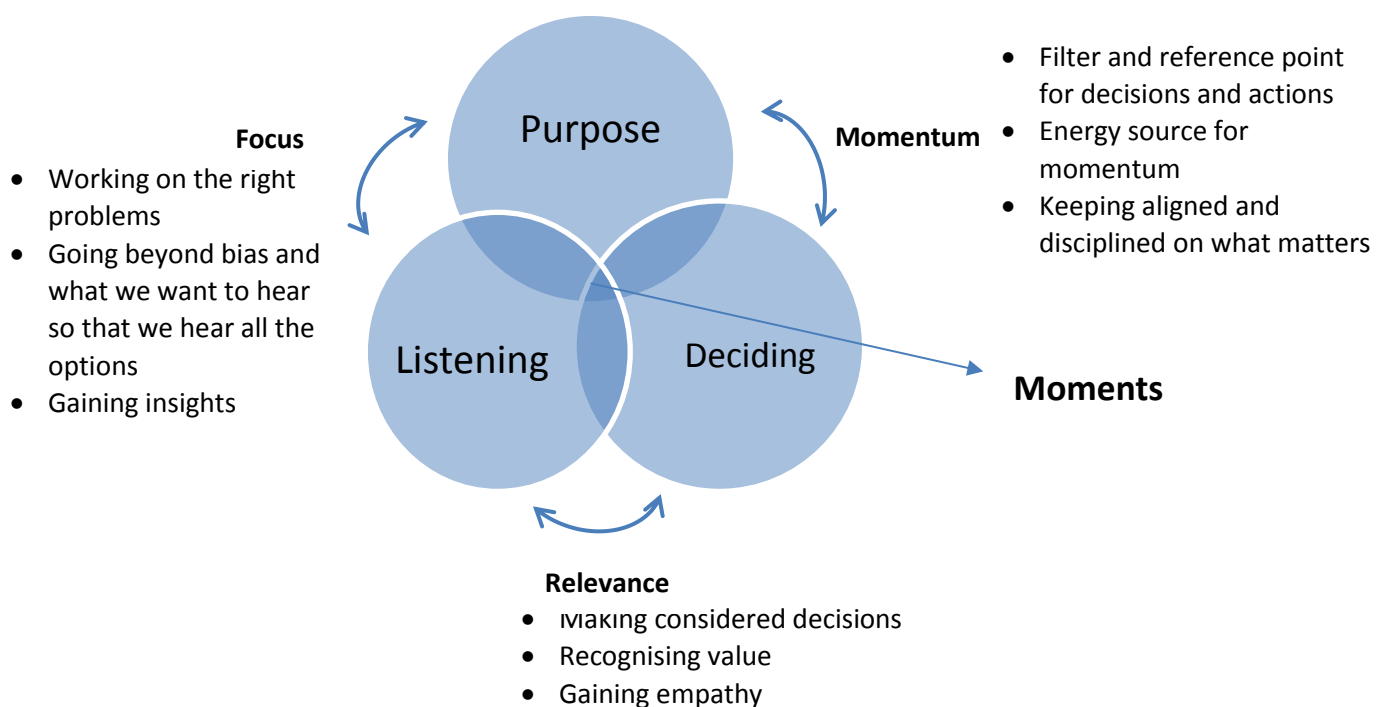
When in conversation, focusing on the individuals moments within the conversation can lead to better conversations. This approach puts the other person front and centre in our dialogue as opposed to thinking of our next appointment or of what happened earlier that day. It promotes a sense of awareness that makes us more alert to what opportunities might be generated within that conversations that can add value not just to us but to the other person.

Putting the value of better conversations into today's workplace where people are increasingly working in activity based workplaces and encounter more spontaneous and informal and conversational learning opportunities – such as the the corridor conversations

Bringing value to a moment

To create moments in which we can harness the value on offer we focus on the elements of purpose, decision and listening.

The purpose is important for making sure we are true to our intention and focused on what is meaningful and important – this answer the why question. Deciding is an important element as without decision we are left without momentum or action. And listening to ensure we are aware and alert to opportunity.



About John Pastorelli

I work with business and individuals to help craft transformative experiences through the power of moments. Such moments provide a value and currency that inspires, motivates and brings an enthusiastic focus to our efforts.

I love this focus of my work as it brings into play conversational skills, customer service principles and creative thinking. It also promotes the importance of fostering rich and meaningful relationships to ensure a business remains strong, sustainable and optimised for growth.



I've been fortunate to work on a range of exciting projects and learn from a number of very clever people. These projects included being a member of the original start-up team for BridgeClimb where my responsibility was to help craft the 'on the steel' experience and build the team of Climb Leaders that would deliver this experience.

I have worked throughout Australia with all levels of government departments, private enterprises including multinationals, multicultural and Indigenous communities, regional towns and communities, and not for profit groups. I've also facilitated training workshops in New Zealand and Europe.

Connect

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I offer training, coaching and cultural change programs on crafting and delivering rich customer experiences. My preference is to work with business on a holistic 'project basis' so that sleeves can be rolled up, employees engaged and a holistic solution implemented.

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