

## Five Minutes with Annie Anderson



My name is Annie Anderson and I am an Associate with Lane4 Management Group and have just come off a strategic project at AXA

Previous roles have included international sales and marketing management, change manager at Old Mutual (South Africa), Project Change Manager at Woolworths, South Africa, who own Country Road and Principle Consultant for Wilson Learning.

### **2. How did you come to perform in a change management related role? What attracted you?**

I trained in marketing and sales and went into main stream consultancy after having had the children. My consulting roles naturally led me into change management. I had really wonderful clients at Wilson Learning including Nike and CarPhone Warehouse so I was able to really get involved in communication. Whilst working with BP on their takeover of Castrol I got introduced to Levels of Work (Broadbanding) and this led me to a number of OD Change roles.

I love the flexibility of taking my skills to any location. I have worked and lived in three continents. Change is always needed in any industry and no more so than the present time.

### **3. Why is good change management so critical to the way businesses perform today?**

Change is not linear and people have to make sense of it in their own way and in their own time. Without really well thought out conversations and change plans employees make sense of reality in their own way – which is sometimes crooked thinking. This can lead to a lot of resistance and fear. Change management helps transitions to happen quicker.

### **4. What makes a great change management practitioner?**



The ability to leave their ego at home and to not be afraid to tackle often difficult and complex issues with good grace. The ability to really listen and absorb what is not being said by those impacted.

A good dose of emotional intelligence and a genuine, authentic passion for doing the right thing.

**5. What would you say to anyone thinking of starting/developing a career in change management?**

It is a great career to allow you flexibility and learning by doing. There is no one right answer so learn as much as you can about the informal sides of change. and get active in the debate.

**6. What is your idea of a great change management challenge?**

Where the rationale for the change is to create a better offer for the end customer. Ultimately companies must improve their service offer rather than bottom line. Although both can co-exist too often the reason for the change is financial rather than humanistic.

I had my ideal project – working for a luxury cosmetic brand on changing the consumer offer – they don't come better than that. The Programme Director gave me a spa day as a leaving present!