

Five Minutes with... Jill Harbrow



My name is Jill Harbrow and I am a Change Manager at National Australia Bank.

My professional career includes over 15 years operational and consulting experience in Organisational Change, communications, HR, and Project Management. My corporate and industry experience spans Financial Services, Manufacturing, Retail and Distribution, Mining and Minerals, Public Sector, Automotive and Telecommunications. The focus of the work has been on designing and implementing change management, organisational design, business readiness and communications strategies to support large-scale systems implementations, mergers and acquisitions, business re-organisation, and transformation programs.

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

Long before the discipline of Change Management had been envisaged as a strategic requirement in projects (transformations, mergers, restructures) I was fortunate to have been exposed to a range of change management IP, and consulting advice as part of a large scale program at ANZ. I was instantly attracted to and as a novice in the area, quite adept at the various change methodologies and practices that we were applying in that environment. I began to see the organization at various levels one, in a holistic way and the other at the group and individual level of change. Following this I completed a Post Grad Diploma in Organisation Change and Development

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

Business Performance is dependent on people understanding and engaging in how the organization works, how they fit in, what is expected of them, and how they will be recognized for their contribution. Once 'change' is signaled in the organization people need to be encouraged to 'get on board' with how things will



change and their role in it. Success in execution is directly related to how well the various aspects of the change are managed along with the leadership's ability to know when the change levers need to be used and have the courage to listen to 'how' the organization is responding.

4. What makes a great change management practitioner?

The skills, attributes and motivation of a change manager are all intrinsically linked. I believe that a change manager needs to want to engage with others, help people and teams, and enjoy being immersed in complexity and ambiguity. There some inherent technical know-how and skills that complete that picture – group facilitation, analytical ability, consultation and active listening, understanding how organizations function – to name a few.

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

You have a great opportunity to make a real difference! In starting a career in this area it would be very helpful to talk to a range of practitioners as there are many areas of change methodology and different ways in which it is applied. Find a topic or environment that appeals to you so you can visualize practicing your skills. Secondly, acquiring some academic qualifications in the discipline is good strategy if this can be combined with action learning in the workplace even better where you get to apply your know-how. Keep your professional interest current

Be yourself and trust your instincts and remember you don't have the magic wand and are not overly responsible for things working out OK!

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

Altering how society values, acknowledges and rewards people in the helping professions e.g. nursing, social workers, carers.