



Resilience Special Interest Group

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RESILIENCE PRACTITIONER HANDBOOK

Skills, attributes and tools required of the
modern-day resilience professional



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In an age of globalisation and increased connectivity including that of media and supply chains, the impact of small events can reach and be felt across the most far flung areas of the globe in seconds. Today, no place is out of reach and almost anything is possible. With this overlay comes the growing rate of disrupters that exist or will exist that will impact what is considered our everyday normal. The link between risk and resilience continues to become closer, and the importance of contemporary risk thinking and practices critical to ensuring your resilience.

The consequences of small disruptions can be devastating particularly when governments and organisations are not armed with resilience. Too many organisations succumb to the mentality of ‘it will never happen to me’ and in fact don’t survive the next event. Arguably, if you are thinking that, you could be next!

Whilst many perceive resilience as an additional cost and/or resource, we have made an easy to use handbook to make the transition easy and effective. We are passionate about making our communities stronger and able to adapt to change, which is why we have created this handbook.

The Organisational Resilience Practitioner Handbook provides you with an overview of “What do I need to know?” and “How do I do it?” and is written by a team of experts from the RMIA’s Organisational Resilience Special Interest Group.

A special thanks to all of those that have contributed to the development of this handbook including:

- Pete Gervasoni (Chair of the Organisational Resilience Special Interest Group)
- Amit Bansal
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- Jennifer Le
- Kathryn McEwen.

The RMIA would also like to acknowledge the support of Risk Cloud as well as Dynamiq, our strategic resilience partner and sponsor of the RMIA’s Organisational Resilience Special Interest Group.

Anthony Ventura
RMIA President and Chairman

SECTION 02

What is Organisational Resilience?

Organisational Resilience (OR) stems from a growing need to manage the uncertainty of complex and interconnected modern societies and economies. It is an organisation's ability to absorb and adapt in a changing environment that is either sudden or incremental.

As defined in the recently published International Standard, ISO 22316:2017 – Organisational Resilience – Principles and Guidelines, organisational resilience is the ability of an organisation to absorb or adapt to a changing environment.

Organisational resilience is a holistic approach that assists in managing change events. It is a strategic approach to build adaptive capacity within an organisation to enable it to prepare and respond to change.

Organisational resilience is not seen as a plan, or a checklist. It's something you do. Resilience is found

in an organisation's culture, attitudes and values. In creating appropriate knowledge, culture, attitudes and values, an organisation builds its capacity to either absorb or adapt to change events. An organisation needs to understand its resilience capabilities and develop a system that underpins its strategic and operational capabilities.

Organisations are required to exhibit high reliability when faced with the challenges of change and adverse events, and decision-makers must consider not only the events that they know will or might occur, but also the events that they cannot predict.

Resilience is a function of an organisation's:

- Situation awareness
- Management of keystone vulnerabilities and
- Adaptive capacity in a complex, dynamic and interconnected environment.

The management of risk is a cornerstone of effective organisational resilience. Resilience is not a defensive strategy, but a positive, forward-looking 'strategic enabler', which allows business leaders to take measured risks with confidence. Robust, resilient organisations are flexible and proactive – seeing, anticipating, creating and taking advantage of new opportunities in order, ultimately, to pass the test of time.

As highlighted in the 2016 RMIA White Paper: A Practitioners View of Organisational Resilience;

Organisations aspiring to enhance their resilience should consider building a system to underpin their strategic objectives, a system that can operationalise resilience strategy and integrate into operational plans.

The system should promote a culture of creativity and innovation, strategic leadership and adaptive capacity.

The system is supported by the many attributes of a resilient organisation including but not limited to risk management, business continuity and emergency management.

Attributes of resilient organisations:

- Shared vision and clarity of purpose;
- Understanding and influencing context;
- Effective and empowered leadership;
- A culture supportive of organisational resilience;
- Shared information and knowledge;
- Availability of resources;
- Development and coordination of management disciplines;
- Supporting continual improvement; and
- Ability to anticipate and manage change.

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Organisational Resilience Practitioner (ORP) – Who, What & How?

The majority of organisations, groups and forums had the misconception that “Resilience” is another name for Business Continuity. There are even systems that referred to business continuity plans as resilience plans.

Therefore, if you were wondering whether a resilience practitioner is just a figment of imagination then you were not wrong. So what is a ‘Resilience Practitioner’?

Just like a nucleus of an atom, the ORP acts as a centre point of the organisation’s resilience capability, and like electrons rotating around the nucleus the various disciplines such as BCM, Crisis Management, Security Management, Disaster Recovery, H&S etc. interact cohesively around the practitioner.

The picture to the right is nothing but a marginal representation of how many risk professionals operate in today’s ever changing and challenging environment. Denis Smith and Moira Fischbacher, from University of Glasgow, highlighted that risk management practices have considerably evolved in the past 10 years.

The intra-disciplinary characters of threats, problems or incidents along with the magnitude of threats & risk information floating around generated expectations of having wider skill set / capabilities upon a risk professional. This also contributed towards the evolution of the organisational resilience practitioner.

While it is not the expectation to be the master of all risk related disciplines, the ORP must possess enough knowledge and skills to deal with the dynamic nature of emerging risks and the current operating environment within their organisation.

This somewhat overexposed expectation on ORP also applies to low probability and high consequence situations, occasionally referred to as ‘black swans’. People are now looking to organisations to prevent significant social, economic & physical impacts. New policies / practices drafted are leaning more towards resilience as a way forward.

New forms of risk such as terrorism or the economic meltdown further illuminate the

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nature of risks is very different and no longer confined. The conventional methods of risk management, risk assessment or risk policies present considerable challenges because of the volatile nature of the risks and its significantly large impact. This interconnection of risks, disasters, crisis etc. further illustrate that the sagacious mitigation strategy now needs to be the combination of intra-discipline and networked forms of management.

Although not an easy task per se but who would be better to manage all this than the “Organisational Resilience Practitioner”?

In today’s environment, the biggest challenge for the resilience practitioner is the ability to gain the right academic knowledge and hands-on skills to successfully manage the ever changing and demanding role. Each organisation is different and the expertise requirements varies accordingly. Financial institutions have completely different requirements for Risk & Resilience management compared to manufacturing industries.

Leading Risk and Resilience leaders must possess a wide knowledge not only within their specialisations, but more importantly, understand all aspects of their organisation. Qualifications are a great base, but the ability to link and fully understand the business end to end is what separates a good operator to a great resilience leader.

The resilience practitioner can be considered a jack of all streams i.e. relationship management, change & project management, process mapping are some of the skill sets they should have under their belt.

In the current environment, knowledge of information security and data analytics is something that will enable the resilience practitioner to create cohesive links with technology and data teams.

The certifications from BCI or RMIA or accreditations on ISO 22301, ISO 22316 and ISO 31000 standards is always beneficial as a good start. There are also numerous courses available globally in Risk Management. The University of New South Wales has a Masters of commerce with a focus in Risk Management. Stern School of Business in the USA has a Master’s of Science program with Risk Management.

The Australian Government has collated some information around organisational resilience (<https://www.organisationalresilience.gov.au/resources/Pages/default.aspx>).

It is also important to acknowledge the value of other avenues to gaining experience. Experiences such as volunteering with the local State Emergency Service or Rural Fire Service unit can also give great exposure to a more community based resilience model. While volunteering as an active member within the Risk, Resilience, and Business Continuity communities also further exposes the practitioner to better industry practices and models.

What do we need to know?

A resilient organisation is Darwinian, in the sense that it adapts to a changing environment in order to remain fit for purpose (Kerr 2012). Resilience operates not just at the organisational level but as Flint – Taylor and Davda (2012) argue, also at the individual and team level. At all these levels being resilient implies being able to bounce back and thrive in the face of tough challenges. For organisations it is about building in protection and using each previous event as an opportunity to build in those layers that safeguard it against future disruptive events. It is evident that with increasing demands and the pace of change within the workplace there is now a focus on how to build resilience in individuals.

For over two decades the term resilience has been used in assessing how well individuals cope in traumatic situations particularly their involvement in war, disasters and even 'routine' abnormal events such as major traffic accidents (McAslan 2010). Resilient organisations are characterised by the ability to build adaptive capacity so it can prepare and respond to change. If an organisation is resilient it would stand that it is made up of resilient individuals. Pulley (1997) argues that individuals possess those characteristics that parallel resilient organizations. Conversely though, Flint-Taylor and Davda (2012) argue that individual resilience is comprised of a very different set of characteristics to that of a resilient organisation.

The aim of this section is to discuss those characteristics that a practitioner of organisational resilience might find valuable. This section will not seek to provide a definitive list of skills, nor will it argue that a practitioner of organisational resilience should have enjoyed certain experiences to be successful in their role. Rather, this section will draw on academic research to identify some common characteristics. Orcutt (2008) argues that research has now evolved to a level that delineates the characteristics of resilient people and links these characteristics to success, leadership and advanced emotional intelligence.

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The University of Melbourne, Professor Jill Klein states that ‘resilient leadership means handling adversity with greater skill, reducing stress across your organisation and uniting your team’. Ashridge, an executive and organisational development institution, developed a resilience questionnaire that measures resilience and perceived ability to cope when responding to a stressful situation. It is based on six “resilient attitudes”. These are:

1. Exercise emotional control
2. Show purpose
3. Draw on self-belief
4. Adapt to change
5. Demonstrate awareness of others
6. Balance alternatives

According to Davda (2012) who designed the questionnaire, resilient people are more able to manage the stress and pressure they experience but also drive, support, guide and influence others to get through stressful situations.

Other research by Lock (2014) describes similar key factors that make for a resilient leader. They include:

1. Perspective
2. Emotional Intelligence
3. Purpose, values and strengths
4. Connections
5. Managing physical energy

Current research does not point to directly to any professional or personal experience that may benefit a resilient leader. Rather the leader that is shown to be resilient is the one that possess a number of key characteristics. One characteristic that appears common successful resilient leaders is emotional intelligence. Leaders that draw on the emotional intelligence competencies to strengthen their resilience and agility, bridge “know-do” gaps and sustain change and value over time. Such competencies ensure that resilient leaders are able absorb complex change and help others move forward to achieve success.

Personal Qualities of an Organisational Resilience Practitioner

While skills and experience in organisational resilience are critical, it can be argued that it is personal qualities that determine how well these are deployed.

Research on what makes a person an asset in this domain is sparse, but we would expect similar qualities to those inherent in management or organisation development consulting roles, whether external or in-house.

OR capabilities and suggested desirable qualities are summarised below.

Influencing and Building Relationships

The role requires strong communication skills and emotional intelligence, especially in relation to empathy. Practitioners need to be open to listening and understanding the operating environment and demands in which they are consulting and be responsive to people's concerns and needs. They need to be persuasive and able to challenge others - providing confronting feedback while maintaining respect and trust. This requires acting

with integrity. A high level of self-awareness as well as an understanding of the impact of their personal style on others underlies these qualities.

Being Political Savvy

Working within organisations involves being sensitive to power and politics and knowing how to work with organisational behaviour and decision-making processes. Given that effective interventions require leadership buy-in, practitioners must know how to adopt the language of groups they are working with and be able to quickly assess and deal with group dynamics. This may involve working with strong personalities, differing agendas and non-alignment at senior leadership and other levels within the business. Intuition and sensitivity are pre-requisites in determining the best way to confront problems and behaviours that need to change.

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Developing innovative solutions

It is useful for practitioners to have a sense of curiosity and a need to understand the 'why'. They need to be comfortable with ambiguity and open to new ideas and learning themselves, as opposed to being the expert. While creativity and innovation in generating solutions is ideal, a good practitioner can harness ideas from others. However, as robust and appropriate client solutions are required, conceptual, analytical and research capability is important. Much of the role involves analysing situations from multiple perspectives, decomposing problems into manageable components and setting measurable goals.

Driving change

OR practitioners act as change agents. As well as being able to influence and engage a diverse range of stakeholders in owning any intervention, they need to be persistent, keep processes on track and maintain commitment. They also need to transfer skills to others within the business so that the changes are sustainable. Relevant personal qualities here are flexibility, tolerance and willingness to adapt when the approach is not working. These qualities can be defined as personal resilience!

In summary, selection of OR practitioners should ideally involve the qualities outlined. We would expect that many people, while skilled and qualified in their speciality, do not possess these characteristics. The

challenge then is to develop team-based approaches with members possessing complimentary qualities that facilitate robust and sustainable outcomes for organisations.

How do I do it?

There are many tools available to assist resilience practitioners in enhancing resilience within their organisations. These tools generally support resilience activities including but not limited to:

- Risk management
- Knowledge management
- Cyber security
- Business continuity management
- Health and safety
- Crisis management
- Fraud control
- Strategic planning

There are a number of other management disciplines that support organisational resilience that can be referenced in ISO 22316:2017 – Organisational Resilience – Principles and Guidelines.

The challenge for any resilience practitioner is that tools available to support these management disciplines are generally outside their control or influence. For example; a Chief Resilience Officer may have risk management, business continuity, cyber security and crisis management as part of their portfolio, but may have little control over tools selected by his or her people and culture team, legal and procurement and strategic planning teams. However they can ensure that data and information is shared between

systems and tools to ensure there is a holistic approach to enhancing resilience across the organisation.

So by now you have probably read a lot of information in this guide on what is resilience, what qualities do I need and what do I need to know. The question you are likely to have now is “What tools are available to help me as a resilience practitioner?” Well the answer is, there are a lot. There are software systems from a variety of vendors that support risk management, business continuity, and crisis management. For the purposes of this guide we have narrowed the search down to one tool, being the RMIA’s strategic partner RiskCloud, and the others sourced from the Australian Government.

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Risk Cloud

Risk Cloud comprises of up to 10 integrated modules that encompass many management disciplines of resilience. These include but are not limited to:

- Corporate Governance
- Risk Management
- Compliance
- Business Continuity
- Incident Management
- Health & Safety
- Environmental Management
- Internal Audit

Further information can be obtained from the Risk Cloud website at www.riskcloud.net

Australian Government Organisational Resilience Website

This official Government website provide practitioners with information, case studies and publications that provide examples of organisational resilience.

The site also offers a free health check for organisations. The health check provides an organisation the opportunity to ask itself:

How healthy is your organisation? Does it regularly monitor its own progress

to build on strengths and address weaknesses? What are its vital functions and is it resilient enough to not only bounce back, but bounce forward after a major disruption?

The Organisational Resilience HealthCheck is a free self-assessment tool to help you evaluate resilience attributes and identify opportunities to improve resilience capability in your organisation. You can complete the HealthCheck:

- **Individually** – a risk manager, human resources officer, team leader or senior executive or
- **As a group** – a management group, team members or workshop environment.

For further information check out <https://www.organisationalresilience.gov.au>.

A resilience practitioner can access a wide range of tools globally to support how they enhance resilience within their organisations. The important aspect is to ensure you find the right system that supports your organisation's capability, culture and can fully integrate with each management activity. The above mentioned tools are not in any way the only available but do however provide an integrated system and an opportunity for organisation to assess their current resilience capability and maturity; and provide systems that support the management of resilience disciplines.



RESILIENCE ACTIVITIES INTEGRATED IN AN ORGANISATION

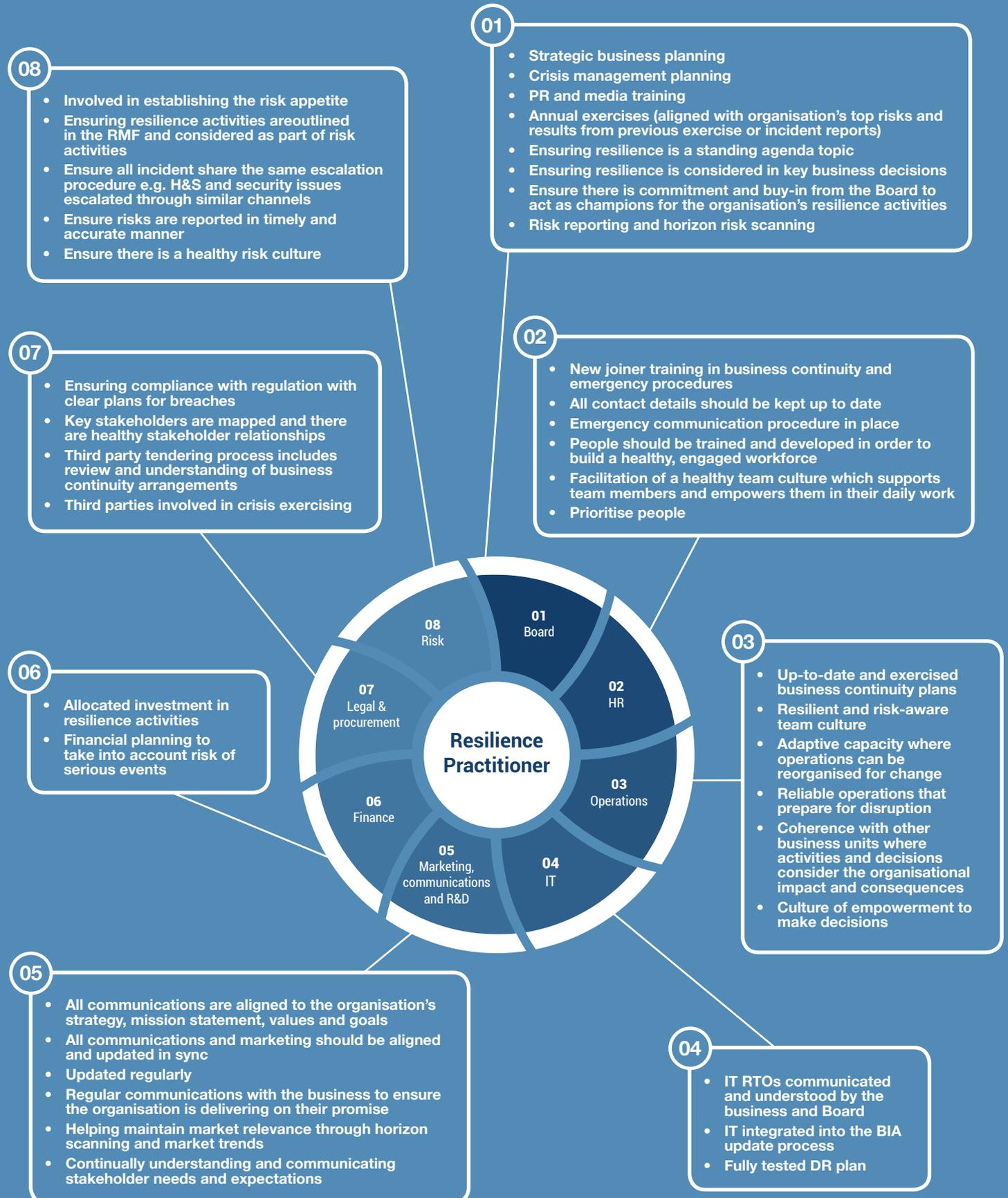
A Resilience Practitioner should have associations with nearly all business units and functions within their organisation. Resilience is holistic and intends to build coherence, agility and adaptive capacity across the whole organisation to enable it to prepare and respond to change. It is therefore critical that the organisation as a whole is committed to becoming resilient

and that resilience activities transcend department boundaries in a coherent way.

Whilst resilience cannot purely be achieved through checklist activities, the diagram below highlights some key activities that a Resilience Practitioner should be involved in across their organisation:



RESILIENCE PRACTITIONER ACTIVITIES



How to find trusted peers/associates and mentors?

For the Resilience Practitioner, building a strong network of peers, associates and mentors is of critical importance. In particular for independent Resilience Practitioners/Consultants, a network of trusted peers/associates will allow for the Practitioner's own 'resilience' so to speak, in being able to handle small as well as large projects, at often unexpected times, and with the right experts involved to be able to offer the client the optimal solution.

For Practitioners in permanent roles, peers fulfil the role of a 'sounding board' when Resilience challenges are encountered. Additionally, mentors are essential considering the field of Organisational Resilience is new and it can be difficult to find sufficiently experienced academic instructors/lecturers in this respect.

Finding a great mentor

1. Be a mentor before seeking one

If you are looking for a mentor, offer your own time as a mentor first. You will learn through the process of mentoring what you will be most looking for in your own mentors in the future.

2. Don't seek mentorship from total strangers

Find mentors through the inspiring people you're already interacting and working with now. They need to be people to whom you have already demonstrated your potential – who know how you think, act, communicate and contribute. And they have to like, trust and believe in you already (why else would they help you?). They also need to believe with absolutely certainty that you'll put to great use all their input and feedback.

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3. Get on the radar of strangers whom you admire

Don't ask for mentorship, but follow their work, and be helpful and supportive. Give, and give more. Tweet out their posts, comment in a positive way on their blogs, share their updates, start a discussion on LinkedIn drawing on their post, refer new clients or business to them, and the list goes on. In short, offer your unique voice, perspectives, experiences and resources to further the action and conversation that these influencers have sparked. Understand that you are able to be of service to them, and go out and do it.

4. Be someone who is enjoyable to mentor

How you operate in your career and your life? Are you somebody you yourself would like to mentor? Are you open, flexible, resilient, respectful? Are you eager to learn, and committed to modifying how you're interacting in the world so you can have even more success, reward and happiness?

Be someone who is already actively building his/her career, and is demonstrating that every day:

- Be great at what you do.
- Ask for more responsibility.
- Be creative/think outside the box.
- Don't be a wallflower – participate in all meetings even 'optional' ones. Volunteer to represent your team on important department or enterprise-level initiatives.
- Prepare ahead of time so that you can meaningfully advance any discussion.
- Promote the success of others – your generosity and openness are critical to your success, and will be remembered.
- Build your support network – reach out to groups within your company and outside your line of business. Learn what they do and how you can help them succeed.

5. Put yourself in a potential mentor's shoes

Whenever you're in a quandary about how to get help from someone, put yourself in their shoes. If the tables were turned, what would you want to see from this individual asking for help? If you were inundated with requests for help every day, what type of person would YOU choose to assist, and why? Go out and become that person that others would love to support and nurture.

Building a trusted network of peers/ associates

Online

1. **List your 'Top 10' favourite industry experts**, connect with them on LinkedIn, review which LinkedIn groups they belong to and in particular common groups. Consider joining these groups as you will start having online conversations visible to (or directly with) your 'Top 10'.
2. **Share your own knowledge with your peers** via newsletters, LinkedIn discussion groups, LinkedIn articles/posts and blogs.

Offline

1. **Participate in an applicable community**, whether it be through meetups or local user group events. Volunteer your time in order to assist the organisation, and meanwhile build a trusted network of contacts.
2. **Share your knowledge with your peers** at those community events, e.g. as a panel member, facilitator or speaker – or assist others in enhancing their own speaking abilities.
3. **Treat every interaction as if it were a new client interview**: Be professional and be interested in the other party's story.
4. **Make this a continuous activity** and not just action to be taken when you've had it with your current role, or worse yet, in the event you are losing your job.

Finally

'Pay it forward'. By sharing your knowledge with others when they need it most, trust is built and long-term relationships are established.

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Conclusion

I would like to thank the Risk Management Institute of Australasia for their ongoing support for the Organisational Resilience Special Interest Group. This handbook was developed to supplement the 2016 RMIA White Paper – A Practitioners View of Organisational Resilience.

The objective of this handbook was to provide existing resilience practitioners and those looking at a career in resilience with resources and information and a list of qualities, skills, qualifications, associations and tools that would enhance their own resilience and development.

Risk management is considered the primary component in achieving organisational resilience, however, it is only one of many disciplines that a resilience practitioner requires to be successful in their role.

To date there is no formal certification or qualification available for an Organisational Resilience practitioner and their handbook together with the 2016 White Paper provides a foundation for the RMIA to develop these products.

The 2018 RMIA OR SIG will focus on establishing a world-first certification program for resilience practitioners, together with a set of requirements for an endorsed organisational resilience education program.

2018 provides an exciting opportunity for the RMIA and OR SIG to position itself as global leaders in promoting the benefits of enhancing organisational resilience and the importance of a resilience practitioner.

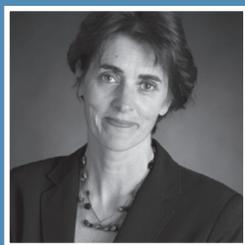
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November 2017

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The purpose of RMIA is to promote recognition and reward for our members and deliver:

- Cutting edge education and professional development
- Recognised certification of professional standards, competency and ethics
- The opportunity to network with the Australasian and global risk management communities
- Value added services which benefit Members' careers, businesses and personal development.



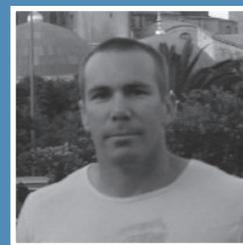
Kathryn McEwen
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Building A Network Of Trusted Advisors (Kong Yang, 2016)

