



The Future Of Work & Workers
Senate Inquiry Submission
March 2018
Author: Penny Locaso

The Challenge

“65% of children entering primary schools today will ultimately work in new job types and functions that currently don’t yet exist. ”
– World Economic Forum

Predictions indicate an unprecedented scale of disruption caused by the full realisation of automation and technology. To thrive in the rapidly advancing digital economy, those of us who work and lead will need to be prepared, but many of us are unsure how, or where to begin. Creating an exponential fear in society around the future.

As a future of work expert I have spent the past 3 years working with large corporations, schools and business community groups creating a disruptive global education company that teaches individuals and organisations how to step into fear in order to thrive in and uncertain future.

My insights have been confronting and I believe without action we have the perfect economic and societal storm taking form.

Big Business

We are experiencing a crisis in big business. The rising pressure to prepare for and embrace the future of work, while relying on out-dated business models is cultivating an environment of fear.

The struggle is real: blue chip companies are undertaking their seventh transformation in five years and only attracting the bottom 35th percentile of talent in their graduate recruitment programs (comparative to past years), diversity quotas aren’t being realised and the unhappiness of the professional worker is growing. With many talented professionals seeking fulfillment, greater flexibility and leaving the perceived security to become an entrepreneur, especially women.

Remaining relevant has never been so relevant for the big end of town.



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Mental Wellbeing

We have never been more technologically connected yet humanly disconnected. Anxiety and overwhelm within our society is at epidemic proportions across professionals and the younger generations. Technology has driven a new level of busy where our brains are over stimulated paired with a generation of young adults who have lost the innate ability to humanly connect and have difficult conversations. These factors can be directly linked to the feelings of isolation, overwhelm and the rate of loneliness more than doubling since the 80's.

The Next Generation

We have a younger generation that is pessimistic about the future.

- They fear an outdated education system that is not preparing them to skill for the unknown. Not teaching them how to ask questions rather than answer them, how to embrace change, how to have difficult human conversations.
- They fear a lack of opportunity in a world where robots do the bulk of the work
- And perhaps most disturbingly they fear the extinction of mankind at the hands of artificial intelligence we've created. And yet many in my generation (gen X) seem unaware that this even a potential threat.

Young people are looking to [Nihilism](#) Facebook pages to share their disenfranchised feelings with life.

The Intergenerational Divide

Ageism is rife. With what feels like generational conflict beyond that experienced before. The divide between understanding and embracing our differences, seeking to empathise and grow together is impeding our ability to thrive as a society.



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Equality

There is no integrated view of the macro technologies being evolved and how they will impact every aspect of our lives in the just the next 5 to 10 years as they realise scale. Many of these technologies will come on stream at the same time and will displace, disorientate and further overwhelm a society that is unable to deal with the current pace of change. The opportunity for the divide between the haves and the have nots could grow so significantly that it will be hard to come back from. Equally we are not making informed decisions as a society as to whether we actually want certain technologies that may further compound the mental health issues we are facing.

The Opportunity

The Future Of Work provides a unique opportunity to re-conceptualise what work and life means and cultivate innovative environments and skills that create happy organisations and people.

Work is a construct we as humans have created and now is the time to reset that construct in a way the drives equality, opportunity, meaning, social impact and human connection.

But how do we leverage the technological evolution to create a truly diverse and inclusive culture, how do we put care back into a world of technology and build skill that enable our people to thrive in uncertainty?

Solutions To Explore

Mandated Investment In Reinvention Training For At Risk Workers

We know NOW the most at risk of automation industries and job types in just the next five to ten years. Corporations and government should be partnering with disruptive new world education providers to skill at risk workers NOW in the exploration



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of curiosity, adaptability, change, problem solving, resilience, human connection and purpose. These skills are foundational to creating a society of perpetual learners who can innovate and drive their own positive future direction. This would ensure these workers are well equipped to transition or innovate and create new jobs and industries before the job losses occur.

Invest In Virtual Reality Companies Driving Equality

There are a number of VR companies currently leveraging the technology to teach empathy by firmly placing individuals in the shoes of others. Imagine the impacts of this at scale in driving greater equality for minority groups like those with disabilities, refugees, indigenous people, LGBTI and women.

Start The Conversation

Awareness is the first step to change. But alas, when it comes to the impacts technology may have on our lives, many of us seem to be suffering from a severe case of Ostrich Syndrome. Burying our heads in the sand and hoping this too shall pass is a sure-fire route to the ethical demise of our society. We need to turn ostriches into eagles by kick-starting round-table conversations about macro trends in technology and the opportunities they present to us as individuals, communities and businesses. I have been Future-Proofing councils, large corporations and community groups over the past six months. These conversations create unbelievable connection, understanding and awareness that drives self-accountability and positive action .

Make Fear The Future

Fear is the future and the greatest lever we have to create what we want from work and life. Skilling people to lean in to fear by creating a culture where fear is embraced and celebrated produces resilience, greater happiness, diversity and innovation. I have been running the Fear (less) Masterclass across Australia and America to



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find out what fears are holding our society back in order to implement cultural interventions that help normalise and overcome these fears.

Cultivate Human Connection

Did you know that 82% of Australians believe loneliness is on the rise? Rapid advancements in technology have created a society motivated by convenience. But this convenience has come at a cost. We've never been more technologically connected yet humanly disconnected. Loneliness is scientifically proven to impact our physical and mental health negatively, along with our mortality. It appears we are also losing one of our most important skills: the art of challenging conversations learned through human connection.

Consider creating Human Hour, Human Day or even Human Week. I'm currently developing a Human Connection Summit to demonstrate the power of human connection and rebuild this skill across multiple generations due to demand. This is time purely dedicated to human connection. No slides, no technology, just the space for people to connect and discuss what matters to them: social issues they're interested in, problems they'd love to solve, trends they're observing.

Let Our Children Find The Answers

According to the World Economic Forum, 65% of children will work in jobs that don't currently exist. How do we skill the next generation of leaders for work that we don't yet understand? We redesign our school system to skill for a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous future (VUCA). We focus educational programs on building the uniquely human skills that will remain relevant regardless of their application –resilience, emotional intelligence, curiosity, problem solving, human connection, collaboration, change management. We must invest in the next generation at a



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grass-roots level so we can develop business models that appeal to their desire for work.

Connect With Community

According to the Fujitsu Workplace 2025 White Paper, corporations will reduce their office footprints by up to 50% in the next seven years. The co-working footprint is also predicted to scale significantly as workers migrate to a more community-based work style. Reconnecting people with their communities– and the innovators within them–is a powerful way to cultivate innovation within our society and happiness within your people. Co-working spaces are everywhere. Empowering people to utilise these spaces, even just once a week, is a great way to humanise the future of work.

Invest In Women Lead Businesses

We can reach singularity by the year 2045 according to Ray Kurzweil but it will take us another 200 years according to the McKinsey and Lean in report to reach gender equality in business. What does this say about what we value as a society? We are not driving the disruption needed to shift the dial in this space. Less than 9% of Venture Capital is invested in Australia in women led businesses. Yet women are starting their own companies at an exponential rate in search of equality and flexibility that supports the life they want. If we want gender equality it will be driven by innovative fast growth companies most likely led by women. If we wait for large corporations to make the change we will be holograms. Government partnerships with investors to grow women led businesses is a must to truly create the change we need in this space.



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Who Is Penny Locaso



Voted most influential female entrepreneur in Australia by The Age & Sydney Morning Herald. Penny Locaso is the world's first Happiness Hacker, on a mission to teach one million women and girls, by 2020, how to future proof happiness. When Penny couldn't find a disruptive global education company, that could skill her to future proof her happiness, she went out and created one, BKindred.

Partnering with corporations like Booking.com, Salesforce, General Assembly, The Department Of Defence, LuluLemon Athletica, Medibank, Australia Post, schools and technology communities, Penny is transforming lives and organisations, by humanising the future of work. Penny's work focuses on technology amplifying human potential, rather than replacing it.



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Three years ago, Penny turned her life upside down. In a 7-month period, she left a 16-year career as an executive, relocated a family from Perth back to Melbourne, left an 18-year relationship, and started BKindred, to positively impact the lives of others. In just 3 short years she has firmly placed herself as a global thought leader on Humanising the Future Of Work, by teaching the 'how' of happy change.

As a disruptive leader, Penny went viral on LinkedIn (50,000 views) and created a global movement after delivering a keynote in her bathing suit, to demonstrate how stepping into fear, opens the door to possibility.

Penny has been published and quoted in the Huffington Post, San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Mail UK, SmartCompany, Conscious Magazine, StartUp Smart, Smarter Magazine, The Age, Women's Agenda, The Sydney Morning Herald and NZ Entrepreneur.

What Does BKindred Do?

Our Mission

To teach 1 million women and girls how to future proof happiness in work and life by 2020.

Our Why

We want to see the power of gender diversity realised in business in our lifetime. We want to make the world a happier place, one woman/girl at a time.

Who We Are?

A disruptive global education company, skilling organisations, schools, women and girls to thrive in the future.

What We Do.

We Help Women And Girls Make Change



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We partner with corporations, schools and women in technology communities, to build businesses, careers and lives that make women happy.

We focus on driving cultural innovation and capability, that puts care back into a world of technology, amplifies human potential and provides the skill to thrive in the future.

What's Our Secret?

Our motivation is not money, it's positive societal impact, which means we choose to only work with companies who are invested in leveraging the future, as an opportunity to reconceptualise how gender diversity can be realised to thrive.

We work at the intersection of innovative change, happiness, and technology to amplify human, and organisational potential. Our extensive global networks across entrepreneurship, social enterprise, venture capital and corporate, enable innovative problem solving and thought leadership.

The Harvard Business Review indicates that the key skills required to thrive in the future, include innovative thinking, resilience, humility, open mindedness and emotional intelligence. BKindred has developed diversity focused, transformational leadership programs, cultural advisory services, and keynotes to build the skills of the future.