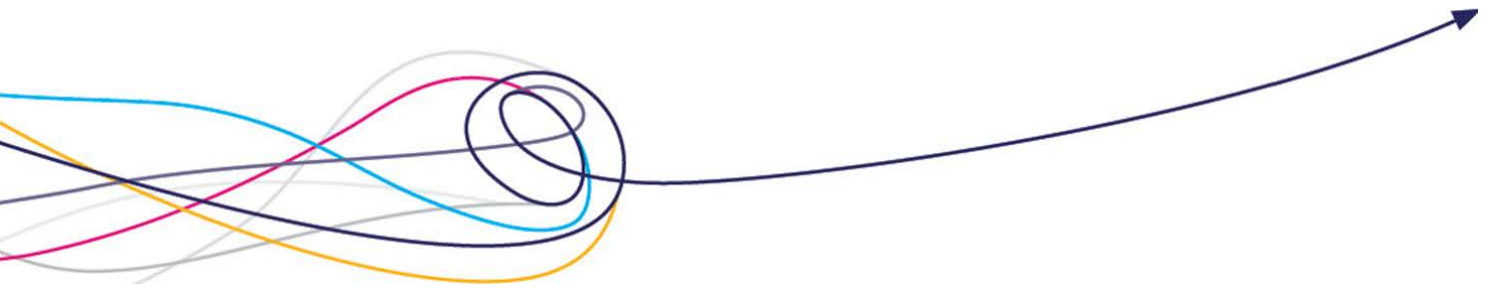


EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW

*"Don't be too busy to read this book.
It puts life and work into perspective."*

Lieutenant General David Lindsay Morrison AO

BUSY?



**Take control, get relevant
& become an influential leader**

Julie Hyde

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About the author

Julie Hyde is passionate about leading and leading with the heart.

As a speaker, facilitator, leadership and business mentor and now author, she empowers leaders to take control of how busy they are so that they can remain relevant in business and become influential in their life.

She understands how hard it is to do this because she has experienced firsthand this challenge – first from working her way up in the corporate world and now as a master of her own business.

Julie stepped into the entrepreneurial space eight years ago after enjoying a 21-year career in corporate. She uses this experience, insight and personable knowledge to help other leaders, CEOs and business experts to tackle their difficulties head on to accelerate their success.

Julie believes that behind every great company is a great leader, and behind every great leader is a great team. The more successful the leader, the more successful the enterprise, and the stronger the business is as a result.

She knows what it's like to lead people of all generations and genders, and how to harness the power of a diverse team to achieve extraordinary results. She, too, can empower you to become a better leader and a master of your own success.

Julie is a Telstra Business Women's Award nominee and loves nothing more than fine wine, beautiful food and great company. She combines all three of these vices running supportive dinners for leaders.

In addition to her work on the Board of Advice a financial planning company, she is a long-suffering Richmond Tigers supporter. Julie is a firm believer that it's this hardship that her beloved team subject her to which makes her such a resilient leader.

www.juliehyde.com.au

INTRODUCTION

RELEVANT: This is one of the most important words in leadership and business today. Relevance is a top priority for leaders who want to be not just successful, but influential.

How do you stay *relevant* when everything in the world is evolving so fast? How do you stay *relevant* when everything in business is uncertain? How do you continue to adapt to this landscape and stand out against everyone else out there who is doing the same? How do you stay *relevant* when you're busy trying to cope with what's being thrown your way each day? How do you make an impact?

BUSY: Is what we are and why we're struggling to answer any of those questions above.

We're *busy* ticking off our to-do lists, trying to run a business. We're *busy* hopping from meeting to meeting, trying to manage our team, meet client expectations, ensure cash-flow and results are where they need to be, while dealing with the hundreds of emails that land in our mail box each day. It's relentless.

We live in a rapidly changing world that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). This military term has been adapted to everyday business because of what we are experiencing:

- **Volatility** reflects the speed and turbulence of change.
- **Uncertainty** means that outcomes, even from familiar actions, are less predictable.
- **Complexity** indicates the vastness of interdependencies in globally connected economies and societies
- **Ambiguity** conveys the multitude of options and potential outcomes resulting from them.

We've never had to deal with a business environment that is just so, well, busy.

And this is not going to change anytime soon. VUCA is forcing us as leaders to think and respond differently. It requires us to be agile, adaptable, inclusive and innovative to create our future. As leaders, it makes us ask 'what's next?' and

Busy?

'how do I prepare for that?'. This can be a terrifying place to be. It can make us feel uncomfortable, uncertain and unconfident in our leadership where 'busy' can seem like an easy place to hide.

When do you ever get time to think about what might come next, let alone how you're going to get there?

The problem is that while you're busy managing all of this in the here and now, you're already becoming irrelevant in your rapidly changing industry, market, in your organisation or with your team.

But it's not all doom and gloom. The good news is that although these leadership challenges are significant, they're not insurmountable for those who are willing to disrupt old thinking and approaches.

Once you learn to control 'busy' and respond effectively to the changes that are presented to you, your world will change in ways you never believed possible. Once you reconnect back to your leadership foundation and what you stand for as a leader, your confidence will grow and you'll enjoy being a leader again. You'll be able to unlock the potential you may not have realised you have in your team, identify ways to build a powerful workforce and make a difference as a leader.

It's no secret that being a 21st century leader is tough and demands you to be at your very best. People are smarter, business is faster but you can use all of this to your advantage and adopt the strategies that a *relevant* leader needs. You can't afford to fall behind in today's competitive and challenging environment.

How do I know this? I've been there too.

I've had firsthand experience of what it's like to become an *irrelevant* leader – and believe me I don't want to go there again. Making a difference is something I am incredibly passionate about and something I strongly believe in. This book is a culmination of two decades of research, interviews, human behaviour studies and of my personal experience working with leaders from all industries, organisations and backgrounds.

This book explains *why* being a relevant leader is critical to your success now and in the future, and provides a roadmap to show you *how* to remain relevant

Busy?

when everything around you is constantly evolving.

It demonstrates why you can't afford to be caught in 'busyness', what the consequences are of being caught in this trap and how you can change this.

It shows you *how* to move from being stuck in the status quo and become an influential leader. This book is permission to let go of the past and create your own future built on a solid leadership template.

You will learn to

- move from busy and boring to influential and inspirational
- define what's really important to you as a leader
- listen to your leadership
- close the gap on generations, genders and diversity
- promote a strong leadership brand
- build a solid leadership template
- enlist a powerful circle of influence.

While our world presents many challenges, it also presents just as many incredible opportunities. The trick is to harness our talents, leadership abilities, and savvy skills to challenge conventional wisdom. It's only by doing this that we will be able to have an impact and become truly influential.

So what do you say, are you ready to take control, get relevant and become an influential leader?

Busy?

Part 1 – WHY

You can't afford to be busy. It's as plain and simple as that.

Being busy is costing you your leadership, not to mention your life.

In Part 1, you will learn why you must shift from being 'busy' to becoming relevant. You will uncover the consequences leaders suffer as a result of being stuck in the status quo and why it's important to get back in control.

What's really important to you as a leader? How do you use your time effectively and efficiently? How do you listen in to yourself and others around you to engage your team and become a leader that others want to work with?

We'll also unpack why your emotional intelligence is now fundamental to your leadership success, and provide valuable insights on how to close the gap between different generations and genders in your workforce.

Let's get into it now.

Chapter 1 – Being busy is beige

If you had to choose a colour to define who you are what colour would you choose? Would you be a bright orange, bold red, tranquil blue or vibrant green? How about a soft pink, an earthy brown, strong black or a blend of multi colours?

The chances are that you wouldn't say 'beige'. In fact, I'd put money on it. Beige is just so, well, *boring*. It's a pale, sandy colour that children use to draw wheat or colour in dried-up old fields (at least brown gets to be used for fun things like adventurous bears). Beige is pretty non descript and bland.

Beige is the colour that comes to mind when I ask people 'how are you?' and they reply with , 'busy'. They're either crazy busy, frantic, too busy to scratch myself or just plain flat out . They're usually pretty breathless when they say this, like they're tired of responding to that question, indicating it's all becoming too much and they're running high on adrenalin and either tired or totally wired.

Being 'busy' has become the socially accepted and expected response to a greeting. As the saying goes, 'No matter how busy a person is they are never too busy to stop and talk about how busy they are.' Quite frankly, busy is pretty beige and boring!

In today's hyper-connected online world, we need to stand out. We need to attract attention, to be colourful and easily identifiable through masses of other information and noise out there.

When we get caught in the vortex of busy, when we're running to keep up with everything else that's happening out there around us, we become beige as a leader.

Being trapped in busy and allowing busy to control you doesn't allow you to think strategically, to come up with new ideas or lead your team in a fresh direction, it means you become boring with a capital B.

Influential leaders that we admire refuse to be busy – they refuse to be beige. They ensure they are spending their valuable time on strategic thinking and proactive actions, thinking ahead, while also doing what it takes to keep the business going in the present moment. They think about what's happening and wonder '*how can I do better?*' rather than '*how can I survive?*'

Busy?

Look at Richard Branson, for example. Most of us would attribute the colour red to him, not just because of his Virgin brand but because he is bold, dynamic, loves taking risks and acts courageously. His charismatic style and child-like curiosity commands our attention. Contrast this with Nelson Mandela. Often described as a champion of peace, he stands for freedom, integrity and social justice. I would attribute the colour green to him, or even white. He was a peace keeper and worked tirelessly to ensure the people around him experienced a better life – even at the cost of his own life.

Both of these leaders refuse to conform to beige. They challenge life and leadership and make things happen. They are colourful characters who take action, make a difference and create powerful legacies for those around them. They challenge the status quo.

Status quo is a danger zone

The ‘status quo’ is a dangerous place to be if you’re a leader today. It is a stagnant and stifling place of acceptance. It’s where we resist change, innovation and creativity. If you choose the status quo, you risk falling behind your competition and falling into obscurity.

As leadership pioneer Dr Jason Fox said at the Future of Leadership conference 2016, ‘busy is getting in the way of making clever happen. The capacity for slow and considered thinking is crowded out at a time when we need to be thinking differently’.

A few years ago, I was engaged to work with a leader of a large business who wasn’t performing well. It was like he had accepted his fate. He had decided he was too busy to handle his workload and there wasn’t much he could do about it. He’d stuck his head in the sand and accepted the status quo. His results reflected his attitude – they were poor to say the very least. His team also reflected his attitude, they were directionless and disengaged. The turnover rate in his business was very high, which should have signaled alarm bells for him. His leadership had not just become irrelevant, but also reckless.

Acceptance of the status quo is a direct result of how distracted, exhausted and busy we are. We don’t feel like we have the energy to handle any changes in our business or market, let alone to lead others through it. So we switch on the autopilot and remain as is. The problem is that in times like these that, as a leader, it is imperative that we evolve our thoughts, assess our strategies and goals, work hard to motivate our team and ensure we remain relevant in the marketplace.

Busy?

However, the thought of having to do more with seemingly less time seems incredibly overwhelming. Add to this the pressure of understanding younger generations we work with, getting our head around new technology, legislations and employment laws, or navigating new marketing strategies, complexities and uncertainty. It's no wonder that embracing the future or what our client needs seems all too hard! We put this stuff on the back burner until it's either too late or has gotten to the urgent stage and you *have* to address it.

Successful leaders don't get stuck in the status quo accepting things as they are. They constantly challenge the norm and ask 'why is this happening?' To be a successful and relevant leader today you must be curious and accept you can't succeed on your own. You must adopt a collaborative and inclusive approach that embraces all generations, genders and new ways of operating and leading that is way beyond the bland and obvious.

A Kodak moment

A classic example of a company and its leadership that refused to move with the times is Kodak. They chose to accept the status quo and soon found they had become irrelevant.

Ironically, the camera company's brand was built around creating 'moments that last forever'. It was once heralded for its smart innovation having introduced high quality colour film to the photographic industry and the company and its founders enjoyed enormous profits for nearly 130 years.

As the digital revolution took off, the need for film declined. Kodak wasn't agile or smart enough to react preferring to stick with their current business model with confidence believing that the consumer would come back to film.

They ignored the obvious signs that consumers wanted to immediately see the photo captured rather than wait days or weeks until their film had been developed. In 2012, Kodak filed for bankruptcy.

This left the world wondering, 'what happened?'

Dig a little deeper and this story shows that the leaders of the company became complacent in their success and didn't take responsibility for their future. They chose to ignore a revolution believing their product was more

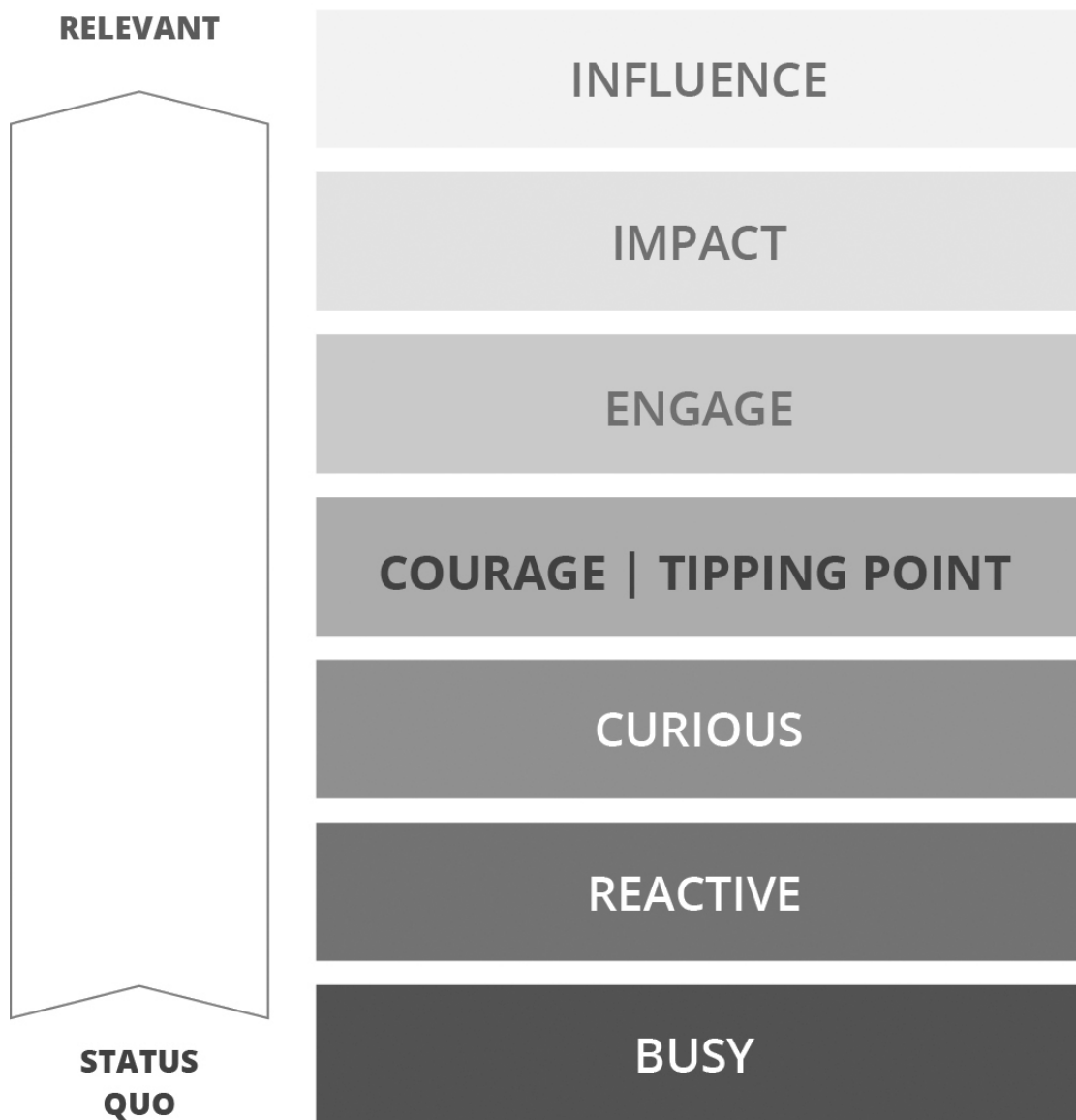
Busy?

powerful, rather than to choose to navigate the uncharted waters of digital. They stuck with the status quo.

From busy to influential

The question on many business leaders minds is: ‘How do I move from busy to ensure that I’m a relevant and influential leader?’ Figure 1.1 explains the journey you must take from being busy and stuck in the status quo to becoming a relevant and influential leader who embraces curiosity and shows courage at every step.

Figure 1.1: From busy to influential ladder



Let’s unpack the ladder in more detail.

Busy?

Busy

As you have seen so far, busy is our new normal state. So the bigger question is what are you busy doing and will it move you closer to achieving your goals?

We are consistently 'busy being busy'. We wear busy like it's a badge of honour and use it as an excuse to avoid the tasks we know we should be doing, such as coaching our team. Instead we choose to stay in our comfort zone doing what we know best, such as firing off emails to all and sundry.

When we are busy, we default to the past for relevance. So while leaders are facing constant change, challenge and competition, we often look to the past for what has worked and use this approach to try and 'fix' whatever isn't working for us.

When leaders are caught in the busy vortex, we feel like we have lost control. This 'out of control' feeling is the disconnection we experience from our team, our leadership, our vision and goals. We become disconnected from our purpose and all the important tasks that will move us forward. We end up asking ourselves, 'why am I doing this and is it worth it?' It's a complete jumbled, messy experience for us and incredibly demotivating as we feel like we are simply going through the motions, that there is no purpose to what we are doing – and there's often not! Busy is an excuse that gets you nowhere, but trapped within the status quo.

Reactive

When you get caught in busy, you become reactive rather than proactive. You chase your tail, extinguishing fires and handle 'situations' as they arise. Being busy controls you and dictates what you need to deal with right now. Often you'll experience a big build up of stress and anxiety because of the way you are operating.

We all have a deep need for a sense of control. Without it, we feel threatened and insecure. You only have to look at Maslow's hierarchy of needs to see the lower you go the need for control is greater. If the lower needs of physiological and safety (removal of danger), love and belonging (connection) aren't met the higher level needs of esteem and self-actualisation will be compromised in favour of securing your lower level needs. So what that means for you as a leader is that you won't feel confident, will constantly second-guess yourself and your actions, and will fail to reach your true potential or achieve any goals.

It's often when we feel out of control and are aware of how reactive we are that

Busy?

we become frustrated. You'll start to notice that your reactive behaviours are fuelling you, instead of supporting you. You feel the tension between operating as you know and desiring things to improve. This feeling of frustration can finally trigger you to think, 'surely there must be a better way?'

Curious

When you start to question your way of working, you start to move up the ladder and away from the status quo. *What are you doing well? What needs to change in order to get better results? What do I need to stop doing and what can I start doing to get back control of my business and my leadership?*

When you get curious about your team – how you can leverage their strengths and engage their skills – things suddenly become a whole lot brighter. When you question your leadership and operational style you begin to improve, add energy and insight into your world.

If you remember back to your childhood or observe your own family, you'll see the wonderful curiosity that children have. The insatiable need to know 'why' and 'how', to constantly ask questions. This is how we grow, learn and develop into the incredible human beings that we are. Adults often forget to do this, thinking we have all the answers.

Leaders need to let go of thinking they have the answer and ask a lot more of why and how. Then we'll see the possibility in everything. This is a place of empowerment. This is when leaders can choose their colours and leave beige behind for good.

Courage

Being curious, understanding the possibilities and researching different strategies on how to improve and move from busy and reactive will trigger two reactions in leaders.

The first is one of motivation. You now have the benefit of clarity. You see and start to believe that things can be different for you. You have clarity on how to improve your results. You feel inspired to change and want to get started straight away, to take control and make busy work for you, rather than being reactive and out of control.

The second place is one of fear and paralysis. You think this is unfamiliar and a lot of hard work, which there is, it's like breaking any bad habit. It requires you get out of your comfort zone and put some effort into doing things differently.

Busy?

You must let go of the things that don't work and embrace new and uncomfortable ways of doing things.

It's normal for change to trigger fear. It's how you react to that fear that counts. Courage is the tipping point for leaders. When you choose to move forward and be courageous, to embrace uncertainty and challenge any fears you have, then you start to disrupt the norm, take back control, and create a business and career that is worth leading.

The question is: *Which way will you choose to move?*

Engagement

As a courageous leader, you need to engage the following three areas:

1. FOUNDATION - your leadership principles and vision
2. STRATEGY - your purpose and goals for the business
3. POWER - your people and team.

Your influence and results will depend on the level of engagement with all three. You are the key in your leadership. What you think, how you behave, what you do will determine your leadership outcomes. If you don't have clarity on your strengths, weaknesses, what you stand for, what you don't stand for and the vision you have for the legacy you want to leave behind then your results will reflect this. Your leadership needs to be built on a solid foundation. It starts with you.

Engaging with your strategy, and your purpose and goals for the business, is the way you will create calm from chaos and lead people through changes, challenges and the complexity of business. To lead a team towards a common goal, you must be connected and have clarity in your direction.

The people are your power in your business. Period! Leaders have a rich tapestry of people in their business made up of different cultures, generations, genders, skills and experience. The only way you will get the best from your team is to understand them. You need to understand each individual in terms of what motivates them, what they need from you, how they can contribute and how they can work collectively. How you engage, communicate and listen to them counts.

When you are truly engaged, passionate and committed to what you are doing, you will not only experience your business differently, but your team will as well. This is when a relevant leader begins to have impact.

Impact

Making an impact is a power you have, whether you are aware of it or not. Your impact is determined by how conscious you are of your value, how you communicate with others, how you position yourself in your marketplace, and how credible you are.

So what type of impact are you having right now? Is it positive or negative?

Having an impact is about being aware of your strengths and weaknesses and how you affect others. You understand how you are unique and what you stand for as a leader. You harness this power to have a positive impact. This enables you to be an authentic leader the world wants and needs.

Today, everything is a commodity, even people. 'Real' leaders stand for something and are courageous enough to voice who they are and what they stand for. This isn't about self-promotion and it isn't about being brash like Donald Trump. It's about expressing yourself in an authentic manner and making an impact for the right reasons; it's ensuring you don't get lost in the status quo and stand in your own spotlight.

Positively impacting others can be as simple as allowing them to see what's possible. Through your actions and behaviours your team can see what is really possible for them and be inspired enough to move forward with you as a role model. You become a dealer of 'hope' – it's a privileged place to be.

To be a role model, to positively impact someone to fulfill a potential they never thought possible is an incredible gift every leader has the opportunity to give. *Wouldn't you want to experience that?*

Influence

The type of leadership we need today is courageous and influential. As John Maxwell puts it in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*: 'The true measure of leadership is influence. Nothing more, nothing less'.

A relevant leader influences others through their actions. You become inspiring – someone others want to work with and for. You connect with the hearts and minds of your team and create a magnetic pull. You become vulnerable, you share, you listen, you engage and you make an impact on another level. This is the type of leader that stands the test of time, survives change and remains relevant.

Busy?

Becoming influential is not about changing who you are. Rather the opposite. It's about embracing your strengths and weaknesses, and adopting a new way of operating – from your thought process to your behaviours – to ensure that you are moving with the rapidly changing times. People will look to you to carve the path through chaos and lead them to where they need to go. People will look to you for inspiration, so they can make sense of what's going on around them.

Being an influential leader means being courageous, engaged and committed. It's about having a positive impact, inspiring others and making a difference through what you do and how you do it.

Influential leadership leads to better results and the opportunity to create a culture of inclusion, collaboration and creativity, which is what is needed in business today.

The ladder to relevant leadership

Now that you can see the logical progression up the ladder in Figure 1.1, from being busy and stuck in the status quo to being an influential and relevant leader, it's time to make a decision. *Are you ready to leave the world of busy behind, to disrupt the status quo and start standing out for the right reasons?*

It's time to make busy work for us. It's time to get back in control and make an impact. It's time to work out what's important so you can become influential.

Take control

1. What colour would you say reflects your leadership right now?
2. What colour would you like to be?
3. Where do you see yourself on Figure 1.1 right now?
4. Where would you like to be?

Busy?

Interview 1

Catherine Duncan, General Manager of Matthews Steer

Catherine Duncan is a highly respected leader and is the General Manager and Board member of a large accounting practice in West Melbourne.

Catherine is a courageous and relevant leader who walks her talk, but also has a genuine care and empathy for people, which hugely influences her success and the impact she has on others.

How important is it to be a relevant leader?

If you don't know what's current and needed today or tomorrow, you're already past your use by date.

There has never been a more crucial time to stay on top of your game. Movement and change can feel supersonic but you need to know what your trusted basics and fundamentals are to keep you on track in a sea of data, information and the slick selling of the next 'new best thing'.

I am so bored with the overuse of words like 'disruption' and 'entrepreneurs'. They are new words selling an old product or service but get blasted to death on social media very quickly. So leaders need to be careful when to jump on but also when to jump off on the latest word or insight. Be really clear on what it means to you.

How do you ensure you remain relevant?

I have a three-tiered approach:

1. I test and talk to my clients to get a better understanding of their needs
2. I do the same with my team and identify their needs
3. I find out what problems they need me to solve and explore how I am able to add value to their success.

I just immersed myself in three years of study which was intensive and could be perceived as over the top, however it has totally changed my mindset in how to be a leader who implements new learning immediately.

I feed my mind every day with new insights, concepts or a different take on a well-worn theory.

This constantly motivates and inspires me and gets me thinking in different ways.

I have also had to become even more decisive in my approach. I am becoming

Busy?

much more selective in what events I attend and I am getting better at considering the purpose of why I am doing things. This is important as time is precious so I need to ensure that who I am connecting and spending my time with is getting me closer to what I am trying to achieve. By doing this it's enabling me to say no (with respect) and I'm getting more comfortable with that.

How do you lead different generations in your team towards shared goals and outcomes?

Different generations are certainly different, but people's needs aren't. How each generation is driven or what their values and beliefs may be different but fundamentally everyone wants to be able to add value, make a difference and be noticed. No one wants to be invisible.

Younger people in general are incredible in their sense of urgency and acceleration. Why not? They literally have the world at their fingertips. They can learn things 24/7 from the internet. However, some are also teaching older generations about balance, living life on their terms and not compromising what is important. They want a voice, to be heard, they love a challenge, they love competition and thrive on autonomy (within an agreed framework or criteria).

In saying all of that the younger generation can still get lost on the basics of how it all fits together, understanding the bigger picture and their role in it. They can also have a tendency to forget their impact on others as they drive forward.

Older generations in general want respect, they want to be included, they want to have mattered, be heard and they want to share their wisdom. I think each generation struggles with the other in terms of true respect, listening to what's being said and exploring how to blend both of their strengths to create a brilliant and new result.

What's the main message that you try to communicate as part of your brand and why?

'Have the conversation'. These are the honest conversations – the difficult and the positive ones. It comes back to having a deep level of care and respect for people. I focus on doing the right thing by them for the right reasons. People know when you are fake, when you've switched off or when you have a 'different' agenda.

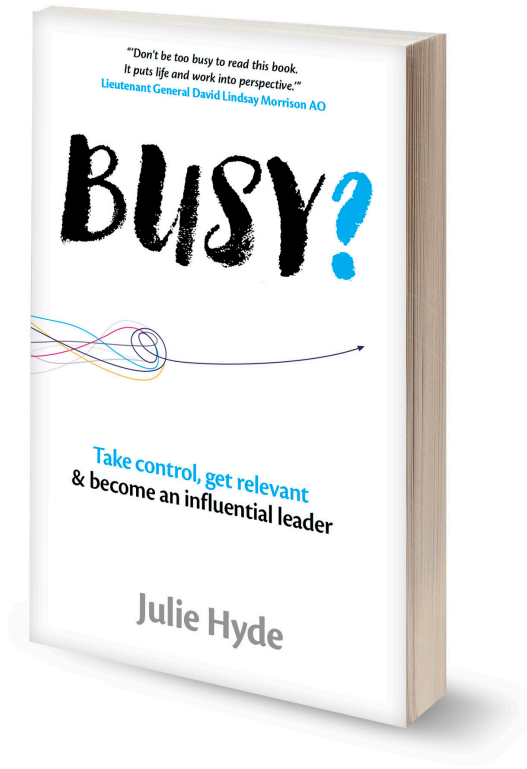
Once you truly care you are able to create an environment that is conducive to having honest conversations and it's only when you have created that environment that you can have the difficult conversations (to agree/disagree and even respectfully argue in some cases). The tough balance is around caring whilst still holding someone accountable.

I try to be mindful of the fact we are usually judgmental and wary of people who are 'not like us' but I need to truly care enough to look beyond that and find a way to achieve a result. Business focus is paramount but when you have that

Busy?

clarity in each individuals needs and take this into consideration, it's then that you have the chance to create the magic ingredient to the solution.

We hope you enjoyed your exclusive preview from *Busy?* Take control, get relevant and be an influential leader by Julie Hyde



Are you busy?

Frantic? Crazy busy? Or just flat out?

While you're busy being busy in the here and now, you're becoming *irrelevant* in your industry, market, organisation or with your team.

How do you stay *relevant* when everything in the world is evolving so fast? How do you stay *relevant* when business is so uncertain? How do you continue to adapt and stand out against everyone else struggling to do the same as you?

This book explains why being a relevant leader is critical to your success now and in the future, and provides a roadmap to help you move from being stuck in the status quo to becoming an influential leader.

You will learn to:

- move from busy and boring to influential and inspirational
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- enlist a powerful circle of influence.

This book will help you take control of being busy, get relevant and become an influential leader.

[Buy your copy of *Busy?* here](#)