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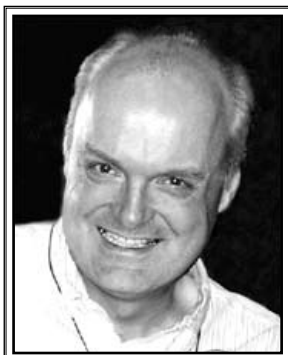
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Stephen Abram leads a busy life giving over 100 international keynote talks annually to library and information industry conferences, as well as writing several columns for library and information professional periodicals. Stephen has chaired successful summits on

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## MARY ELLEN BATES

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Author of seven books and innumerable articles on Internet research, and a frequent international speaker, Mary Ellen Bates is the owner of Bates Information Services.

Former president of the Association of the Independent Information Professional (AIIP), Mary Ellen was the first recipient of AIIP's Sue Ruge Memorial Award, created to recognize a member who, through mentoring, has significantly helped others establish their businesses. Quoted in publications such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Wired, Business Week, Washington Business Journal, Computerworld, The Australian and Forbes, she was voted Member of the Year for both the Communications Division and the Washington DC Chapter of the Special Libraries Association and received SLA's 2002 Professional Award. She resides in Colorado, United States.



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**G**ail Blanke, renowned executive coach, and presentation skills trainer, is the author of three books. *In My Wildest Dreams* appeared on both the New York Times and Amazon.com's Best Seller's List. The sole guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show in October 1998 she used concepts from her book to empower audience members to live fulfilling lives. She was one of the youngest female senior vice presidents of Avon Products, Inc., where, in addition to her responsibilities as global head of corporate affairs, she motivated and inspired Avon's half million sales representatives to live the lives of their wildest dreams. She launched the widely acclaimed Avon Breast Cancer Awareness Crusade. She resides in New York City, USA with her husband and two daughters.

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**A** serial entrepreneur, Peter Bouffard was Founder and President of Epstein Enterprises Inc., 1991 to 1995, Content Alive Inc. 1995 to 2002 and CE Network Inc. 1999 to 2002. A budding artist - watercolour, acrylic and oil - he has a colorful background in accounting, business development, operations, and creative problem-solving. In his present company, Peter is responsible for developing and facilitating a series of professional development workshops supporting innovation and creativity in the corporate marketplace. Peter resides in Ontario, Canada and is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario, American Society of Training and Development and The Creative Problem Solving Institute.



**SIMON GRANT**  
PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS

*“Success is not a place at which one arrives but rather the spirit with which one undertakes and continues the journey.”*

-Alex Noble

~**CHALLENGE**~ I firmly believe that business is about people. Understanding people as individuals, and providing an environment that they are motivated by, is one of the main business challenges for any leader.

I remember very clearly starting my first job as a recent immigrant to Sweden. I had decided to change something within Research & Development and went in and instructed the appropriate employee – well his reaction was a flat “No” – he couldn’t explain why but he just didn’t feel it was the right approach. He repeated that “No,” he would not follow my instruction. I remember leaving the room with “my tail between my legs” and thinking “but I am the boss, he has to do what I say! ...”

~**RESOLUTION**~ Well over time I adjusted to the Swedish consensus management style and actually became very comfortable with it – it is a good way to share risk as a leader and to unite a team. My next stop with the company however was mainland China. One of my first decisions as head of the Beijing office was to re-arrange the office – three of the sales representatives would now be sitting together in a new room. I went in and using my Swedish consensus approach informed them that they should together discuss and decide how they would arrange the desks because it is their room and of course they should decide how it was best arranged, but decide it as soon as possible, as we need to get started. One day went by and two desks were still stacked on top of each other – all three were sharing the same desk. “Come on you have to decide this” I said, “yes, yes,” they replied, “We are working on it” looking very worried. Next day the same thing and I was starting to get irritated. Third day still nothing had happened and I lost it – I started shouting out orders. “That goes there, you sit there...” and so on. The look of pure relief on their faces was amazing. They had been totally paralyzed by this seemingly trivial responsibility.



**~LESSONS LEARNED~**

1. Cultures are different and there are no cookbook solutions for working together in groups
2. Even more importantly, people are individually very different and to be a good leader you must spend time observing and talking to those you work with. You do not have to talk about their social interests or their family (though that can help) and become their “pal,” but you do need to talk to them about their interests when it comes to their work – and figure out why they think they are/can be important for the company
3. Without your colleagues you are nothing and trying to truly understand them as individuals is the most respectful thing you can do as a leader. Mutual respect provides the foundation for motivation in almost all cases

**~HOW TO INTEGRATE YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE~** With difficulty! I find that the best way for me is to allocate certain days for prioritising family and certain days for work. I tend to do best when I am focussed wholly on one thing at a time. I also prioritise holidays, and have taken two one-year travelling “sabbaticals” so far in my life – and I intend to take more. I have twice left a very successful career and started again from scratch. This can be a very important exercise for the soul and to figure out what really is important (hint – it’s not money...)

**~FORMULA FOR SUCCESS~** Passion

**~MAJOR REGRET~** I don’t generally do regrets. One could be being in too much of a hurry, and not spending more time in university learning about “interesting” things rather than engineering.

**~FAVOURITE QUOTE~** I like “Success is not a place at which one arrives but rather the spirit with which one undertakes and continues the journey” by Alex Noble because if you focus only on the goals, you will make your bosses happy, but you sell yourself short – life, love and work are all a series of journeys. Goals happen, are temporary and then are gone and leave emptiness. Enjoying life is not about enjoying and having passion for the achievement of goals, but about enjoying and having passion for the journey itself.



~**INFLUENTIAL BOOK**~ *The Penguin History of the World* by J.M. Roberts was an enormous book for me in all senses of the word. I read it over many months while backpacking around the world. It is over 1,000 pages of fine text, heavy on facts and detail. It describes the development of civilization and the human race and covers an enormous breadth of material and most of the major events in history.

This book helped me put many things in perspective – how temporary things really are and how much has gone before. We tend to believe that our time is special but there is a cyclic nature to power of nations and ideas and even trends. Much of what we see in the world today has happened many times before but with different players and environments. We are not as special as we think.

WORDS OF WISDOM 

*Problems are often complex, and you have to find a multifaceted solution. ~Stephen Abram*

*... Do what you love, be prepared to do things you don't particularly enjoy doing in order to build and sustain your business, surround yourself with the things that revive your soul, don't take yourself too seriously and give back to the profession. ~Mary Ellen Bates*

*Identify your "catcher," the person who backs you up, and "let the catcher do the catching." ~Gail Blanke*

*It's easy to focus on what you think is important, but it's always about the other person, and their needs, and this takes you down the right strategic path. ~Peter Bouffard*

*You need to involve other parties from an early stage, in the decision-making process, in situations in which they are affected, and recognize their views and input. ~Prudence Brown*

*The loss of a client is not necessarily a negative. New business opportunities constantly arise and the loss of a client may in fact allow you to accept new business. ~Oliver Campbell*

*... One's attitude about what exactly their "job" is influences how they integrate their work and professional life... Our "JOB" in life is to awaken to who we truly are – to experience the greatest level of freedom and achievement we can in all aspects of our lives and to BE who we are as fully as we can be in each moment. ~Lea Chambers*

*People work for YOU to pay for other parts of their lives. ~Arunas Chesonis*

*... There are no accidents in life, everything about where we are, what we accomplish, who we attract, is all because of who we are, and this is what I call consciousness journey. ~Samy Chong*

*Have a strategy on how you do things [and] execute the strategy with passion. ~Purdy Crawford*