



5 Minute Strategic Mindset

“Anyone who isn't embarrassed about who they were last year probably isn't learning enough.”

— **Alain de Botton**



Backyard scientist

My son, Jasper, 11, said to me last week: “I learn more from this guy in 10 minutes than in an entire term of science at school”. That got my attention, and was my introduction to YouTuber [Mark Rober](#).

Rober is a former NASA and Apple engineer and inventor who now makes viral videos about subjects as diverse as how to trick parcel thieves with an engineered contraption that sprayed glitter on the thieves, a [Halloween costume](#) which embeds iPads or iPhones into costumers making it appear as if you're seeing a body's internals, and [beating escape rooms](#).

Jasper's [favourite](#) is one where Rober, during COVID lockdown, intends to birdwatch in his backyard, but squirrels keep stealing his bird seed. So, instead, he creates an elaborate obstacle course which combines animal behaviourism, physics and electronics to provide persistent squirrels with a snack as a reward. Imagine a young and hip David Attenborough with software development and electronics skills -- and a budget of \$500.

I found it compelling, too, and can see why some of his videos have been viewed 25 million times in a single day, upon release.

Question: What can you teach, unconventionally, in a rapid, enjoyable way?

Tangents that turn out to be core

Comedian [Bill Murray](#) told a [fascinating anecdote to a Rolling Stone journalist](#) about a late night cab ride in San Francisco. Murray got talking to the driver, who explained he was a frustrated saxophonist who never got time to play, because he drove cabs 14 hours a day. Murray asked him, “Where's your horn?” And the driver said, “In the trunk”. So Murray talked him into giving up the driving to him, while the saxophonist played from the backseat.

Murray then thought he'd turn it up a notch, and asked his 'driver' if he knew anywhere good to eat. From the back seat came this reply: “There's a great late night BBQ place nearby. But it's a sketchy neighbourhood”. Murray said, “Relax - you've got a horn”.

They ended up eating — and playing music — for an astonished crowd. Not only did it show me Murray's ability to facilitate someone else's genius (for everyone's genuine enjoyment), but it showed a key leadership trait: enabling other people be heroes in their own life stories.

Two questions here, for me, from this minor event: “What would happen if we let more tangents become core?” and “Whose genius are we facilitating?”

Keeping it real

Today, I was discussing a strategy and governance project with a client, Kelly Rogerson, who's CEO of a [community-based palliative care service](#).

Kelly let it drop that, when introducing herself, she rarely says she's a CEO; instead she says, “I'm a nurse”. I was surprised, and asked, “Presumably it's been a while since you've nursed?” She said, “No, not at all. I believe in keeping it real. I still go out and see clients, a few each quarter”.

She went on to explain her strong belief in retaining a connection to the grass roots of patients, carers and front-line workers. She and I discussed the many CEOs who don't visit the front lines often, and board directors who never do at all.

What are they missing?

Question: How do you connect personally with your customers and 'keep it real'?

As always, please send me your feedback by email to ww@workwell.com.au. Which bullet above is your favourite? What do you want more or less of? Other suggestions? Let me know!

Have a wonderful weekend, all.

Andrew

Andrew Hollo wins the international award for the Society for the Advancement of Consulting's **Consultant of the Year 2020**



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