

# 12<sup>th</sup> National Public Sector Executive Assistant Conference

Skills and strategies to develop your effectiveness as an invaluable public sector executive assistant

## FEATURED SPEAKERS

 **Emily Slatter**  
Executive Assistant to the Secretary, Home Affairs  
Department of Home Affairs



 **Tracy Caine**  
Executive Assistant to Associate Secretary  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



 **Kate Chapman**  
Executive Assistant to Commissioner  
Australian Border Force



 **Louise Youngman**  
Executive Assistant to  
Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission  
Department of Veterans' Affairs



 **Cassie Sydenham**  
Executive Assistant to Deputy Secretary,  
Indigenous Affairs  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



 **Vicki Forrester**  
Executive Officer  
Department of Justice - Juvenile Justice NSW



 **Colleen Brown**  
Executive Assistant to Chief Information Officer  
The Treasury



 **Karina Doblander-Azurin**  
Executive Assistant to  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation  
University of Canberra



 **Monika Lewis**  
Executive Officer to Chief Citizen Experience Officer  
Department of Human Services



 **Yasmin Noakes**  
Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Nuclear Science and  
Technology Organisation



 **Harriet Elvin**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Cultural Facilities Corporation, ACT Government



 **Maria Wallace**  
Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer  
Cultural Facilities Corporation, ACT Government



 **Jessica Botterill**  
Executive Assistant to First Assistant Secretary  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



 **Sharan Robb**  
Executive Assistant to General Manager,  
People, Culture and Communication Division  
Australian Bureau of Statistics



2018 Theme:  
'Stepping Up'

Pre Workshop 2 July  
Summit 3 & 4 July  
Post Workshop 5 & 6 July

National Convention Centre,  
Canberra

Step up as a public sector  
executive assistant

Adapt to adversity and change

Explore career  
advancement opportunities

Maximise networking opportunities

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9.00 - 4.30

## Increase your influence: Confidence, communication and management

The public sector hosts a unique set of challenges. To be a successful executive assistant, you must be able to overcome these obstacles for yourself and your executive. It can be particularly difficult to guide your executive and achieve influence without the advantage of seniority. Effective management upwards and laterally is a crucial part of your success and to become an invaluable asset to your manager, it is vital to master this skill.

This workshop will provide you with the skills and strategies to increase your influence, impact and resilience in your role. You will learn how to communicate with confidence and to manage up and across. Providing practical techniques to improve your emotional intelligence, communication skills and self-care, the workshop will help you create an action plan for enduring success.

### Communicate with confidence

- Understand verbal and non-verbal communication
- Connect with others to seek and provide feedback
- Make your voice heard in all situations

### Know yourself, boss and peers

- Build your emotional intelligence (self and others)
- Understand different behavioural, thinking and management preferences/styles
- Develop capacity for self-awareness and self-management

### Manage your relationships

- Build and strengthen respectful and successful networks
- Align your interests and goals with others
- Embrace difference and diversity as strength

### Impact and influence

- Understand qualities of effective influence and negotiation
- Manage drama and conflict
- Build capacity for self-care and resilience, to keep on keeping on

### Expert Facilitator: Mark Butz Principal Futures by Design

Mark has diverse work experience, which includes more than 20 years in senior positions in government agencies. His agency experience is complemented by voluntary participation in the community sector governance. Mark has also been a consultant, facilitator, trainer and coach since 2002. Through these roles, he has developed sound perspectives on respectful and productive relationships, functioning as a cultural translator to bridge the gaps of understanding between people from different political, administrative, technical, scientific and community spheres. He has found this approach to be fundamental to unlocking the potential of teamwork and collaboration, to averting detrimental aspects of conflicts in values, styles, and ways of thinking.

Mark has been training others in communication, facilitation, leadership, and conflict transformation through more than 20 years across all States and Territories of Australia and in New Zealand, India and Nauru.

His work draws on principles learned as a practitioner of tai chi and mindfulness, along with a deep and enduring interest in ecology, social history and mythology.

## WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

- |                 |                     |                 |                      |               |                          |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| • 8.30 - 9.00   | <b>Registration</b> | • 11.00 - 12.30 | <b>Session Two</b>   | • 3.00 - 3.20 | <b>Afternoon Tea</b>     |
| • 9.00 - 10.40  | <b>Session One</b>  | • 12.30 - 1.30  | <b>Lunch</b>         | • 3.20 - 4.30 | <b>Session Four</b>      |
| • 10.40 - 11.00 | <b>Morning Tea</b>  | • 1.30 - 3.00   | <b>Session Three</b> | • 4.30        | <b>Close of Workshop</b> |

### More people? More savings!

<b>3</b> - <b>4</b>	<b>5</b> - <b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>+</b>
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# Day One 3 July 2018

## 2018 Theme: 'Stepping Up'

How do you take your career in executive support to the next level? What are the skills you need to get there?

We're bringing together an exceptional line-up of speakers to reflect on how they have managed the transitions and challenges throughout their careers in the Public Sector. Learn how some of the most accomplished executive assistants have reached their potential and made their value visible.

### 8.30 - 8.55 Registration and Morning Coffee

### 8.55 - 9.00 Official Welcome and Opening Remarks from the Chair

### 9.00 - 9.35 OPENING KEYNOTE CASE STUDY

#### Embrace unexpected opportunities on the road to success

In the Public Sector, you must learn to expect the unexpected. Change is common and unforeseen career opportunities are often disguised as obstacles. Emily has embraced an overseas deployment, transitioning to a new role within the Public Sector and explores:

- Increase flexibility, adaptability and resilience
- Embrace change
- Optimise opportunities

**Emily Slatter** Executive Assistant to the Secretary, Home Affairs  
Department of Home Affairs

### 9.35 - 9.50 Questions and Discussion

### 9.50 - 10.25 CASE STUDY

#### Navigate the changing role of an Executive Assistant

Executive support roles are the heart of organisations. The people behind these roles collaborate with executive teams and stakeholders to achieve and maintain excellence. As organisations evolve, so does the function and span of the roles within them. It is vital to stay relevant and ensure longevity for yourself as well as your organisation.

- Navigate a political environment
- Manage more than one manager
- Tips and tricks for the future EA

**Tracy Caine** Executive Assistant to Associate Secretary  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

### 10.25 - 10.40 Questions and Discussion

### 10.40 - 10.55 Morning Tea

### 10.55 - 11.30 CASE STUDY

#### Maximise your contribution to your organisation

Today's EA role is more diverse than ever. With increasing demands and pressures of the job, it has never been more critical to broaden your skill set. Louise will share her experiences of how she has become an invaluable part of her organisation and how to make the most of career opportunities.

- Build and maintain an outstanding reputation
- Network for success
- Master and maximise influence

**Louise Youngman** Executive Assistant to the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

### 11.30 - 11.45 Questions and Discussion

### 11.45 - 12.20 EXPERT COMMENTARY

#### Bounce back from adversity and change

The EA role is constantly evolving. With increased work loads and the pressure to adapt, resilience is an essential skill to master. Scott will explore the key skills and strategies to increase resilience in your role, allowing you to successfully adapt to change.

- Bounce back from adversity
- Commit to resilience
- Strategies to develop resilience

**Scott Monson** Coach, Facilitator, Speaker  
4D Learning

### 12.20 - 12.35 Questions and Discussion

### 12.35 - 1.35 Networking Lunch

### 1.35 - 2.25 INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION

#### Master the art of managing up

The ability to manage upwards is a crucial part of achieving and maintaining a successful working relationship with your executives. Achieving influence is a challenge nearly every executive support professional will face. In this session, our panel will draw on their experiences and shed light on expanding your influence.

- Understand your executive's role, style and priorities
- Build on your strengths and successes
- Expand your influence to make an impact

**Colleen Brown** Executive Assistant to Chief Information Officer  
The Treasury

**Karina Doblender-Azurin** Executive Assistant to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation  
University of Canberra

**Cassie Sydenham** Executive Assistant to Deputy Secretary, Indigenous Affairs  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Monika Lewis** Executive Officer to the Chief Citizen Experience Officer  
Department of Human Services

**Kate Chapman** Executive Assistant to the Commissioner  
Australian Border Force

## PLUS TWO WORKSHOPS!

Plus two separately bookable interactive workshops before & after the event



## VALUE PLUS DISCOUNT

Receive up to \$300 off registration if you register and pay by 6 March 2018

# Day Two 4 July 2018

2.25 - 3.00

## EXPERT COMMENTARY

### Develop mindfulness with emotional intelligence

The benefits of mindfulness are extensive. Evidence has shown mindfulness reduces stress, increases cognitive function and improves physiological and mental health. Combined with greater emotional intelligence competencies, mindfulness can help you be more productive at work.

- The connection between mindfulness and emotional intelligence
- Increase understanding of yourself and others
- Learn to work mindfully

**Dr Kim Vella** Executive Coach  
**Kim Vella Coaching**

3.00 - 3.15

## Questions and Discussion

3.15 - 3.30

## Afternoon Tea

3.30 - 4.05

## EXPERT COMMENTARY

### Network for success

Working independently or as part of a small team is common as an EA, but challenging without a large support network to lean on. Networking events provide the opportunity to make valuable connections with professionals in similar roles with similar goals. Liz will provide you with the skills to make the most of professional networking opportunities.

- Develop a networking strategy
- Create valuable and lasting connections
- Practical tips to expand and enhance your network

**Liz Tilley** Coach  
**Liz Tilley Coaching**

4.05 - 4.20

## Questions and Discussion

4.20 - 4.30

## Concluding Remarks from the Chair

8.30 - 8.55

## Morning Coffee

8.55 - 9.00

## Opening Remarks from the Chair

9.00 - 9.45

## OPENING CASE STUDY

### Adapt to system and digital evolution

Today's digital age can bring challenges as well as opportunities in our personal and professional lives. In the executive assistant role, systems evolve constantly and using them to their full potential can revolutionise the way you work. Yasmin has years of experience implementing and adapting to new technologies in her role.

- Proactively adapt to new systems
- Navigate digital transformation
- Remain resilient during change

**Yasmin Noakes** Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer  
**Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation**

9.45 - 10.00

## Questions and Discussion

10.00 - 10.45

## EXPERT COMMENTARY

### Navigate behavioural preferences of your executive

Forming a successful working relationship with your executive requires a comprehensive understanding of their behaviour and management style. To achieve influence and success in your role, it is vital to know your style and adapt to your manager's.

- Understand behavioural preferences
- Communicate with various personalities
- Adapt your management style

**Peter Skeen** Director  
**FarView HR**

10.45 - 11.00

## Questions and Discussion

11.00 - 11.15

## Morning Tea

11.15 - 12.00

## CASE STUDY

### Foster a mutually beneficial relationship

Behind every great leader is an exceptional executive support team with an important and unique relationship. Building and maintaining this connection is crucial to the success of both parties and should be treated as a priority from the outset. Maria and her CEO Harriet have found a winning formula in building a successful business partnership.

- Maintain a successful working relationship
- Communicate effectively
- The importance of value in a working partnership

**Harriet Elvin** Chief Executive Officer  
**Maria Wallace** Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer

**Cultural Facilities Corporation, ACT Government**

12.00 - 12.15

## Questions and Discussion

12.15 - 1.15

## Networking Lunch

## NETWORKING RECEPTION

4:30 - 5:30PM

Make the most of your experience, join us to network over complimentary canapés and drinks

## WHO WILL ATTEND

Current Leaders



Aspiring Leaders



Future Leaders



## SUPER SAVER DISCOUNT

Receive up to \$200 off registration if you register and pay by 17 April 2018



## EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT

Receive up to \$100 off registration if you register and pay by 5 June 2018

## 1.15 - 2.15 INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION

### Balance personal and professional commitments

As an executive assistant, the line between work and personal life is often blurred. Increasing workloads and responsibilities can make it difficult to disconnect from work, leading to stress and ultimately affecting health and well-being. Join this interactive panel as they discuss their successes and failures in developing a sustainable and efficient balance.

- Manage priorities and expectations
- Maintain a personal life without affecting performance
- Find your balance

**Sharan Robb** Executive Assistant to General Manager, People, Culture and Communication Division

**Australian Bureau of Statistics**

**Vicki Forrester** Executive Officer

**Department of Justice - Juvenile Justice NSW**

**Jessica Botterill** Executive Assistant to the First Assistant Secretary

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Yasmin Noakes** Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer

**Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation**

## 2.15 - 3.00 EXPERT COMMENTARY

### Develop an alternative career mindset

Our relationship with work is shifting rapidly. Career pathways are no longer defined and the call for resilience is loud and clear.

- Engage in the career intelligence process
- Develop a new level of self-knowledge and purpose
- Build grounded confidence

**Therese Toohey** Leadership Facilitator and Executive Coach

**TTCoaching**

## 3.00 - 3.15 Questions and Discussion

## 3.15 - 3.30 Afternoon Tea

## 3.30 - 4.30 INTERACTIVE CLOSING ROUNDTABLE

### Stepping up as a Public Sector EA

The role of the executive assistant in the public sector is changing, meaning you must continually evolve and adapt to the new landscape. In this final interactive session, Mark will reflect on the key insights and themes from the past two days and provide an opportunity to reflect on your development.

- Key takeaways from the conference
- Strategies to maximise your value
- Step up and out of your comfort zone

**Mark Butz** Principal  
**Futures by Design**

## 4.30 Concluding Remarks from the Chair and Summit Close

## ABOUT THE EVENT

When working in a continuously evolving and high-pressured environment, it is essential for executive support professionals to continually refresh their skills and refine their knowledge. To thrive in this role, executive assistants need to assert their value and be resilient when navigating demanding situations and competing expectations.

The 12th National Public Sector Executive Assistant Conference is an essential professional development program, exploring the complexities of the role and the challenges faced by executive support professionals. This event will provide an open forum to discuss and develop skills for adapting to change, refining communication skills and managing difficulties in the workplace.

The event will feature inspirational presentations from some of the public sector's most influential executive support professionals. These sessions will be supported by interactive expert commentary and workshops, providing practical tools designed to empower, motivate and maximise effectiveness in the role.



## FOLLOW THIS EVENT

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## WHO WILL ATTEND



**Scott Monson**  
Coach, Facilitator, Speaker  
**4D Learning**



**Therese Toohey**  
Leadership Facilitator and Executive Coach  
**TTCoaching**



**Peter Skeen**  
Director  
**FarView HR**



**Mark Butz**  
Principle  
**Futures by Design**



**Liz Tilley**  
Coach  
**Liz Tilley Coaching**



**Dr Kim Vella**  
Executive Coach  
**Kim Vella Coaching**



**Melinda Varley**  
Director  
**Moxxie Business Services**



### Day One

9.00 - 4.30

#### Developing emotional intelligence to aid strategic communication during periods of high stress

Effective communication is key to managing conflict within a highly charged, emotional environment and as someone who deals with copious amounts of people on a daily basis it is imperative to understand alternative ways to communicate, to ensure relationships are navigated effectively. Having the capacity to be aware and in control of one's emotions, allows for greater ability to handle both professional and personal relationships empathetically and with greater practicality.

A significant body of research supports that a strong link exists between leadership effectiveness and Emotional Intelligence, and as the voice of your executive it is imperative to both develop and hone skills that will enable emotional resilience within high stress situations and difficult scenarios. This workshop's morning skills focus will equip you to:

- Determine how to stay in control of emotions during times of stress
- Gain the ability to respond to challenging situations and changing environments
- Understand different communication styles to best resolve conflict
- Establish strategic ways to manage stress both personally and professionally
- Discover the ability to assess and measure emotional intelligence in both yourself and others

#### Becoming a leader: Being in control of your career path

Developing the ability to think like a leader is an extremely useful skill to accelerate your career development, particularly when the aptitude to remain calm under pressure, whilst being able to manage your increasing workload is both a requirement and expectation in your role. Implementing strategies that allow you to conquer overwhelming tasks and demonstrate professional excellence, will aid you to achieve advancement in your career. From attending this workshop, attendees will be able to gain clarity on their career journey and how to advance within their current roles. Tools and techniques learnt from your attendance will ensure you exercise ownership of the executive support role, whilst leading by example through the ability to become a recognised and effective leader within your office. Achieve professional excellence by:

- Prioritising tasks to effectively manage your workload
- Increasing personal presence within the executive office and exemplifying role model behaviour
- Developing strategies allowing you to manage your work-life balance alongside an ever-increasing work load
- Establishing a leadership mind-set to accelerate your career development
- Creating strong professional relationships through gaining trust and credibility from others

#### Expert Facilitator: Melinda Varley Director and Principal Moxxie Business Services

Melinda Varley, the founder and principal of Moxxie Business Services and Moxxie Training Academy. She is a sought-after facilitator and trainer with more than 25 years' experience as a leader and manager in the public service, private and not-for-profit arenas. Melinda is a qualified trainer and developer, accountant and business coach with extensive experience in facilitation, business, human resource and financial management.

Melinda provides training and development in leadership and management, foundations of government, financial management and governance to Commonwealth and ACT Government organisations, employees and graduate programs.

Melinda has extensive experience in leading and managing teams through change in the public service, which has been recognised with multiple public service commendations.

### Day Two

9.00 - 4.30

#### Keeping your composure: Strategies to develop resilience and overcome difficult scenarios

Along with managing broader stakeholder relations, tackling tough conversations can be one of the most challenging parts of an EA role. If not approached with the correct finesse, it can impact both yours and your manager's reputation. Having the capability to tackle awkward situations is often dependent on an individual's confidence and knowledge.

Often, being the voice of your leader means being responsible for their actions and decisions, whilst ensuring personal behaviour and relationship building skills do not negatively influence the organisation. Day Two's afternoon skills focus will explore different ways to maintain rapport with stakeholders and negotiate arduous situations pivotal to navigating your way to a positive outcome.

- Identify how to empathise whilst remaining in control of a situation
- Increase confidence to broach sensitive topics
- Explore communication strategies to address difficult conversations
- Determine different personalities and the ability to approach these with finesse
- Develop the ability to build rapport and maintain relationships
- Examine how to initiate sensitive conversations and effectively raise concerns
- Ascertain how to maintain composure during times of confrontation through emotional resilience
- You and your manager: Managing up and influencing with integrity

With the daily grind under control, executive assistants are able to step up as active participants in a number of complex working relationships. Improving your ability to effectively manage up is imperative to enabling your manager's productivity. Ensuring management decisions are made in a timely manner and communicated correctly are central to the job. The key challenge that commonly arises is an inability for an EA to impose any formal authority and influence upon senior executives. By dealing with a number of different stakeholders, executive assistants have the ability to influence a number of people on a daily basis. However, doing so with integrity is a different feat. Gaining trust, listening intently, responding quickly, persuading easily and feeling empathetically towards others are all ways to influence positively. Remaining authentic in nature when exercising such capabilities will ensure you remain an integral cog within the organisation, indispensable to your management team and peers.

- Building an authentic relationship with your manager
- Gaining full engagement from your executive during times of high pressure
- Recognising your individual brand, whilst ensuring you advocate your organisations
- Remaining authentic when faced with making difficult decision
- Understanding the traits of a holistic managers approach to leadership and how to implement such to your executive office
- Finding your own communication style to maximise your influence on key decisions



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