

OK v Great
A guide for 21st Century PAs



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- Welcome... my name is Angela Mortimer and I run one the leading international business support recruitment companies
 - 250 employees
 - 2,500 vacancies per year

- I will be talking about **three** main points today:
 1. Women's role in the workplace back when I started
 2. Women in the workplace today and how the role has changed
The role technology plays in your work
 3. Mindset – it's important in being great



- Work is not just about money / glamour – you need fulfilment
 - good job
 - recognition
 - contributing
 - growth
 - career development
- All these things are available to you now
- You have similar job titles now compared to the past, but very different roles



- The role of a PA in the past was a tough one, but very straightforward
- Traditional PA = Gatekeeper
 - vertical hierarchy
 - typing speed 75 wpm & shorthand 120 wpm
 - worked to instruction
 - opinion not required (thanks)
 - limited career
 - 1 on 1
- Women I was recruiting in 1977 - woefully under-utilised
- Changes:
 - Education
 - In the past 5 to 7 O-levels was average
 - 75% of candidates are A-level and above

Other changes

- The Pill – when/ whether to have babies
 - Life balance options
 - Female expectations & aspirations
- Flattened business structure - Part-time / flexi-time & job shares available



- Big technology changes have affected the way we work
- Keyboard was gender specific
- The arrival of a mouse = key / a gadget
Attracted men to a field previously dominated by women
- Who could have predicted influence of technology?
- I can't predict technologies of future **BUT** I do know this..
 - Technology may provide flexibility & opportunity
 - Part in the field of research; Google, Wikipedia etc
 - It opens huge volumes of knowledge previously laboriously obtained through the library
 - Social & business networks providing ever increasing opportunities for exploring business and social opportunities
- **BUT** it won't make your working life easier – EVER
- The price you pay is a plethora of information some describe as a 24/7 avalanche
- The main thing is to stay employable

21st Century PA

Key decision maker
Negotiator
Project manager
Communicator
Researcher
Recruiter



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- So improved technology revolutionised the way we work
 - more information processing
 - more work volume
 - more measurability
 - more productivity expected of us
- Already we see it in the roles we take on
- PA = Proactive. You now are expected using all the above listed to be a...
- **Key decision maker**
- **Negotiator**
- **Project Manager**
- **Researcher**
- **Recruiter... and a**
- **Pastoral responsibilities such as staff welfare**
- Compare this to traditional role:
 - Sheer scope of role & amount of work
 - Responsibility
 - The value created
- And so to remain employable for future stuff that will happen you will require certain specialisms for example...



- An article back in 2006 spoke about PAs being given responsibility of budgets up to £50K
- Since then, we have seen skills and responsibility go up tenfold
- Some of our top PAs are controlling around £500,000 worth of funds
- To define the value you give to your organisation need to highlight the importance of your role - create savings and measuring effectiveness (which also means success)
 - This makes the case for you being indispensable (also negotiate better pay)
 - Social networking/black book for PAs globally demonstrates that PAs are some of the most well connected people around
- It's up to you how you define your value within your organisation – our annual blue book salary survey is a good place to start
- And so to stay employable you also need the same competencies as your managers



- Competencies of great PAs:
 - Autonomy
 - Business awareness
 - Numerate
 - Communication skills
 - Technology
 - Problem solving
 - Team work
 - Adding value = key
- Only the great are able to maintain calm in a crisis
- So lets look at the most important kit you have....



- Strongest resource = your brain
- *Did you know?*
 - *Men will apply for a job if they can do 75%*
 - *Woman only if she can do 95%*
- It's the value of your judgement & your soundness which will make you great...
-
- Do you know someone really good at:
 - Letter writing?
 - Chairing meetings?
 - Implementing new ideas?
 - Public speaking?
 - Identifying new business opportunities?
 - Event management?
 - Database management?
 - Influencing people?
 - Negotiating?
- Are they better at it than you?
- Use all the resources you have available to you

How to be great?

Build on strengths
Learn from struggles
Humility & gratitude
Strive for excellence
Never compromise values
Never give up
Have faith in your ideas
Fear is an opportunity

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- Difference between being ok and great - need to be great all the time

1. Cover for me
2. Oh, good idea boss
3. It was like that when I got here

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- If you don't like my suggestions - try Homer Simpson's!
 - Cover for me
 - Oh, good idea boss
 - It was like that when I got here
- Remember that it is **YOUR** decision to be great
- You are hired for your own personal values
- Think on this...
 - You are more than sum of your skills and education

A lot of fellows have a B.A., an
M.A. or a PhD. but unfortunately
do not have a J.O.B.

Fats Domino

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- It is not just your education - it is the essential you

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- Thank-you
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