

The Catalyst Chronicles - 2022

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The other day, my daughter and I were driving somewhere, and she asked me what a chronicle is. As I explained that it is an exciting story, an adventure if you will (The Chronicles of Narnia came to mind you see) I had a tiny nagging inner-mom voice saying, “Maybe you want to check that definition”. I was disgusted to find that it is not at all about excitement and adventure as a chronological recording of events without analysis or interpretation. So, in the style of C.S. Lewis, what follows in my traditional year-end blog is **The Catalyst Chronicles**.

Part 1: The Power of Belief

While 2021 gave the Catalyst team a little breathing room to strengthen our internal capability to deliver at scale, 2022 certainly tested our mettle. We embraced the new year with open hearts and minds and a crystal-clear intention to **ignite possibilities for an inspired future through courageous engagement, innovative solutions and wise choices to create clarity and meaning**.

We heard leaders, near and far, struggling in the context of continued disruption to re-align operating models, strategies and roles; to find each other and work together cohesively in blended teams; to connect and build trust. We remained laser focused on sharing our **PowerUp⁸** and **NeuroChange** solutions, driven by our unwavering belief that they hold the key to unlocking the potential of teams and organisations to;

- manage employee wellness and stress more effectively;
- build the skills needed to adapt to change;
- create workplaces, leaders and teams that encourage collaboration, communication and creative problem-solving;
- facilitate the healthy resolution of conflict;
- drive sustainable business growth.

Tony Robbins says, *“If you’re creative enough, if you’re playful enough, if you’re determined enough, if you’re focused enough – you can find a way.”*

We held public workshops and retreats. We were invited to speak to organisations and teams across various sectors, at industry-specific and general management forums and director’s associations, as well as at leadership, learning and HR conferences.

All the while, we continued to run our **I am Talent** workshops and programmes to help individuals build the self-awareness and insight to be their best self and enhance their results and value in both organisational and entrepreneurial contexts through building their brand and optimising their talent and careers.

We continued to invest in building relationships with trusted collaboration partners, all the while actively listening with a whole lot of courage and empathy to the challenges our clients were facing. So strong was our belief, we were determined to find a way to bring these solutions to the world.

Part 2: The Floodgates

And then it happened. As if a dam had burst, releasing all the pressure of the last 2 years and the impact of Covid, Ukraine, rising inflation and cost of living, political instability, technology, the list goes on... we were inundated with requests to work with teams ranging from 7 to 900+ people to:

- create strategies and operational plans in the “new” world
- build team alignment and clarity of vision;
- understand individual and team preferences, strengths, focus areas;
- identify the challenges and opportunities that need attention and actually have the conversations everyone had been putting off;
- empower individuals to deeply examine their foundational belief systems and consciously cultivate and embed new neural paths and habits;
- build the thinking, beliefs, processes and habits for curious, creative, focused and effective teams;
- develop the roadmaps and tools needed to lead organisational change, shift culture and build capability.

Part 3: Sustaining Momentum

As we said goodbye to valued members of our Catalyst core team and associate family, and welcomed more than a few new ones, we had to dig deep for the determination and focus we needed to deliver at scale as we rethought our own operating model in South Africa and beyond her borders.

In my capacity as GM, I had to say no to work I loved and stick with projects that needed more of my attention. I took on a masters in innovation, leadership and consulting, and I have been excited and energized by this new opportunity in my own personal growth. And I have been pushed to near-breaking point as I learned to navigate the vastly different and ever-changing needs of both my family and the business (and my team) better.

It was not always a glaring success, if I am completely honest, but the valuable (and sometimes painful) lessons in prioritising honest conversations and self-care, asking for help more proactively (my inner strong and independent woman is fierce, and stubborn!) and sometimes just saying no and putting firm boundaries in place, are worth their weight in gold.

Hot on the heels of a much-needed December break and some focused family time, I am struck by the dichotomies that are bouncing around in my head and heart right now:

- Feeling mentally stretched AND energised and ready for more
- Being physically exhausted AND getting stronger (my children drag me off to the gym at 5am everyday)
- Growing and expanding the business, AND staying focused on our core areas of expertise (our real sweet spots)
- Opening myself to new people, experiences and relationships, AND saying goodbye those that no longer serve me

As I look forward into the new year, where Catalyst will build on the significant successes and learnings in 2022, and continue to grow and expand our team, our geographical reach and our **impact on people, planet and profit**, I hold firm in the belief, put so eloquently by Stephen Covey, that *“the great apparent dichotomy is that the more we give, the more we get.”* While I may be in need of a break and a little TLC (ok maybe more than a little), I know that the Catalysts and I still have lots more to give.

From Debbie, myself and the Catalyst team, we wish you all rest, reflection and rejuvenation this year end. Stay safe. Be brave. Keep believing.

Kathy