

EEL... ENERGISE, ENTHUSE, INSPIRE

EEL gives a voice to the new generation of library and information professionals. If you have any suggestions or topics for this column, please contact the column co-ordinator Lesa Maclean at maclean.lesa@gmail.com

Rockin' the mojo

Kelly Hall wants to keep that conference enthusiasm alive when you get back to the workplace.

Since September 2011, there have been umpteen conferences around Australia. I'm betting that you may have attended one, if not two or, if you are extremely lucky, three.

Guaranteed, regardless of how many you have attended, you walked away full of ideas, passion, and enthusiasm.

But now, here we are, a few months on. Are you still as inspired as you were when you left your last conference? Chances are, you got back to work, found your desk piled high, and despite your best intentions, you've fallen back into the same routines and thought processes, forgetting about all the new initiatives you wanted to put in place and all the lessons you've learned.

So how do we capture that enthusiasm we had and keep it up between each conference we attend?

Keep in mind that "nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm", as Ralph Waldo Emerson once pointed out. You now have plenty of that, so you theoretically should be able to achieve something great.

Have a plan. What is your ultimate goal? Everything you read about motivation says that a plan is what helps you succeed and achieve your goal. Want to run a marathon? Do your research, organise a training plan, investigate nutritional needs, and put your plan into action. So why not use the same philosophy for work? Even the smallest change in a workplace requires thought and a plan.

Be prepared to hit the occasional road block. Some are just a slight detour; others might mean building a bridge to get over a ravine. These are just a chance to think more laterally or out of the box about the situation. The outcome after this may be even greater than you originally thought.

Also, think about other ways that you can inspire people. After ALIA's 5th New Librarians Symposium (NLS5) a number of delegates returned home and hosted report-back sessions for their workplaces and local colleagues who were unable to attend. This is a fantastic idea and should happen more often. What better way to help others catch your enthusiasm and passion to achieve work related and personal goals?

Even better – encourage as many people as you can to attend the same professional development conferences as you. More minds together create more ideas, and more unified minds can create a greater reason for management to listen and support suggested changes and innovation. This approach may also make it easier to put together a business case. Partnerships across organisations and sectors may develop because of such a session.

Use your Personal Learning Network (PLN). Regardless of where your PLN contacts are, they are your support crew. They are people to bounce ideas off in the very infancy of those ideas. They can help with suggestions when you hit a road block. Your PLN can be online via Twitter, or offline with a group of colleagues or a mentor you speak to occasionally. I know I'm preaching to the converted – we all help each other – we want each other to succeed.

Personally, I can think of instances recently where having a PLN born out of a conference has been extremely helpful. I have been approached for ideas to be used in a business case to encourage an organisation to use social media. In the reverse, I've been offered assistance on projects I am working on.

Don't think you have a PLN? Of course you do! Anyone you learn from is part of your PLN. Alternatively, join a local group. ALIA has numerous groups in each state that you can get involved in, such as ALIA CYS, ALIA Health, and ALIA New Graduate Groups, just to name a few. For a full list see www.alia.org.au/groups/.

When catching up on your reading – online and offline, personal and professional – and conversations with others, do you write down ideas and concepts that you really like – even if you're not sure what you might be able to do with the information? This can be a fantastic source of future inspiration. Who knows, something that you note down could be the start of a possible conference paper and presentation.

Also, occasionally go back and reread the notes you made at previous events – you never know what little thing can spark that enthusiasm again.

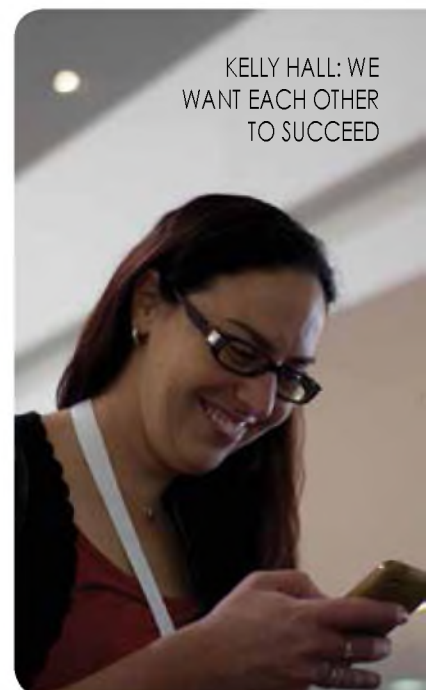
The ALIA Biennial conference is quickly approaching in mid-2012, what will you be doing to keep your enthusiasm alive?

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Kelly was Marketing Chair for NLS5 and is a 2012 ALIA West committee member.

Apology: The gremlins got in the works in our January/February EEL column and we incorrectly rechristened Julia Gamett 'Julie'. Our apologies to Julia for this error.



KELLY HALL: WE
WANT EACH OTHER
TO SUCCEED