



Issue 76 | May 2016 | Subscribe

Nancy MacKay, PhD | Founder & CEO

CEO Mental Toughness

Interview with MacKay CEO Forums member [Andrew Bulmer](#), SVP & Managing Director, Canadian Operations, [Active International](#).

Active International is a global corporate trade company that helps companies leverage assets for multi-platform media, marketing, retail, travel, shipping and freight services. As the industry leader, we've delivered a strategic advantage and measurable results to our clients for 26 years.

What is the toughest business issue that you've faced?

In 2014, our company successfully transitioned 22 staff positions from our New York office to Toronto. During the process, we built out a great new office space, focused on "culture fit first" hires and created a high performing and fun office culture. Unfortunately, our environment literally went up in smoke with a small office fire that started after hours. This resulted in our entire staff working from home for the next 3 ½ months while our office was completely rebuilt due to the smoke and water damage.

What did you do to stay focused on success and deal with the issue?

I engaged our internal resources and external partners beginning with a 6:30am meeting on-site the following day. Our first priority was to ensure business continuity including ensuring our software systems and any critical files were intact. As well we needed to ensure that all of our team were equipped to work from home effectively so that we could continue to serve our customers. I also ensured that everyone in our organization was provided with frequent communication about how our project plan was progressing to get us all back to the office. With our strong team culture, people wanted to see each other. We rented some temporary workspace nearby so that teams could get together for meetings and have coffee breaks together for that personal touch. In the end, I am most proud of the fact that our customers and business partners did not notice that we were dealing with this adversity, and that we did not lose any employees during this time. In fact, we recruited and onboarded 2 new employees during this time thanks to our team!

What did you learn about CEO mental toughness?

Dealing with this situation absorbed a significant amount of my time and energy. I learned that I needed to delegate some responsibilities and trust my team to keep our business rolling in order to focus on the business continuity and insurance decisions that were my responsibility. I also needed to make sure that I managed my stress and stayed healthy through exercise and proper diet. I think that this challenge ultimately resulted in personal and team growth.

What is your favourite book pick on the topic of mental toughness?

I moved my family to New York to manage the city for Molson USA in October of 2002. For Christmas, I received Rudy Giuliani's book [Leadership](#) as a gift. It outlined his approach to leadership and candid thoughts as he dealt with major challenges during his time as Mayor and of course through 9-11. His ability to remain calm under pressure and his communication with those who looked to him to know that they would get through a difficult time stuck with me. My dad also had a great saying "if this is our biggest problem, then we have no problems." Perspective and the ability to keep your team focused during challenging times are important for a leader.

CEO Leadership Tip



CEO Health Tip



Some Key Questions to Ask Your Best and Brightest Talent

Having great questions on hand can spark meaningful conversations with the best and brightest in the business. Here are key questions that will help your high potential talent succeed.

1. 5 years from now what does an amazing career look like for you? A mediocre one?
2. Over the next year, what contribution are you most inspired to make, and why?
3. Let's assume that as you try to achieve your priorities you will be super busy and distracted. What systems do you need to put in place to see your priorities through?
4. Let's imagine for a minute that your ability to achieve your vision will be in direct proportion to the extent to which you keep your word. What does this mean to you?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you believe your team is doing? On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you think they need to doing?
6. When you look at the business and your life, what's dear and obvious to you?
7. How can I help?

Contributed by [Natalie Michael](#) - Vancouver Forum Chair with MacKay CEO Forums; Executive Coach and Succession Management Consultant with The Karmichael Group.

How much work is too much? Strategies for keeping your brain in the game

High-achievers work hard and often work many long hours. But what if those extended hours were shown to compromise brain health? In fact, studies have shown that people who work 9 to 12 hours a day have decreased cognitive alertness and reasoning by the end of their workday and if sustained over many years may suffer some longer term effects. Studies on the cumulative impact of long work hours show that people who engage in more than 55 hours per week may suffer declines in cognitive abilities by the time they reach middle age. Researchers believe this is because there are only so many hours in a day, and long work hours interfere with the brain's regeneration and recovery processes by cutting out time for sleep, relaxation, exercise, and eating healthy foods. This places executives at risk for health problems, including conditions affecting the brain.

So what should you do if long work hours have taken over your life? Find a way to work smarter, not longer: prioritize high-impact projects, kill projects that won't yield, delegate busywork, and keep interruptions and other time-wasters at bay.

Your brain and your health are your livelihood. Make sure they are a top priority.

Contributed by [Dr. Elisabeth Sherman](#), Brain Health Program, Copeman Healthcare

New Forum Chair Opportunities

At MacKay CEO Forums, our vision is to populate the world with better leaders and we are currently inspiring over 600 CEOs/Executives across Canada to accelerate their performance. Our BHAG is to become the dominant player in Canada by 2017 (1000+ members) and then begin the global journey to 10,000+ members around the world.

In order to achieve our BHAG, we will continue to add new forums, but we must first identify and partner with new Forum Chairs. Please consider your network and reach out to anyone you think may be interested in this dynamic opportunity.

We are interested in partnering with Forum Chairs in: Toronto/GTA, South Western Ontario, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver/Fraser Valley/Richmond/Surrey.

[Read More](#)

Events



Breakfast Events



Vancouver 7am-9am
Economic Update: Navigating through Turbulent Economic Times

With Jock Finlayson, Executive Vice President and Chief Policy Officer, Business Council of BC

Note: this event is for CEOs only

[Email Nancy for details](#)

Co-hosted with Mogan Daniels Slager LLP and Nicola Wealth Management



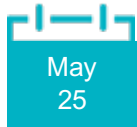
Toronto 7am-9am
Economic Update

With David Rosenberg, Chief Economist & Strategist, Gluskin Sheff

Note: this event is for CEOs + Executives

[Email Nancy for details](#)

Co-hosted with Talbot Marketing and Empresario Capital



Vancouver 7am-9am
What top CEO's do to Improve their Odds in Talent Development and Management Succession

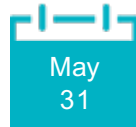
PANELISTS:

Mary Jordan Chair: Vancouver Airport; Director: Coast Capital, Vancouver Opera, Timberwest
Joe Nemeth CEO, Catalyst Paper
Michael Rusch President, Jim Pattison Lease
Phil Vanderpol President, Vitalus Nutrition

Note: this event is for CEOs only

[Email Nancy for details](#)

Co-hosted with Korn Ferry



Calgary 7am-9am
Navigating Through Turbulent Economic Times

PANELISTS:

Chad Hughes President & CEO, LandSolutions
Patricia Kaiser COO, Sierra Systems
Chris Read President, Upside Engineering
Bob Redden President, EDI Environmental Dynamics Inc.

Note: this event is for CEOs only

[Email Nancy for details](#)

Co-hosted with CIBC & Deloitte



Vancouver 11am-3pm

2016 BC Business Top 100 - the province's top networking event

Join Peter Legge as he continues his revealing and insightful interview series with British Columbia's business legends. This year's special guest is CEO extraordinaire Christine Day.

[Registration & Information](#)

MacKay CEO Forums is a Corporate Event Partner for this event.

Welcome to our Newest Forum Chair

[Jim Gormley](#), Toronto - An accomplished business executive and mentor, serial entrepreneur and franchising expert with over 25 years of senior operating experience, Jim brings a contagious optimism to MacKay CEO Forums. He has a passion for helping business leaders sort through priorities to achieve greater personal and professional balance, and a talent for fostering an open and dynamic exchange of ideas.

CEO & Executive Forums

MacKay CEO Forums accelerates CEO performance through the highest impact, least time-intensive peer groups for results-oriented CEOs and top executives in Canada. If you would like to explore a forum opportunity, or refer someone to us, please contact [Nancy](#).