



Solve.

Issue 3 | May 2022

THE NATIONAL RESILIENCE EDITION

WITH YOU
WITH ME

As a global company with headquarters in Australia, WithYouWithMe acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



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Welcome to Solve.

At WithYouWithMe we set out to solve problems. Problems in the way organisations hire and retain employees, problems in fair access to digital careers, and problems that our customers experience in their digital environments.

We've created Solve to showcase the ways we and our customers tackle these problems. We believe in sharing lessons learnt so that we can work together to make a future of work that works for humans.



» OPENING REMARKS

FROM
TOM MOORE

CEO & Chief Goblin
WYWM



When I think about the theme for this edition of Solve – national resilience – I consider it through a lens different from most. This is in part due to my personal experience of serving in the armed forces, but also from conversations I’m having each day with government leaders from around the world.

The ongoing aggression from Russia and volatile geopolitical environment in the Indo-Pacific have thrust the critical role of military preparedness in national resilience onto the global agenda.

There is no question that our forces must be robust – but there are serious doubts about the ability of military forces to grow and scale at the rate required to defend against modern threats, including cyber and electronic warfare.

How will conventional militaries prevent strategic miscalculation by attracting the required numbers of new personnel, particularly when existing recruitment and retention targets are not being met?

The good news is, that if you are a Defence department, you are sitting on a goldmine. A digital goldmine.

Over 67% of enlisted Military members tested by WithYouWithMe match to being a software developer by aptitude.

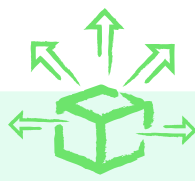
The military's ability to attract young talent coupled with this insight into enlisted members' tech potential should be a joy to those serving in digital enablement, transformation or cyber operations who are screaming for talent but relying on external contractors.

The following endeavours are essential for Defence departments to take advantage of this digital goldmine quickly:



Attract talent like a tech company.

There is no reason why “going on an adventure in the Army and seeing the world” can’t change to “going on a tech adventure and protecting your community” to attract a whole new pool of talent.



Decentralise tool access and trust your soldiers to do great tech work right at the edge.

The alternative is to hold them centrally and limit scale, speed, and innovation.



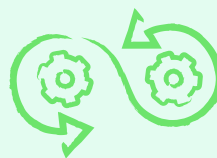
Move to non-linear career paths in talent mobility to increase tenure.

A soldier could be a rifleman for 4 years, then a data analyst for 2 years, and a data engineer for 4 years in uniform. This could increase the average time in service from 7.5 years to 10 years.



Use aptitude testing and skills testing to find hidden strengths in your workforce.

Test everyone in uniform – you will be surprised how strong your talent’s ability is to move to digital skills.



Allow project work to be distributed through a great DevOps platform to underutilised resources, such as military reservists.

We already run a mission command structure. Giving your workforce more control over the work they do or how they would like to work will be the key to supporting and sustaining a digital capability in a competitive workplace.

If you are truly digital, you might even be able to attract a whole unique type of digital native looking to build the best and coolest technology to protect their community.

BUILDING SOVEREIGN STRENGTH:

DIGITAL NATIVES

AND THE MODERN MILITARY

by General Sir James Everard, KCB CBE

I left NATO Allied Command Operations in 2020 with unfinished business – regrets I am working to rectify – in three areas.

1

We had failed and were failing to educate our populations on the true nature of the Russian threat and the security challenges posed by China.

2

Far too many Allies still believed that once exposed, a secret loses all its power when we have to be bound by the secrets we share.

3

And my focus today: no Ally has found a way to attract or upskill or retain the right talent, and these shortfalls are an ever-expanding hole in our capability bucket.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is the eleventh strategic shock of the 21st Century. Once again, we see the need to be resilient at home and strong abroad across the instruments of national and Alliance power: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic.

Unsurprisingly, this crisis coupled with volatile geopolitical environments in the Asia Pacific is triggering an uplift in Defence spending everywhere. Look at Germany with a one-year boost of £100 billion euros in 2022. And the Australian government last week announced a plan to grow its military to its largest size since the Vietnam War, increasing by nearly 20,000 people by 2040.

Great historical shifts are moments of danger and opportunity. Our ability to exploit these opportunities and to establish a decisive military advantage in conflict (to win) is directly linked to our ability to find the right people; digitally skilled, tech-savvy, mentally agile, physically fit, and committed to and over time.



In other words, our edge will remain human and must be capable of harnessing and exploiting the power of technology in all domains and all functional areas.

The problem is that every business wants to harvest the same people. Others will pay more than we can afford to pay, and those we train ourselves (at significant cost and over a long period of time) too often get poached.

We need a path out of this dark wood. If not, I doubt any of us will be able to attract the large numbers of digitally smart people that we require.

So, we need to win the talent war. This is hardly an insight because we have said the same thing for years, but perhaps now the pressure to succeed will drive a fresh approach because (directly and indirectly) there is always a way.

First, we need to be clever in the way that we attract digital natives and rethink how we

are tackling the issue, end-to-end. To win the hearts and minds of digital natives, we need to operate in their world. Currently, we do not.

This weakness is often exposed from the first stage of recruitment, with time-consuming application systems lacking intuition and speed, confusing processes that are not streamlined, and endless hoops to jump through instead of open doors.

This experience is at odds with the expectations of the digital natives, who have grown up with screens in their hands, living their lives online and are used to immediate answers. Our recruitment model must offer an intuitive and digitally-optimised experience that meets the expectations of a tech-savvy generation.

Improving efficiency by harnessing technology in the recruiting process will engage applicants from the start of their military career. I also think that an intuitive cross-platform app or portal,

where paperwork is lodged, aptitude tests and medical questionnaires are completed and updates are provided to the candidate at every step of the process would instill confidence that “Military-Grade” technology is not a myth and that we are serious about developing a dynamic work environment optimised by technology and smart processes.

We also need to tackle the challenge indirectly. This requires us to broaden the pool of talent we are looking to recruit. There are many roles in modern defence forces that sit outside the scope of its traditional recruitment drives. For example, we need people with digital skills to help fight our cyber threats – and these recruits have different skills and backgrounds than what militaries traditionally recruit.

This is an opportunity to bring diversity into our forces – those who may not previously have considered a career in the military. We also need to be better at recycling the talent we have. This includes those who have already served.

Veterans or those looking to transition out of the military are the perfect candidates to retain and retrain to fill the new demand for digital roles. This was a topic I touched on briefly with the UK Minister for Defence, People, and Veterans at an Armed Forces Covenant signing with WithYouWithMe earlier this week. It’s a challenge WithYouWithMe CEO Tom Moore is working with the Australian, Canadian, and now UK governments to address. For example, they provided specialized aptitude testing to 30,000 veterans and found that 67% of them had the same aptitude traits as the best software engineers. This was a strategic insight, validated in practice, and offers both parties (Defence and veteran) significant benefits.

This article is just a brief introduction to the evolving challenges faced in modern military recruitment, and it’s a topic I plan to delve deeper into over a series of LinkedIn articles. Please connect with me on LinkedIn to discuss this further.

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”



Signing of the UK Armed Forces Covenant on 14 March 2022. WYWM discussed how to address the UK skills crisis and build a more resilient nation with UK Minister for Defence People and Veterans, Leo Docherty.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

General Sir James Everard KCB CBE commissioned in 1983, joining the 17th/21st Lancers in Germany on the Chieftain Main Battle Tank. Having commanded at every level - including the Queen's Royal Lancers, 20th Armoured Brigade, 3rd(UK) Division and the UK Field Army - he ended his career in September 2020 as the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (and Operation Commander European Union Operation ALTHEA, Bosnia-in-Herzegovina). As a Major General he served as the Assistant Chief of the General Staff, and as a

Lieutenant General as the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Military Strategy & Operations) based in the UK Ministry of Defence, London.

James Everard is President of ABF The Soldiers' Charity and took up the appointment of Lead Senior Mentor for NATO Allied Command Operations in January 2021. The Senior Mentors provide high-level coaching, advice and support to NATO Commanders, and assist decision-makers in unlocking and implementing solutions to current strategic and operational challenges, to ensure that Alliance forces remain as responsive, as resilient and as lethal as possible. He is committed to finding a sustainable solution to the digital skills challenge in Western militaries.

» CASE STUDY

FUNCTIONALITY ENHANCEMENTS TO THE

CAF OUTCAN DIGITAL PORTAL

**ARE IMPROVING
THE USER EXPERIENCE**

**FOR SERVING MEMBERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

by Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd) Caleb Walker



WithYouWithMe is assisting the Canadian Armed Forces by building a **scalable digital portal for out of country staff to deliver high quality and timely administrative support to deployed members and their families.**



THE CHALLENGE

The Office of the Ombudsman for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) published the 'Engaged in the World' report, investigating the administration of postings, assignments and employments of Defence Team personnel outside of Canada. The Report found there was a "lack of effective communication and administrative support" in place for CAF members and their families when posting outside of Canada.

It was recommended the OUTCAN Programme should be optimised to improve the experience of posted members and align with the Defence's broader digital transformation agenda of streamlining processes and making better use of digital tools. WithYouWithMe (WYWM) was engaged to deliver a new optimised data-driven solution to improve the communication and administrative processes supporting the OUTCAN Programme.

THE SOLUTION



WYWM created a digital portal that acts as a single point of entry for the administrative processes involved in an OUTCAN posting.



This streamlining of the business process results in significant time savings and improvements in accuracy, providing a better experience for both administrative staff and the end user.



The initial project focused on the approximately 1000 users within the VCDS OUTCAN Canada department. As of June 2020, there are over 4000 military members, Defence department employees, Non-Public Funds staff and their families across 70 countries, leaving scope for this project to scale.

THE RESULTS

1

Existing legacy business processes in OUTCAN led to manual information processing resulting in wasted resources, inefficiencies, and mistakes. Without digitisation and tracking metrics, decisions were made on outdated information instead of up to the minute data. The digital portal allowed for an efficient delivery of administrative services, improving data analytics through digitisation. For example,

documents can be tracked throughout the administrative process, providing data on how long a document has been with one user for action. Alerts raise awareness of stalled processing and prod users to act on their administrative tasks. This data analytics capability allows for better data capture, resulting in insight in to processes and a basis for future improvements.

2

The digitisation of existing processes resulted in significant time savings for both end users and administrators. The OUTCAN process is administration heavy and current processes use informal information submissions, paper forms and multiple sites for managing information. In line with the digital transformation of government, the OUTCAN digital portal reduced time spent on manual processing and improved accuracy, timeliness, and user satisfaction. An estimated savings of twelve hours per person, per process, means a significant savings of thousands of labour hours when scaled to the 4000 personnel and their families currently posted overseas.

3

An OUTCAN posting is desirable and is often a key developmental milestone in a member's career. Most OUTCAN postings involve the members spouse and dependants travelling with them, leading to an increased number of people in need of administrative support. The Ombudsman for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces received numerous complaints about OUTCAN postings, most citing issues with the administration of the program.

Members and their families spoke of increased stress levels, uncertainty, and frustration in their engagement with OUTCAN. The digital portal creates a more streamlined, transparent process for all users: members, families, and administrators. Users can see progress in real time and access all process steps from a single dashboard. The administrative burden is reduced with a resulting increase in confidence in the process. This user-friendly portal supports clients during a challenging time in their career, leading to members and their families who feel secure as they move through the OUTCAN posting process.

The focus on the digital transformation of government services has the potential to create meaningful change in people's lives. Slow administrative processes and lack of transparency affect not only the OUTCAN member but creates uncertainty and stress in the lives of their families. This OUTCAN digital portal streamlines the process by using existing tools more effectively.

Personnel have a single dashboard and can manage the posting process in a timely way, reducing the stress on themselves and their families. By reducing the administrative burden of an OUTCAN posting, we can refocus on the incredible opportunity of serving Canada overseas.

*Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Caleb Walker
Vice President Defence and Government,
WithYouWithMe*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lieutenant-Colonel (Ret'd) Caleb Walker spent 20 years in the Canadian Army. His last role was the Command of the Army's Chief Action Group. In 2019, Caleb wrote the Managed Readiness System Review. Currently, Caleb works as the Canadian Vice President Defence and Government for WithYouWithMe.

» IN THE SPOTLIGHT

HELPING AFGHAN REFUGEES IN CRISIS

by Mohammad Tariq Zia



**As you start
to walk on the way,
the way appears.**

Rumi saying



I, Mohammad Tariq Zia, was born in Bamyan province of Afghanistan to an educated middle-class family. My father was the only one who worked in our family. I remember how he struggled but never came down to pave the way for us to get an education. From the very beginning, when I was old enough to identify my left from my right I decided to study and complete my higher education.

After finishing High School, I went to University to study Civil Engineering. To support my family and pay my tuition, I worked part-time as a Computer Operator at the Ministry of Justice in Kabul, Afghanistan. I graduated from University, at the top of the graduating class. I began my career in the construction industry, working as a Structure Design Engineer, then as a Project Manager at the Ministry of Urban Development & Land (MUDL). When my contract ended, I found work as an interpreter/translator (Supervisor, Team Leader) with Australian and Coalition Forces in Afghanistan.

As NATO and its counterparts announced their withdrawal from Afghanistan, people lost jobs and were sent home. I was one of the last remaining translators. Day-to-day, the security situation got worse. My colleagues asked me to contact our mentors about our visa applications. No one could address our concerns. This occurred at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Even after sending over 10 emails to the Department of Home Affairs, I received no updates on my own visa application.

It was at this moment I realised that; as individuals, our voices will not be heard. So, I decided to rally my colleagues and raise our voices together. To rescue ourselves from certain death.

With the ongoing situation in Kabul, it was difficult to bring many interpreters together; it was hard to know who to trust, and where we were going? What if our identities were revealed? What if Insurgents, Taliban, ISIS, Haqani Network...etc. found out about our activities? What if we all died? We would have all been killed and prosecuted.

So, I stepped forward and started the initiative. I invited a few of my colleagues first to my home to share my ideas and ask them if they shared my concerns? Then, I told them my plan. Everyone agreed and said, write whatever you want, and we all will sign it.

I wrote a joint general position statement after considering my colleague's ideas. This was a risky decision that put our lives in danger. Our group consisted of 62 interpreters, including 3 women. I made a WhatsApp group and invited everyone to it. That way, I could share updates and respond to their ideas quickly and easily. Using an alias; I sent out the joint general position statement to every email address I had as a point of contact with the Australian Government.

Naveed Arman, a fellow interpreter, introduced me to Kate Banville, a Guardian journalist. We sent her the joint general statement and she published it in the Guardian. Meanwhile, I was interviewed in Kabul by Soraya Lennie a journalist from Channel 10's News and Current Affairs programme: The Project. This was risky due to security concerns. I hid my face and used another alias to hide my identity. It paid off; the interview was broadcast.

By applying continuous pressure across different channels, we finally got a reply from The Department of Home Affairs, Australia. "Our Cases will be processed under exceptional circumstances and soon we will receive our medical appointments, and visas will be granted."

“This was the exact moment when I realised the outcome of teamwork; I cannot describe how much I, my friends, and their families were happy, how our hopes were alive once again. Fortunately, it all worked, we were able to make it happen, and soon everyone in our group was evacuated to Australia.”



Our Team has now settled in Australia. I arrived in Melbourne on the 26th of June 2021. I had to plan my new life and job here. Due to visa application regulations, I was unable to bring my parents and siblings to Australia. They had to stay behind in Afghanistan. My Father has retired, I am the sole family member working. It was up to me to find a job to support my family financially.

I started working as Pick-Packer in a factory, but the journey to stable work did not stop there. I was getting my overseas Engineering diploma verified. I also found work translating news items for Channel 10. One day, one of my Aussie mentors sent me a link to WithYouWithMe's website. She asked me to sign up to the Potential platform, she told me they were looking to hire some interpreters for the translation of their courses.

After signing up to the Potential platform, I made a phone call to Rebekah Nugent and told her about my background and experiences. A month later, I received an email from Rebekah stating that they were looking to hire an Afghan Training Program Manager. Rebekah said "As you can speak both Dari & Pashto languages, I thought of you. If you are interested, book an interview".

After completing a couple of interviews with Rebekah and Julian, followed by the culture fit interview, I was hired as the Afghan Training Program Manager.

As Afghan Training Program Manager, the mission and responsibilities I have ahead will be challenging. I am confident that with my experience, skills, contacts, and most importantly working with a dedicated team that I will achieve my individual and organisational goals.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Afghan Training Program Manager
Mohammad Tariq Zia (aka Tariq) joined WithYouWithMe October 2021. Tariq works for Winslow Construction Company and studies Infrastructure Engineering Management at Swinburn University. Tariq served as an ADF and Coalition interpreter in Kabul, supervising a team of translators. Tariq seeks make Tech Jobs and opportunities more accessible to Afghan Refugees.

LEVERAGING CANDIDATES' POTENTIAL TO STRENGTHEN

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND RESILIENCE.

by Olly Benzecry



Since I became UK Chair of WithYouWithMe, I have had the privilege of witnessing many stories of courage. The courage of individuals looking to realise their potential in digital roles even when the odds were initially against them, and the courage of employers to address their digital skills need with diverse talent, based on potential not on classical CVs.

The core of WithYouWithMe is such individuals. They walk the talk, but there are many more stories besides. I'd like to highlight one of these stories from our early days of operating in the UK. My hope is inspire employers to join in to help us build a more diverse and resilient workforce – and to motivate those of you with unrecognised potential to step forward.

Meet Babou Jobe...

Babou Jobe is a remarkable ex-military veteran who served in the British forces for seven years. At the start of his military career, he began working in Human Resources for three different branches of the army – 21 Signals Regiment (responsible for managing army communications on missions), 102 Logistic Brigade HQ (an Adaptable Force HQ with 15 different Regiments under its command), and 1 Yorks (an armoured Infantry battalion).

During his career, Babou was deployed to Afghanistan as Junior Information Manager on 'Op HERRICK20', the last operation during the war in Afghanistan. He was part of a small team responsible for managing the British tri-service headquarters' information systems, consolidating all data and IT assets; and repatriating them to the UK upon completion.

With a lifelong passion for technology, Babou left the army in September 2016 to further his education. He enrolled at London Southbank University graduating with a First-Class Honours degree in Computer Science in June 2020. By October of the following year, Babou had completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Lifelong Learning – Project Management.

Despite his impressive education and military experience, Babou struggled to find employment following his studies, having applied to over 300 vacancies unsuccessfully.

In September 2021, Babou came across WithYouWithMe (WYWM) a fast-growing Australian tech start-up dedicated to diversifying workforces through a transformative aptitude-based approach to recruitment, on LinkedIn. His initial thoughts were, "it's too good to be true".

Six months later, Babou decided to attend one of WYWM events, which saw him register for what would be a career changing call with WYWM's Career Success Team.

Babou underwent psychometric testing, in which, according to Babou: "WYWM assesses what you are capable of learning, not what you have learnt before".

Coincidentally, the test identified his dream career path in technology, where he had unsuccessfully been trying to break into for the previous two years.

Within just one month of engaging WYWM, Babou had accepted his first IT position as a Senior Developer at Northrop Grumman UK.

On that note, it's also important to acknowledge the important employer's story here. Northrop Grumman – a world-leader in space, aeronautics, defence and cyberspace technologies – was one of WYWM's first clients in the UK. They are placing diverse candidates – such as military veterans, the neurodivergent and people with disabilities – into secure high-paying tech roles. In doing so, they are blazing a trail, helping the UK 'level up' and giving individuals like Babou the opportunity to prove their potential. It's a commendable approach – and one which I hope will inspire other organisations to make change.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Olly Benzecry has recently been appointed Chairman of WithYouWithMe in the United Kingdom. Previously, Olly Benzecry served as the Chairman and Managing Director of Accenture UK and Ireland. Olly Benzecry also serves as Chair of Movement to Work and is a member of the UK Digital Economy Council.

» CASE STUDY

TRAINING THE

AUSTRALIAN NAVY'S DIGITAL WORKERS.

The Australian Navy is training digital workers—commonly known as bots—to perform boring, repetitive tasks, leaving people to focus on more valuable and rewarding work.

Ten sailors, officers and Australian Public Servants (APS) from the Australian Naval Headquarters recently completed the Navy's first boot camp style training course to identify and automate day-to-day business processes, reducing their administrative workload.

The Robotics Process Automation (RPA) Analyst course, run by Warfare Innovation Navy (WIN), gives participants the skills to employ, hand over and sustain a bot.

Director General WIN Captain Adam Allica said the bots would generate real benefit for Navy.

"We want to take the robot out of the human," Captain Allica said.

We're working to release Navy personnel from mundane tasks and let them do more of the cutting-edge jobs they've been trained to do. The idea is for digital workers to work alongside our human team members, to free up some capacity so that people can focus on higher-order tasks. WIN Branch is committed to delivering technologies that help the Navy do things smarter and do smarter things. RPA also provides the platform for more exciting


and more complex AI tools in the future. Our focus right now is to develop more digital workers. We're also looking for opportunities to automate business processes on ships across our fleet," Captain Allica concluded.

Course participant Leading Seaman Anthea Smith said that it was great to be in the workforce eliminating mundane processes, opposed to doing them.


"The days of 'because someone has to do it' is transforming into 'let the bot know when you need it [done]'. The bot will complete what takes me half a day, every day to do. I would recommend the course to anyone seeking change and further challenge."

The Navy Strategic Committees Secretariat has been developing a bot to input 12 months of forecasting for 15 committees, daily. This is 1000 rows of data subject to update every 24 hours. RPA is suitable for high-volume, repetitive and burdensome tasks like copying files to Objective or data entry into Excel spreadsheets or systems such as the Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKEYs.)

The RPA Analyst course is appropriate for all ranks and is civilian recognised. The workshops are recorded, the training is flexible, and can be completed part-time over five days or at one's own pace.



The idea is for digital workers to work alongside our human team members, to free up some capacity so that people can focus on higher-order tasks.



*Director General The Warfare Innovation Navy (WIN)
Captain Adam Allica*



Does a career as an RPA Analyst sound interesting to you?

For more information on the WithYouWithMe Robotics Process Automation course, please visit:

<https://www.withyouwithme.com/academy-courses/robotics-process-automation-rpa-course/>



WHY PAID VOLUNTEERISM & DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING WILL

REVOLUTIONISE

NATIONAL RESILIENCE

by Scarlett McDermott

Every year, almost 7,000 natural disasters occur worldwide – with the Asia Pacific region experiencing the most crises. When you add the unique complexity of an ongoing, global pandemic to the mix, one thing is certain: disasters do not discriminate. Working alongside government agencies during the pandemic provided me with a clear view of the challenges at hand and left me certain that rather than merely responding to an emergency, it is essential to double- down on implementing effective resilience strategies focusing on preparedness.

The National Resilience Project is an initiative aimed at improving the access to the digital skills that are necessary to responding to various disasters. This kind of turnkey access to skilled digital talent is something that has not existed before. The innovative opt-in program enables members of the public to volunteer their skills and knowledge to be utilised on temporary working assignments. Once a user has registered with the database, they will also have access to additional training and industry-recognised certifications, ensuring that volunteers maintain a relevant skillset over time. This is a new way that the public can give back to their local communities and country, while also being paid for their service.

This type of large-scale paid-volunteer platform, capable of using the extensive range of accessible technology that we have access

to, will bridge the gap between experiencing a disaster and formulating a timely response. The National Resilience Project has been successfully launched in Australia and is being rolled out in Canada with the UK soon to follow.

While we cannot stop disasters from occurring, we can help make sure that our country is armed with the right resources to allow us to respond in the best way possible. It's a sentiment echoed at all levels of government.

Alison Howe, Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Institute of Strategic Resilience, has acknowledged that filling Australia's digital skills shortage before the next crisis is a national imperative. "The National Resilience Project is a powerful example of industry and government joining forces to enhance Australia's strategic resilience and preparedness. It is a clever and creative approach to ensuring our government has people with the right skills at their fingertips when crises occur."

Adding a cosmetic layer of policy or practice to a vulnerable population will not result in increased resilience. Commitments to long-term shifts in physical approaches (I.e embracing innovative technologies, methodologies, materials, and improving infrastructure systems), as well as cultural approaches (people, management procedures, institutional arrangements, and legislation), are required to promote long-term community resilience.

Focusing on Australia, it's estimated that to meet the demand for digitally skilled workers, the number of newly skilled and reskilled technology workers will need to increase by 79% by 2025. To maintain its strong economic position, each worker will need to learn seven new skills in the next four years.

We can already see how critical tech skills and data analytics are vitally important when crises strike. For example, during the 2022 Australian East Coast floods, locals shared large volumes of data via social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and Twitter. State government officials and Federal Government agencies such as the Bureau of Meteorology crowdsourced and analysed these updates to inform response. The data was used to map disaster risk zones, which informed evacuation procedures and timelines, as well as to map floodwater rise and its environmental effects.

The information was also used to communicate a variety of disaster

contingency plans and warnings to large audiences, as well as to improve aid distribution to flood victims. Analytics, app development and geospatial visualisation were all key digital skills required to inform this response and recovery.

We can all make a difference by assisting our country. A volunteer base that is digitally skilled and committed to improving preparedness, planning, absorption, recovery, and adaptability skills are critical to our ability to better respond to and recover from various crisis situations.

If you would like to get involved with the National Resilience Project and are based in Australia, you can sign up and gain immediate access to digital skills training as well as being notified about future paid volunteer work opportunities when a crisis strikes.

If you are outside Australia, follow the National Resilience Project on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram for updates about when the National Resilience Project will be rolled out in your country. For more information, please visit

<https://epic.withyouwithme.com/nrp>



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Scarlett McDermott, CTO, WYWM.

Scarlett is the founder of the National Resilience Project, and Chief Technology Officer at WYWM, leading our product engineering, training, and IT (Information Technology) capabilities. She is also a military spouse and has embraced a career in technology that she has taken around Australia with her. When she is not busy changing the world of employment, she is spending time together with her family or doing something creative.

*BE READY TO ANSWER
THE CALL*

**WITH THE
NATIONAL RESILIENCE
PROJECT**



Individuals from Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom will soon be able to volunteer their digital skills to government organisations in the event of a disaster – and be compensated for their efforts – thanks to the formation of the National Resilience Project.

When a disaster strikes, one of the most difficult challenges governments encounter is being able to mobilise rapidly and deploy the digital skills necessary to respond to these scenarios effectively.

Through the National Resilience Project, government organisations will now have immediate access to a network of highly trained digital volunteers. For governments, this is a first.

This will ensure that participating countries have the resources they need to respond to disasters in a timely manner.

WithYouWithMe is offering up to \$5,000 worth of online training in areas including data analytics, cyber security, digital project management, robotic process automation, and software development to anyone who registers with the National Resilience Project.

The project is open to citizens who want to upskill and complete meaningful paid work assignments in various government organisations. Membership and training will be open to anybody of working age. Individuals with service-based backgrounds or security clearances are strongly encouraged to volunteer their skills and expertise to the National Resilience Project. Once registered and trained, members will be able to apply for flexible, short-term government contracting gigs that make a meaningful difference.

A digitally skilled workforce of paid-volunteers that are committed to enhancing preparedness, planning, absorption, recovery, and adaptability skills is vital for ensuring governments are able to protect their citizens and recover from various critical scenarios.

Are you ready to answer the call?

To register your interest in joining the National Resilience project visit:

<https://epic.withyouwithme.com/nrp>



» RESILIENCE IN ACTION

WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT RESILIENCE WHILE PLAYING 3 HOURS OF ESPORTS

by Gareth Gardner



In the eSports world, PUBG is a battle royale game that combines last-man-standing action with survival, exploring, and scavenging features. The winner of a battle royale game is the last player or team standing—teams of up to four battle for a “WINNER WINNER CHICKEN DINNER” trophy.

WithYouWithMe’s sponsored four-person PUBG squad is led by “Player IV”, AKA PIV. I have been amazed by his ability to comprehend complex problems and make wise decisions that aided his team. I can’t help but applaud as I watched his squad overcome obstacles in live matches. They regularly beat rivals and friends to finish at the top of the local Pro Competition.

One week PIV invited me to join him and his friends to play some scrimmage games. He believed it would be more challenging for him if he had to keep me alive. I had minimal experience with the game.

PUBG’s learning curve was steep. Being knocked out can lock a player out of specific phases, each with its own unique rules and strategies. Learning to get good at all phases can take repeated defeats. However, you do not have to observe from the sidelines. I was able to see any players’ performance from their perspective, hearing decisions in real-time. If I wanted to, I could watch them on repeat, in slow motion or even from a different angle, with each player becoming a data point. This feature was impressive and is unique to eSports.

It was a lot to take in; analysing and interpreting all the data was almost overwhelming. A pro boxer may track calories and maintain a stringent training programme. Still, an eSports player keeps track of balance adjustments and kill/death ratios. A professional footballer might watch other teams’ replays to learn patterns and strategies, but an eSports gamer studies tournament stats and live feeds.

This learning loop can be a mental endurance barrier to aspiring elite athletes. Young players must also be business analysts, psychologists, and military tacticians for 20-30 minutes bursts every day. They are fighting for their virtual lives while developing tacit leadership skills.

In my first game with PIV, I was parachuting into an unknown area surrounded by unknown enemies. The rest of the team urged me to follow PIV. He leads the troops to a haven with predictable routes and resources, demonstrating his global knowledge and quick forecasting skills. This instinct clearly showed me why he leads the team (experience gleaned from a thousand virtual deaths). One of the squad members notices a player following us into our landing zone as we approach. No sooner had I landed when my environment erupted, and it was all I could do to run away from the perceived threat.

Calm and collected, I hear the order in my headset to rush the enemy.

I follow PIV's lead and fall in behind him. We can buy time with our lives for teammates to scavenge weaponry and rescue us. We hadn't won the match yet, but we had averted early tragedy with action and calm. Without stopping, we proceeded to capture critical terrain. I had learnt my first lesson: "who deliberates is lost." and this exposed a dichotomy in my thinking and behaviour towards learning this game. The game's goal is to be the last person standing. All other rules and techniques are merely suggestions. The game's only recognised threat is a decreasing circle, which harms you if you don't stay ahead of it. The best teams that adapt to the surroundings win the coveted "Chicken Dinner", accurately representing the Red Queen Hypothesis.

"Here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place," the white rabbit tells Alice in Through the Looking Glass.

Like me, PIV revealed that he started trying not to be observed and to avoid conflict. However, the best weaponry and resources were in exposed regions, beckoning the bravest to battle for the rewards. The chances of success against any equal opponent were 50/50 at most, which diminished over time. Like a stockbroker accustomed to the market's highs and lows, PIV knew that his losses were temporary and that he might recover. PIV learned from his mistakes.

In a fight, the winner would have more experience. His survival game participation shifted from "live the longest" to "don't let others live the longest." such a subtle mental shift would be difficult without his resilience and dedication. It was clear that he wanted "chicken dinners" more than I did. I fought my desire to hide and wait throughout the remaining games and reverted to a military mindset. I listened for commands and reported what I saw. When I got the chance, I took steps to improve my competitive position. I scanned the environment to assess the consequences of my actions before deciding on my next move. We went on to beat the other twenty-five teams and secure a win!

My journey has only just begun. There was plenty yet to learn from playing PUBG, and I expect to lose a lot more times if I ever want to be as good as the others I was playing with that day. It was fun. I played with friends while learning a lot about myself. My biggest takeaway was that it took a fierce mindset and the strength of resilience to succeed. It was more than just a game.

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This feature was impressive and is unique to eSports.



Check out WYWM's Twitch streaming here: www.twitch.tv/withyouwithme



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gareth Gardner is a veteran of the Australian Army. He served in the Armoured Corps for fifteen years before joining WithYouWithMe as an RPA Developer in 2020. He is currently working as a Customer Success Executive to help organisations in Australia transition veterans into meaningful work.

» RESILIENCE IN ACTION

RESILIENCE,
AND HOW IT HELPS US

PREPARE
FOR THE WORST.

by Jim Kelly



What does “resiliency” mean? The dictionary defines resilience as: *“The ability to quickly recover from or adjust to misfortune or change.”*

How do we contextualise that? On a national level? In the context of an organisation? Even on a personal level, it encompasses physical, mental and emotional robustness.

Resilience has many layers and can be multi-faceted.

It is both inherent and can also be learnt, but ultimately without its presence, the ability to successfully move forward in life and in business is seriously hampered without such a tool in the belt.

Nature and history are littered with “Tortoise vs Hare” scenarios, where the capable and confident are both outthought and outfought by a less talented, but more determined adversary.

“Will is more important than skill” is repeatedly demonstrated in such situations. Even in biblical times and before, it was recognised by elite military forces and fighter trainers.

Why train a person to a high standard if they will collapse like a house of cards when subjected to even the slightest amount of pressure?

Resilience, is, therefore, undeniably one of the key components required to not only survive, but also thrive. Its importance is timeless and undeniable.

So: how do we go about achieving it?

As previously stated, when given a blank canvas to work with, inherent qualities and life experience are not completely teachable. A baseline standard must be created and achieved, so the first strokes can be scribed on the page.

From there, you can observe a persons or organisations current level and look to improve upon it and this can only be realistically achieved through preparation and tested through pressure.

A tyre inner tube will only start to bubble escaping air when placed under the surface level of the water. If you’re leaking anywhere? You’re leaking everywhere.

We can all bluff and lie our way through a casual assessment from an uninterested eye, but real scrutiny will always reveal the weak links in the chain. I have always subscribed to the philosophy that the chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

The ultimate goal here is not necessarily some spartan-esq selection to break that which is being trained and tested, but to improve the baseline by highlighting the deficiencies and then remediating those until they no longer become an issue.

The circle in the unrelenting pursuit of excellence then restarts, continues and becomes part of habit and culture, which in turn builds rock solid confidence in a person or organisations resilience.

Statements and mantras like “Whatever happens? I can deal with it” or “That was pretty bad, but I have been through worse” become common place. At this stage, the resilience becomes part of a persons or organisational make up, where previously it may not have existed.

The military has known this for a long time, as demonstrated by the demands placed on its personnel throughout basic training, with specialised units expanding on this with their own volunteer selection processes.

Even in times of peace, responsible commanders subject their troops to varied levels of controlled pressure through physically and mentally demanding sports as well as high-stress, fear-inducing adventure training to keep the sword sharp if and when it is needed.

Commercial organisations need to learn this valuable lesson too. It is no good having a challenging hiring and onboarding process, only to let that excellence slip once in the comfort of the chair, particularly at management and executive level.

Once resilience has been achieved, the next step is always to put plans in place for “Worst case” scenarios and to regularly test them, robustly and honestly. Even if the latter requires audit and inspection by an external agency.

Who you were yesterday does not guarantee how you will react and perform today. Training is constant and ends for the individual only when they leave the service of that company. It only ends for the company when they cease to trade.

Unfortunately, a lack of constant training and assessment, which builds on baseline resilience achieved, can bring about such a conclusion involuntarily.

Excuses of “We don’t have time” can be answered with a retort of “You will have all the time in the World when you are stood at the back of the unemployment line ”

Closing the stable door after the horse has bolted may make you feel better, but it provides a solution to your problem about as useful as an ashtray on a motorbike. You are still without a Horse. Better to have fitted a lock in the first place.

WithYouWithMe is a company that has a firm but fair selection and onboarding processes and one that is designed to challenge its new alumni and give them the confidence that they can operate in a high stress, fast paced tech start up.

In both the boxing ring and on the battlefield, I’ve learned that when you’re under great stress, you don’t have time or capacity to critically think; you just have time to react. Only the quality and consistency of the training you’ve invested in will influence how you react.

This is the gold standard of resilience, corporate or otherwise. A personal or organisational quality that has been developed through the right level of selection and onboarding and is then improved upon through flexible emergency planning, realistic training and transparent assessment.

In this manner, your competitors will stand a limited chance of defeating you as you have taken the necessary time and effort to ensure that you will not be consciously defeating yourself.

**“The iron ore feels
itself needlessly
tortured as it
goes through the
furnace...**

**The tempered blade
looks back and
knows better.”**

Japanese Proverb



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Kelly is a former British Army career soldier who served primarily with the Airborne Forces. Jim has served on operations across the world, including five years in a dedicated counter-terrorism role. Jim ended his career with the British Army at the forefront of Defense Influence Activities. A lifetime student of both boxing and martial arts, he splits his time between Poland and the UK.



» CLOSING THOUGHTS

BRINGING CERTAINTY TO

TOMORROW'S NEEDS.

by Tobias Butler


It is perhaps the irony of the 21st Century that, in a World now wrapped in digital sophistication and the proliferation of 'always on' connected communications, that our sense of certainty becomes diminished. The increasing prominence of nationalism, accelerating climate change, and a global pandemic, test our ability to adapt and overcome, to find new innovative ways to solve today's problems and bring certainty to tomorrow's needs.

Resilience is our ability to recover quickly from difficulty or strife, and to return to a state of equilibrium perceived to be 'good'. A societal perspective of resilience is an assumption that someone else is going to step in and provide the means to 'get back to good', yet our experience time and time again is that assumption is weak – that we manage on best endeavors and somehow muddle our way through. Before framing resilience in the context of military thinking, I wonder if there is an notational idea of hierarchy of resilience, a lineage progressing from individual (and it's associated emotional, physical, psychological, biological dimensions), to civilian NGO (charities, not-for-profit enterprises), to institutional (government agencies and entities), to National, and then to geo-political-economic-military alliances

defined in pacts, trade agreements or commonality of intent (e.g. member security). If so, the narrative of resilience needs to understand how to transverse across the different dimensions, to motivate and encourage a citizen to think beyond the immediate self to a mindset and call to action to be part of community or social resilience.

Military resilience has its own nuance on this. For it is both the capability of a military entity to recover quickly from setback but also as a show of strength. Jamie Shea, NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General, in his article 'Resilience: A Core Element of Collective Defence', positions resilience as 'the corollary of deterrence and reassurance measures. To achieve that there is an active and measured state of preparedness.

History shows us the elasticity of this preparedness state, of rapid urgent expansion in the threat of warfare, to shrinkage under vanity of peacetime politicians.



Today, we need to frame both civilian and military resilience in the narrative of imperative.

Civil emergencies such as floods and fires, exacerbated by global climate change, require a different approach to preparedness – where civilian resilience is the result of a well engaged, systematic approach that binds commitment to personal resilience (such as the acquisition of new skills if an individual enlists in the military reserves) and becomes a meaningful two-sided interaction between citizen and state.

Perhaps the same holds true for military resilience, which requires the active contribution of civilian resources to augment and compliment military professionals – the need for a holistic end-to-end journey experience of communication, development, contribution, and purpose is needed. Given that both now share the same narrative – it's not hard to foresee a time of convergence. We can no longer rely on intrinsic strengths to get us through adversity – meaningful preparation as a function of resilience needs to become the new norm – for if I am not prepared, how can I be strong in the face of adversity and quick to recover?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Tobias Butler is the Chief Information Officer for WithYouWithMe, providing a wealth of architectural, quality assurance, and delivery expertise to the role. Tobias is a professional Technology Capability Lead with strong experience in BPM, CRM, Decisioning, Core Banking, and Digital Transformation programmes.



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