

WLP 2021 Event Summaries

Book Club

During the book club *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*, by Caroline Criado Perez, we had the pleasure of having Dr. Jeffrey Mogil, book contributor and E.P. Taylor Professor of Pain Studies and the Canada Research Chair in the Genetics of Pain at McGill University, and the past Director of the Alan Edwards Centre for the Study of Pain. “The extant literature provides compelling evidence that pain processing is, at least in some important respects, robustly sex dependent. Evidence of sex specificity can be seen at all levels of analysis, ranging from the genetic to the psychosocial. The most robust differences appear to be in the neuroimmune modulation of pain, though the details of sex-specific mechanisms remain to be clarified. It is eminently clear, however, that decades of study of primarily male rodents has led to the emergence of a male-biased literature, the extent and details of which are only starting to emerge,” said Dr. Mogil.

Podcast

In the podcast *Life on the International Scene*, host Milva D’Aronco and guests Louie-Anne Gauthier and Sara Leclerc shared their experiences about taking their lives and careers abroad from two very different paths. They also gave perspective on working in other cultures as well as on a global level. One of WLP’s podcast listener’s, Laura Haines, was considering an international move and reached out to Louie-Anne via LinkedIn. The two had never spoken or met, yet Louie-Anne was able to provide Laura with support in tackling the international move. Today, Laura has moved to Switzerland and shared with us that, “Louie-Anne’s support was great as it allowed me to leverage her experience to simplify some aspects of the move. A move is complicated no matter what... having that bit of extra help goes a long way”.

Louie-Anne expressed similar sentiments: “It was the same kind of support I got from Milva when I moved to Lausanne, and she introduced me to people in Switzerland who were able to support. The network in WLP goes a long way.”

Lift, climb, leap - A panel on career advancement in pharma!

You want to make a change and, one way to do that is to find ways to advocate for yourself and create allies... **Laura McDermott** : First of all I define a career advocate as someone who's going to publicly support or recommend you, whereas an ally is really someone who wants to help you achieve your goals so there's a small nuance there and it's important to have both. Start with cultivating an advocate or an ally relationship with your line manager, [...] keep in mind that advocates and allies that are not your direct manager are necessary as they can talk about you to people in your organization that you may not actually interact directly with, thereby increasing your presence across the organization. [...] Lastly, not only do you need to activate allies, but you also need to advocate for yourself. Early in my career, I made the mistake of thinking that if you're a top performer you will get noticed and get promoted, and boy was I wrong!

How to know when it's the right time to make a career move.

Gena Restivo

Gena Restivo ... Every person’s reason for career change will be different and should align to personal goals and aspirations. However, I’d like to share two scenarios when I believe a

clear and time-bound action plan needs to be put in place, sooner than later. (spoiler alert: we should all be proactively planning for our growth and development)

1. The first scenario is what I refer to as 'Get Moving Now'. We all hope these times never occur but should you find yourself experiencing some of the following, talk to a mentor/coach asap and put a plan in place pronto: A/ You've exhausted all opportunities and you are no longer learning; B/ You constantly feel miserable, pessimistic and stuck – and this feeling is bleeding into your personal life. C/ for whatever reason, your personal values are misaligned to the work or company. Life is too short for any of the above. Put a plan in place and get going!
2. Not every situation is so dire (thankfully!) and that is why I believe we should all "be on our front foot" with our personal growth at all times! Are you proactively planning 'what's next'? If not, you should be regardless if that comes in the form of a bold career move, the next role in your progression or simply aspiring to learn something new to broaden your own perspectives. Never stop learning. Its also good to recognize when you need that 'nudge'. For instance, if you feel you've developed enough technical mastery to excel in the role you have or you have made some tough decisions and - more importantly - you have learned from (and even course corrected!) your decisions, these are good triggers to nudge you into looking for what's next. Try to extract as much learning as possible out of every assignment you have – these experiences will serve you well – but don't stall, especially not because of your own self-doubt, fear or taking a passive approach to your development.

How Can someone impact the culture they work within

Gena Restivo: Culture is owned by all and I truly believe we all have the ability to impact company culture [...] For example, how we hold each other accountable, how we exemplify our values and the behaviours we embody when we 'show-up' every single day shapes culture. Do you want leave a lasting impact on your company culture? Of course you do! Here are some things to consider. First, be your authentic self, that is why the organization hired you – for you!. Second: Have a voice, have an opinion and share it. Organizations want to hear what you have to say. Don't be afraid to share a different perspective and challenge status quo – but always do it respectfully. Third: Give more than you receive. Yes, Give more than you receive. Your superpower should be finding ways to help raise others. Make space for other people's voices to be heard and aspire to be 'the best' at authentically recognizing and celebrating their successes. I guarantee you, if you embrace this approach, personal fulfillment will result. I have always believed that a career is most fulfilling when you rise those around you.

Laura McDermott If you find yourself not fitting into a culture, first you want to really take a long hard look and consider: do you dislike the culture? Or do you like the culture and just don't fit in yet (maybe because it is new and different and it is going to take some getting used to)? If you cannot thrive in a culture, it will impact your career opportunities and your growth at that organization. On a personal note, I have absolutely left organizations in pursuit of a culture that aligned better to my values.

How do you prepare for an interview? **Julia Duszczyn:** I do three main things: First, I comb through the job description and for every requirement/bullet point, I try to think of a tangible example of when I showcased this skill or had this experience... and when I cannot think of a specific example, I speak to other times when I didn't know anything about X, but I took it on and it turned out great. Second, I put on my former researcher hat and I prepare

my thesis on that company- its pipeline, its people, its business. Trust me, it is worth the time to fully understand the company and the people to whom you will be committing yourself. Third, I look inward: 'why do I want this job?', 'what excites me about this opportunity?', 'what are my best qualities?', 'what are my not so great habits?', I own it all and get ready to speak to it. I would recommend this self-reflection for anyone contemplating career moves- because no one should feel restricted from showing their true self at work. Doing any less limits your self-growth.

What is the next perfect role? Gena Restivo: Is there such a thing as a perfect role? Well only if it aligns to your total life plan and helps advance your growth, aspirations and life goals. Remember that actually finding your next 'perfect role' is a balance between what an organization needs and what you aspire to, and trying to find a solid match. My experience has taught me that most people are too conservative in what they think they can do next, hence why there can be many perfect roles! Some tips for finding your next role: First, self-reflect, write down what you want and then, go ask for help. Be specific with the type of help you need, make it easy for people to help you because you're clear and focussed. Second, be open to new experiences; your next opportunity needs to be roughly 30% solid experience, skill and capability you bring to the role, and 70% stretch. (give or take) My advice is that you resist the urge to look for roles that you can 'nail' from day one and don't stretch you. Lastly, I believe the best leaders have broad experiences. So, go look for that "X factor experience". Seek out non-traditional growth opportunities – the kind of assignments that when you find yourself one day sitting in front of a recruiting panel for your dream job, surrounded by a very competitive pool of candidates – you're differentiated. This will be the experience that you're asked "Well, this was an interesting experience on your resume, tell me more about what you learned...". I guarantee your courage to try something new and the broadening experiences you will have acquired will make you better, stronger and more capable to tackle whatever the world throws at you.

Decoding digital dialogue: A workshop on virtual communication

Nancy Milton:

First thing, you need to know your audience.

- When we build trust, trust is two ways. It's like an emotional bank account, you need to make a deposit before you can take a withdrawal. We need to give to receive. If you are looking to build a partnership you need to be able to give first; that's putting yourself out there, that's being vulnerable.
- Leading with a different type of introduction would be part of that.

Five tips for more effective virtual or face to face meetings:

1. Agree to meetings of a maximum 45 minutes in length. This respects everyone time and gives all attendees 15 minutes to stretch their legs, to go to the washroom, to get a snack, to call home to the sick child, respond to email, etc. What key to this meeting length is all department members agreeing to HOW to keep each other committed to this vow. Ideas like using a timer, having a time keeper for each meeting, setting a 10 minutes remaining bell so everyone knows that in 5 minutes you're reviewing action plan /next steps etc.
2. Every meeting must have an objective. Literally - a clearly stated "we are meeting because" so we are all clear on the common goal. Create a "Set the stage" statement to

launch your meeting like “The purpose of this meeting is, so that (what you will get out of it goes here)...”. Whoever you are communicating with is clear on what you are communicating on. This allows all involved to know what the heck the topic is AND if attendees stray from topic, easy to say “let’s recalibrate to our agreed to meeting objective”

3. Have an agenda which must include the topics and alongside each one of them the number of minutes needed per topic.
4. Unsure if you need to go to a meeting? If you receive a meeting invite, review the agenda and the objective is. If there is no agenda or objective in invite, decline meeting and explain (in one sentence) why you are declining. What you permit you promote ;0) If you have nothing to directly contribute to meeting objective/agenda, directly email organizer acknowledging something like “I received your meeting invite and prior to committing to this time, please summarize what specifically you’re looking for from me, to make this a successful meeting? ”
5. Want to keep your meetings efficient? Important to have your voice heard? You have been asked to go to the meeting because you have something to contribute. Ask yourself for this session topic, “with my skill set, what do I have to contribute?” That’s the start of your three P’s: Prepare, Practice, Present. You prepare by considering what some of the questions that could be asked; you Practice potential response to those questions. Say your answers out loud to own the verbiage while you practise. Then Present; aka participate fully in meeting. After the meeting self reflect asking yourself: What’s 1 thing I did well in that meeting? What’s 1 thing I could do differently or better for future meetings?

You, Me & Diversity

let's define what diversity actually is.

Sandra Rinto Flavien: I like to define it by using a quote from Verna Myers, the key note speaker and author that says: “diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance”. You can even push it a bit further and say: “diversity is asking people to plan the party, choose the music... I think inclusion is all about acceptance and openness.

what does the word belonging

Vicky Chan: Somebody gave me this example: diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is actually having that voice being heard.

Inclusion and intentionality

Vicky Chan: We formalized employee resource groups where people can talk and come up with solutions so more grassroots effort along with including our inclusive leadership team that I think has a more formalized way of working. I’m really proud of our organization. We recognize that we don’t have all the expertise; yet we as an organization, believe in this so much that we want to bring it in-house. Headcount is always tough to get, the fact that we’ve decided to put some resources behind hiring a DEI manager is formalizing this intention.

Sandra Rinto Flavien: For me, it comes from the top; you have to have a space for diversity and inclusion to exist within your organization for you to express yourself.... Last year was a big was a big turn of events because, after the murder of George Floyd, new conversations started to happen around me, and not just in my personal life, but at work also. I started having conversations with colleagues that I never had before. Anything valuable will require time and effort to make those changes happen and having those uncomfortable

conversations is key. It won't happen without uncomfortable conversations, it has to be uncomfortable for behaviors to change...especially when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

Rachel Megitt (she / her): ... I think in terms of intentionality, one of the things that has been so powerful and meaningful in terms of George Floyd's legacy is kick-starting conversations that arguably we should have been having for ages, that feel uncomfortable, that feel icky for lack of a better term, Yet, if we don't sit in those, ask ourselves those ugly questions, dive down into the depths of people's true experiences, being able to actually be truly inclusive and create a sense of belonging, where people do feel authentically themselves, is going to be nearly impossible to achieve.

how do you measure success

Rachel Megitt (she / her): I think bringing your whole self to work is so powerful, so important. I also think it's so hard and exhausting to not do that, to have to put on a show, to pretend or to decide which part of yourself you're willing to reveal... so exhausting emotionally and physically. There is a freedom associated with being able to be your authentic self in the best possible way.

The future of Pharma

How do we stay productive optimized time in office versus at home?

Andrea Sambati: We made some changes to our office space roles to add more flexibility; we now have three different types of roles for office based positions: onsite, flexible and remote.

- Onsite are those roles that really require employees to be in their offices in order to do their job.
- Flexible roles allow employees to go to the office and attend team meetings, collaborate with colleagues and allow them to work from home when they can do so efficiently.
- Remote roles rarely require an employee to be at the office; employees can live anywhere in Canada. These new roles add more flexibility.

We believe that this will help us to retain develop and also attract new talents. There will be a learning curve for employer and employees.

Sonia Riverin: There is a benefit of in person meeting, yet post pandemic these will probably be a lot less frequent than what we used to. A marketing director was mentioning me that their company is now promoting people from across Canada to head office positions, having a team of brand managers working from Montreal Toronto and Vancouver. I think first time we see this in the industry. They have been doing that for the last 18 months; everything is going well with collaboration via video conferencing and phone. There will be face to face meetings but probably what just once or twice per year.

What can employees do to adapt to back to that work at office environment?

Sonia Riverin: Companies have or are presently working their back to the office plan; they will probably suggest a transition period from working 100% remote to going back to the office. What I would encourage employees to do is to have that discussion with their managers, to share their concerns, their needs and how can they can transition to a back to the office plan that will be win-win for both parties.

As an effect of the pandemic, sales and field based roles that are most concerned about their roles changing or being made redundant. Is there upscaling required and how do we respond to these new requirements?

Andrea Sambati: Within all positions employees have to continue to develop and learn as they progress and grow in their career. No role should remain stagnant over time: our markets, our customers continue to evolve, so must companies and individual employees.

- Technology. The pandemic accelerated the speed of the technological transformation and increased the focus on certain competencies in customer facing roles. It also led to a fast upscaling of field force technology, meeting platforms, application, systems and analytic tools. Some companies have done that very quickly at the start of the epidemic; this is only the beginning and it will become more and more important over time.
- Empathy. As we have more virtual settings, how to connect, how to collaborate, how to active listen with empathy become crucial. Empathy has always been important, but during the pandemic, it became key as to truly understand the root of the why.
- Curiosity. Knowing how to ask the right question with a curious mind opens the door to innovation and to solution oriented approaches.
- Growing mindset. We need to view challenges and failures as learning and growth opportunity, pushing us to grow in our resilience, to see change as an opportunity not a barrier.
- We must continue to invest in our employees and give them the opportunity for ongoing learning.

Jessie Robertson: We have data on from a customer point of view, physicians, pharmacists, nurses, on what they want from sales and fields role. Physician say they appreciate the in person visits more than they ever had. We asked them about what the ideal interaction should look like, and it is a hybrid model like they want, half of it to be in person and then these other modalities. In the future it will require that same sort of agility and flexibility from a customer point of view as well.

Sonia Riverin: Undeniably there have been some changes in sales positions. We have seen new roles, companies changing their business model, the creation of inside sales positions to manage smaller or more remote accounts, having sales rep or key account covering the most important clients. We have also seen companies create larger territories, sometimes the whole country. Shifting to a 75% zoom / phone and a 25% on the field model definitely has an impact on reps' reach and frequency objectives. COVID has also brought to the forefront the rep's network as well as of the rep's ease to enter in the clinic or in the hospital.

In terms of new skills, agility and ability to adapt to change are now critical in any position, and even more so in a sales role. Sales reps now need to present PowerPoints over Zoom / Teams; selling and closing on zoom / teams is centrally different and still just as important. Technology savviness is more relevant: if you are in a virtual meeting and experience a problem, you need to know what to do to get back it. Collaboration and listening skills are a cornerstone of any field position, even more so during COVID.

In terms of productivity which position surprised you the most in terms of being conducted remotely since March 2020?

Andrea Sambati: I was pleasantly surprise by how everyone was able to start working virtually as well as being productive. I believe that sales had the biggest challenge and not because of the employee: securing a virtual call requires much more effort and different

skills than dropping by an office and waiting for the physician to be available. We were able to continue to support our customers and our patients. I think it showed a great deal of agility and resilience on the part of our teams.

Jennifer Meldrum: Resilience is the word of the year or of the century; it encompasses everything. It is resilience from a personal and professional standpoint; it is resilience for your customers, for your bosses, and just finding a way to make it work.

Want to be an effective leader? Stories from successful women

Define leadership versus management - how would you differentiate between the two.

Sybil Dahan: I'm going to quote Marcus Buckingham, a prominent researcher on strengths and leadership at work. In one of his books titled "*The One Thing You Need to Know... About Great Managing, Great Leading and Sustained Individual Success*", he concluded that great leadership and management are actually not the same, for great managing the controlling insight has less to do with team building and setting vision, although, we can all agree, those are important. Rather, the one thing great managers know, is the need to identify and then capitalize on what is unique about each person. For great leadership, the controlling insight is actually the opposite: discovering and capitalizing on what is universal to all people regardless of differences of each person. These insights are not mutually exclusive; in fact they are complimentary: to reach the highest level of performance, one must combine both.

how you define success as a leader and what it means to get to that C suite.

Geneviève Guertin: I think the way I would define a great leader is a real leadership skills; when people trust you, the story of your vision, then they want to be part of the journey with you. I think this is for me the one criterion for successful leadership. I would say that the nirvana to that is when you see that not only do you have your team members following you, but you have a few of them that are actually walking in front of you because they know they know where the team is going and they are shooting for it. When this happens, it's a heartwarming.

What does it really mean to get to the C suite? You can be an effective leader in an organization, without being in the C suite. But maybe one of the bias we have, as women, is that we tend to be less attracted to the C suite than males. Someone gave me a book entitled *Lean In*, and it brought me to think that this is where we need to maybe to be a bit more assertive. What I realized is that when you get to management or C suite level, you don't become a better leader, but your impact of course is much larger. When you are at the table, it gives you the opportunity to have an impact on where your organization is going, on how certain strategies are being deployed; this is very fulfilling. You get there, to that level, because you want to have an impact; being in the C suite is an effective way of using your leadership skills for the benefit of your organization.