Track to the future
20 years down, 20 to grow

Plus:

Our new name!

The Peter B. Gustavson School of Business
I’m using financial tools to build a better planet.

As president of Carbon Credit Corp, Shawn Burns creates ways for other companies to make money in the new green economy. A tree, until now, was only worth something when it was turned into lumber. Shawn develops ways for other companies to make money in the new green industries, to make money while leaving precious resources like trees still standing.

I’m Using Financial Tools to Build a Better Planet

Shawn Burns, CMA
President & CEO, Carbon Credit Corp

BETTER PLANET

Create Possibilities:

www.business.uvic.ca
Greetings alumni. Our 20th anniversary year has been truly spectacular. We began the year as UVic Business, and we are ending it as the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business. When we started planning for this event we had no idea we would receive a transformational $10-million gift that would result in the naming of our business school!

Peter B. Gustavson is a Canadian business leader who believes in the value of education, innovation and entrepreneurship. Peter is a wonderful friend of the faculty; he sits on our advisory board and was instrumental in establishing our Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year award event. Under his leadership, it has become one of BC’s premier business events. With his gift we can reach a new level of excellence with our program and faculty, attract high-achieving business students, and build our reputation in Canada and beyond. Peter’s gift will help us look at the future a little differently.

As we look forward to our next 20 years, I believe we need to focus on leadership. The world is crying out for a new style of leadership to tackle the global issues we are facing. The need is particularly urgent given the impact of the financial crisis, critical environmental and social issues and unresolved global geopolitical matters. In today’s global, flat and connected world, we need to consider whether leaders require different abilities, values and perspectives.

To begin, we should abandon the practice of rewarding for competencies and expertise that reinforce the status quo. Instead, we should promote qualities and attributes that take us to places we haven’t been before. A step in the right direction is the resurgence of emphasis on creativity in organizations and as an intrinsic characteristic of leaders and leadership. Creative leadership includes skills and habits such as: asking questions, being truly open to new ideas, taking risks, experimentation and learning new ways of doing things. As evidence, consider how the global automotive and newspaper industries are currently being reinvented. In addition to the ability to innovate, effective global leaders have some other common traits: they know themselves well and are authentic; they embrace and appreciate cultural diversity; they are adept at building partnerships; and they share leadership with their teams.

Business schools have the responsibility for developing more innovative and creative leaders for the future—by incorporating habits, skills and mindsets in our approach to management education that encourage risk-taking, experimentation, openness to others’ ideas, diversity and integrative thinking. These are the kinds of thinking and mindsets that we have long embraced as our key educational pillars, and we’re continuing that tradition with the introduction of our new specialized master’s degree in global business—the Master of Global Business (MGB). This multi-partner, multi-location intensive program in global business with a unique requirement for language training and international internships is an example of creativity at work. Another exercise in creativity was the design of our new PhD program in International Management and Organization. It incorporates the latest advances in international business theory, international exchange fellowships, co-op internships and teaching skills development.

Moving forward, environmental sustainability, social and civic entrepreneurship, designing our workplaces for service excellence and promoting a global mind-set are a few of the key themes that our research and educational programs will focus on. We will need your support and involvement as alumni in order to not only produce new knowledge in these areas, but to develop global leaders to create a better world.

As always, we welcome your feedback. Please send me an email at dastmal@uvic.ca with your comments or concerns.

Ali Dastmalchian
Professor and Dean
dastmal@uvic.ca
POV page picks

This issue we’ve pulled together a group of titles that fit the theme “the world looks different from here.” Whether the subject is early retirement or the source of talent, these insightful reads will get you thinking in a whole new way.

By Krista Boehnert

Early Bird: A Memoir of Premature Retirement
Rodney Rothman
Simon & Schuster, 2005, 241 pages

Who hasn’t daydreamed about retirement? Furthermore, who hasn’t daydreamed about retiring early? Author Rodney Rothman takes it one step further: at age 28, he decides to test-drive a retirement community in Florida. A former writer for The David Letterman Show, Rothman’s fast-paced and self-deprecating chronicle offers a fun glimpse into our future.

Snoop: What Your Stuff Says About You
Sam Gosling
Basic Books, 2008, 263 pages

You know that moment. You’re at a party, in your host’s washroom. Do you look through their medicine cabinet? Gosling does. And through everything else you own: your clothes, your desk drawers, your iPod—the list everything else you own: your clothes, cabinet? Gosling does. And through you look through their medicine
do you feel like we spend our lives on route. And sometimes, travel isn’t pretty. When you just want to get home after 12 days on the road and the departures screen in the airport bitterly informs you that all flights are cancelled due to a freak August snowstorm, you know you’re in the iron grip of travel torture. This book of travel horror stories, complete with pictures, will at least make you realize you’re not alone.

The Book of Awesome: Snow Days, Bakery Air, Finding Money in Your Pocket and Other Simple, Brilliant Things
Neil Pasricha
G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2010, 393 pages

Pulled from his wildly popular blog, 1000awesomethings.com, Neil Pasricha’s Book of Awesome excels at celebrating everyday pleasures in our lives without being trite—a brilliant feat in itself. It’s a great book you can dig into any time, offering short, snappy entries sure to satisfy even the busiest of readers. Polish your rose-coloured glasses.

The One-Week Job Project: 1 Man, 1 Year, 52 Jobs
Sean Aiken
Penguin Group Canada, 2010, 300 pages

In case you need permission to let loose and play your PS3 more often, you’re curious to learn, for example, whether the contents of your cubicle convey commitment to your job, check out this fascinating read on what our stuff reveals about our character.

Daniel Coyle
Bantam, 2009, 256 pages

Don’t Blink at those 10,000 Outlier hours. Daniel Coyle gives us the real deal on greatness: it is grown. The trouble is, it takes passion, persistence, practice and some masterful coaching in your corner. Like Malcolm Gladwell, Coyle writes in a breezy and conversational style; scientific substance is the difference. The Talent Code explores the mechanisms through which the brain develops skills, providing practical tools to unlock them. Not to be missed if you’re a parent, coach, mentor or leader—or even if you’re just interested in mastering those greens.

The Invisible Gorilla: And Other Ways Our Intuitions Deceive Us
Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons
Crown Archetype, 2010, 320 pages

Chabris and Simons reveal the many ways our intuition can mislead us. A delightful assortment of stories and counterintuitive scientific findings, The Invisible Gorilla kick-starts awareness of how we mindlessly fall into everyday deceptions of attention, confidence, memory, knowing and potential. You might miss the gorilla, but don’t miss this self-revealing read.

Biz bites

Top 5 new-grad resumé gaffes

By Bev Stevens, career educator

So you’ve just graduated. Think your trusty co-op resumé will stand out in the stacks of candidate CVs? Think again. Here are five common mistakes to avoid when prepping your resumé for your first real job hunt.

1. The objective perspective

Listing a “career objective” at the top of a resumé is an underhand move—objectives are rarely seen on professional resumés. Consider replacing the objective with highlights of your work; academic and volunteer experience most relevant to the employer you’re wooing.

2. All about me

The bar goes up when you graduate, people. Employers are looking for benefits you can bring to their organization, not what they think they can do for you. So be clear about what you’ve accomplished for previous employers. Did you increase sales? Simplify systems? Improve operations? Play it up.

3. Assumption overload

Not everyone who reads your resumé is familiar with UVic programs or the competencies they develop. It’s up to you to explain them, in language your reader will understand. For example, don’t just list an academic exchange; highlight what you gained from the experience that would be valuable to an employer.

4. One size fits all

Statistics show recruiters spend as little as 30 seconds reviewing a resumé. If you don’t grab their attention quickly by bringing out details relevant to the position they’re trying to fill, they’ll move on. Use keywords from the job posting for maximum relevance.

5. Failure to proooofread

A resumé with typos just won’t cut it anywhere.

So check, recheck and have someone else check too!
The Giving back

The road much travelled
For one donor couple, adventure and education go hand in hand
By Jessica Brown

The Cmoliks have more time for adventure these days, now that they’re retired. Both of them ran their own businesses for many years, which is why they wanted to support a business school.

“I had an accounting practice, which I sold, and Russ grew Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers [a company that auctions industrial equipment] from a million-dollar company into a billion-dollar company,” says Ellen. “And the UVic connection: two of the couple’s four children attended UVic, and their son went through the business program, specializing in entrepreneurship, to become a chartered accountant and business valuator.

The Cmoliks’ donation benefits the UVic Business Executive Mentor Program, which pairs students with a mentor in the business world who can pass on professional wisdom. It was a natural fit: the Cmoliks spend a good chunk of their time mentoring students of all ages, as well as fundraising to help young people get to university.

The donation to UVic Business is just one piece of a larger social enterprise, which the family has dubbed the Cmolik Foundation. The foundation has three components, the first being a scholarship program that pays for five years of books and tuition for university students “who have overcome adversity. It’s not just about the marks,” says Ellen. “They also have to show that they have the drive to follow through things.”

This year alone, the Cmolik Foundation has helped send 22 students to post-secondary school. “We ask all of the university students we sponsor to sign a contract. They have to agree that sometimes in their life they are going to pay it forward and sponsor one other student,” says Ellen. “For all of the 50 students we have sent to university through the Cmolik Foundation, that’s 50 more that they’re going to help, so it’s going to spread.”

The second component of the foundation is a class-adoptation program, through which the Cmoliks adopt two or three inner-city Surrey Grade 5 classes each year. The family’s motto for the adoption program is aptly, “expanding horizons.”

The third component of the Cmolik Foundation is “Life Choices,” which teaches life skills to younger students. “We talk about consequences and your choices and we give them scripts on how to say no to drugs and joining gangs,” says Ellen.

Of course, growing up the Cmoliks had no such worries. Ellen spent her younger years in Richmond, and Russ grew up in Kelowna. Neither family was especially well-off. “My husband’s mother and father had six kids and only his father worked. My father also had four kids, while my mom was a stay-at-home mom,” says Ellen. “Neither of us had a lot of money, but we both had a lot of freedom; so we built forts and went bike riding. We think because we were innocent, happy and free … that allowed us later in life to take risks, which helped us in our businesses.”

It’s probably also what gave them their sense of adventure. Last year they spent five months driving an SUV from Beijing to Paris, through 13 countries. And this August they left for another great adventure: driving across the Balkans for two months.

The trip is bound to fill part, if not all, of their prescription for good living, especially the experience quotient. “We still learn,” says Ellen. “We like to learn about the politics and religion and the culture of the countries we go to.” And planning a two-month road trip through rugged country in a less travelled, though beautiful, part of the world? “Well, it’s risky. And darn hard work.”

Every gift makes a difference.
Your donation — no matter the size — is your ticket to a celebratory event at Peter B. Gustavson’s house.
To donate online, view a full list of faculty priorities, and check event details visit: www.business.uvic.ca/giving
To make a donation by phone, call Cristy Hartman at 250-472-4279 or email chartman@uvic.ca.
Filling the gap

International students could be Canada’s solution to a labour shortage caused by retiring baby boomers

By Brad Buie

Though splendidly rich in natural resources, Canada will become severely depleted in one area during the next 20 years: human resources. Why? The baby boom generation, born between 1946 and 1965, and having given our economy traction for the past four decades, will be leaving offices and workplaces for good—and taking its skills along with it. Considering tax revenues, health-care costs, pensions and the labour market, our population, as it is, will simply be unable to support continued economic growth.

So what’s the answer? One possible solution is welcoming more international students to our institutions. Efforts to date have been very successful, with the number of international students studying in Canada doubling from less than 100,000 in 1998 to almost 200,000 in 2009. Canada’s new Student Partners Program further ramped up recruitment from India in 2009 and from China in 2010, with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges co-ordinating with overseas Canadian visa offices to streamline the immigration process.

However, coming to study for a few years is a bit different than living here permanently. As dealing with an aging population is common in many countries, Canada must compete for immigrants. To address this, Citizen and Immigration Canada recently made the Post Graduate Work Permit more flexible. Before 2008, students needed to have a job offer in hand to apply. However, this is no longer the case. Now, after completing any program of eight months or longer, they can obtain a work permit of equal length without employment stipulations. And for a two-year program or more, the work permit is issued for three years. Within that window of time, graduates may accumulate a year of skilled work experience under the Canadian Experience Class program, as a step towards permanent residency.

For employers, this is going to mean an applicant pool that is unprecedented in terms of diversity. Born outside of Canada but educated here, these individuals possess the newly relevant skill set of mobility, adaptability and intercultural competence. One such candidate is Tina Chang (BCom ’10). Chang entered the BCom program directly from China two years ago, obtained her business education and training, including co-op work with renowned AbeBooks, and is now ready to pursue opportunities in Canada.

“I am hoping to be a financial adviser, helping people manage their money and investments,” she says. “I am studying for my CFA to get the designation in the next three years.” Ironically, she may well end up handling baby boomer retirement funds.

The strategy of welcoming more international students and workers into the Canadian citizenship fold over the next 20 years is about maintaining a robust economy—but it’s also about maintaining the Canadian ideal of multiculturalism.

“I do feel my identity has changed, as I know more about the country and have more Canadian friends,” says Chang. “I definitely feel like a Canadian sometimes—especially during occasions like the Olympics. But at the same time my Chinese background will not fade away. I think I can balance the identity very well.”

As a country that encourages such a balance, Canada will remain a popular place to live and work—no matter how the composition of our citizenry changes. BC

Thank you for giving us an occasion to smile about.

Congratulations to Dr. Alex Campbell Sr, OBC, the co-founder and former President and CEO of Triffy Foods; and recipient of the 2010 UVic Business Distinguished Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Thank you to all our sponsors who made our seventh annual event an outstanding success.

Support a 2011 recipient by small to businesspolicy.ca

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Peter B. Gustavson’s entrepreneurial career began earlier than most—in kindergarten, to be precise. When he was just five years old, he collected abandoned wire hangers in his Winnipeg neighbourhood and sold them door-to-door for a penny apiece. “The neighbours would give me a nickel for five hangers,” Gustavson remembers. “I guess they felt sorry for me.” Even then, he demonstrated acute business savvy in appealing to his target market: impressionable housewives who were powerless to resist the charms of the pint-sized salesman. “I was a cute five-year-old trying to earn a few cents,” Gustavson says, chuckling. “It wasn’t just about selling hangers; I was selling the whole package.”

Flash forward a few decades and you’ll find that the young merchant’s accomplishments have steadily piled up—to the point that he is one of the country’s leading entrepreneurs. Now at the helm of Gustavson Capital Corporation, a private equity firm that invests in small businesses, Gustavson also recently acquired a majority stake in a $11-million-a-year-grossing clothing manufacturer Mary Holland Apparel. And there’s soon to be one more feather in Gustavson’s cap: UVic has announced it will be renaming its business school after him. The tribute comes in the wake of a $10-million donation he made this March—the largest the school has ever received—that left the university and the community astounded.

Throughout his entrepreneurial career Gustavson has received numerous business awards, including the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award (2002), a Vancouver Island Business Excellence Award for Lifetime Achievement (2005) and, most recently, Deloitte’s Platinum Status Award for excellence and leadership in business practice (2009). Now, after all the experience, honours and accolades he has amassed, Gustavson is paving the way for UVic Business grads to follow in his footsteps with his landmark donation. The funds will be used to finance scholarships, professorships and research, and to support student programs such as international exchanges and competitions, all of which will help to ensure UVic Business remains competitive with schools across Canada and internationally.

“Peter Gustavson is a tremendous friend of our faculty and students, and his name is synonymous with our vision and values,” says Ali Dastmalchian, dean of business. “He’s a highly successful entrepreneur with an international mindset, a leader and a team player. With our unique brand of business education, and Peter’s name and ongoing support, we will take this school to a new level of excellence.”

It’s hard to believe Gustavson was ever anything but an entrepreneur. He graduated from the University of Manitoba with a double major in accounting and marketing, after which he obtained his CA designation and set up an accounting firm in Winnipeg. After graduation, he became a chartered accountant, but he was restless in his new role, never fully satisfied. “Even though I was, and still am, a chartered accountant by profession, I’m not really an accountant,” Gustavson insists. “I’m an entrepreneur. Accounting is a great vocation, but it’s not who I really am.”

After 10 years of practising accounting, Gustavson made a life-changing decision: he sold his firm and moved to Tofino. Just across the water on Vancouver Island, a single serendipitous moment would change the course of his career. In the summer of 1992 while visiting relatives in Victoria, he noticed a lease sign on the old customs building located at the corner of Government and Wharf, where the high volume of tourists immediately caught his attention. Gustavson’s enterprising mind kicked into gear and out popped his vision for Custom House, a foreign exchange and payments firm that, today, provides services to individuals and high-powered corporations around the world.

The company started as little more than a 600-square-foot kiosk offering a smattering of foreign exchange transactions to island tourists. That summer, Gustavson put together a simple business plan, hoping that after a year he would make a profit of $30,000. Thanks to the startup’s better-than-the-bank exchange rates, Gustavson hit his target after just two months. He used his earnings to open a Custom House outlet in Vancouver’s busy cruise ship terminal, catering to disembarking passengers who required a quick and easy way to exchange their foreign currency. Business flourished and Gustavson expanded further, building new locations across Canada and eventually breaking borders into the US and overseas.

The real breakthrough, though, was when Custom House made its services available to the business sector. “There was definitely money to be made in helping individuals exchange foreign currency,” Gustavson acknowledges. “But we saw an even bigger demand from corporations trading in much larger sums.” Custom House worked on developing and strengthening its corporate relationships, providing profits soared. Before, the typical Custom House client was a small-town tourist looking to exchange a few US dollars into Canadian currency; now, 95 per cent of the company’s revenue comes from big businesses.

In 2009, Gustavson sold his company to global currency exchange and communications conglomerate Western Union. Custom House, once a seasonal side business, is now North America’s largest independent foreign exchange dealer. It has offices in seven countries, customers in more than 150 countries, and in excess of $500 million in annual earnings to open a Custom House outlet in Vancouver’s busy cruise ship terminal, catering to disembarking passengers who required a quick and easy way to exchange their foreign currency. Business flourished and Gustavson expanded further, building new locations across Canada and eventually breaking borders into the US and overseas.

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employees. When asked about the secrets to the company’s success, Gustavson gives a simple answer: he anticipated what his clients needed—convenience, better rates and fast turnaround—and gave it to them. Just as important, he adds, was the company’s flexibility in allowing for growth and change. “We started doing business just like everyone else, over the telephone,” he explains. “Then the competition picked up, so we turned to the Internet. Our competitors began doing the same so we proceeded further, integrating our systems into the customers’ accounts.” He paused for reflection, then says, “In business you have to keep evolving into something that’s more attractive to the customer than what you and your competition are currently doing. As I always say, stay sticky with your customer.”

Despite his many years of experience in the corporate world, and taking some time off after selling Custom House, Gustavson remains compelled by the intricacies of business—perhaps the wonderful professors who gave them the training they needed to be elite, especially since only one in five applicants were accepted to among Canadian universities. “I could see these students were the thrill that inspired him to take an active role in UVic’s Faculty of Business. He was further intrigued upon learning the evolving into something that’s more attractive to the customer than what you and your competition are currently doing. As I always say, stay sticky with your customer.”

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But business is more than just running a company, and Gustavson is confident his donation will inspire students to not only pursue their academic goals but also build life skills along the way. When asked what he considers to be the most vital of these skills, Gustavson answers without hesitation: “Integrity. Having integrity will help you far more than your MBA, CA or even the amount of money in your bank account. In business, and in life, you need the help and trust of others. And to earn that, people have to trust that when you say something it’s true—it has to be true.” A final piece of advice for aspiring entrepreneurs: “Never give up.” Gustavson says. “You’ll have lots of failures, especially if you prefer the entrepreneurial side of business. It’s all part of the learning process; as long as you learn from your mistakes, it’s just part of the game.”

Being a student is an exciting time, and Gustavson says he wants UVic students to know that the business community believes in what they’re doing and wants them to be successful,” says Gustavson. “I hope my donation inspires them to go out into the world and create new businesses and new jobs, and make us a better society.”

“Value co-creation is the big idea of this decade,” says UVic Business professor Charlene Zietsma, who spoke on the topic at the faculty’s June 2010 Building Futures conference. Co-creation is how she categorizes a class of phenomena that involve collecting information on problems across firm boundaries. Zietsma researches in this area and encourages students to co-create by sharing resources and ideas with each other.

“Co-creation includes things like crowd sourcing, community-based business models, open innovation, open sourcing, ideagoras, etc.,” she says.

“It started with open-source software like Linux, where the code was made available and people could modify it as long as they posted changes back to the community so everyone could benefit. Another example is Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia with entries created and updated by users.”

Co-creation enables firms to harness the creativity and expertise of others. For example, Procter & Gamble’s InnoCentive website pays individuals to solve the company’s innovation challenges. “They pay only for successful efforts,” says Zietsma. “It’s very efficient.”

Threadless, an online T-shirt company, uses a community-based co-creation model. Designers submit designs to a community of Threadless customers, which critiques them. The designers have an opportunity to modify their designs, and then the community votes on them. The company picks several to manufacture and sell each week. The designer gets feedback and monetary incentives; the community gets great T-shirts that it manufacture and sell each week. The designer gets feedback and monetary incentives; the community gets great T-shirts that it

“Infrastructure, distribution, design, waste disposal, regulations and networks all have to change. “We have to stop thinking as competitors and recognize that, in climate change, we have a collective problem,” she says, “so we need to take collective action.”

For more on the topic of value co-creation, download the full lecture, available online at: www.ure.buildingfutures.ca/default.aspx?PageId=1039.
“I can’t pencil it into my schedule right now,” was Roger Mehr’s (BCom ’09) response when his doctor urged him, in 2007, to go straight through with radiation treatment for Hodgkin’s lymphoma. He had a few things to do before he could put his life on hold.

Mehr had always been on the move; always learning to adapt. Born April 5, 1985 in Clearbrook, his family moved to Cassiar, in northwestern BC, later the same year so that his father could become chief engineer at the local mine. After the mine shut down, they moved again, this time to Smithers, where he spent most of his childhood. From Smithers they moved on to Kamloops, when Mehr was in Grade 6. He attended Kamloops Secondary School and was voted class president in Grade 12, graduating in 2003 with a bursary toward post-secondary study. Still living at home, Mehr entered Thompson Rivers University with the intention of pursuing a degree in engineering. After his first year, he decided to go travelling; to Singapore, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia. Mehr says this time was a major transition in his life—an opportunity to evaluate what he wanted to do in and what direction he wanted to take his life. “It forced me to grow up faster,” he says. “I didn’t know what to do with my life, and I couldn’t picture it in engineering.”

After a year abroad, and with a fresh perspective, Mehr returned to school—this time to prepare for a transfer to the BCom program at UVic. “I took the Strong Interest Inventory test to see which careers matched my personality. The top matches were all in business, small business ownership and entrepreneurship,” he recalls. “Engineering was nowhere near the top of the list.”

Between living and travelling abroad, and the switch to a new program, Mehr was more than ready to leave Kamloops. “You are who surrounds you,” he adds. “I didn’t know what was going to happen in the future.”

In August 2006 Mehr noticed a lump in his neck. Unconcerned at first, he packed his things and moved to Victoria to begin his first semester of the BCom program. In December of the same year he returned to Kamloops for the Christmas holidays. The lump in his neck had grown, so he decided to see his family doctor. His esophagus was enlarged, the doctor told him. “I could tell right away that the doctor knew how bad it was,” says Mehr. That was day one. Day two was blood tests. Day three a CT scan. Twenty-four hours after the CT scan he was in the emergency room. He was told he had cancer; it was lymphoma. “It was a surreal moment. It was like an out-of-body experience. I could see the doctor talking but I couldn’t really process what he was saying,” says Mehr. “My first reaction was, ‘OK, so what’s the next step?’

Mehr was in surgery the next day. He jokes that as a young person with a rare lymphoma diagnosis, he received “VIP service” at the hospital. After a biopsy on his neck to determine the exact type of lymphoma he was going to have to fight, he went home to spend the rest of the Christmas holidays with his family.

Cancer’s Christmas gift to Mehr was a Hodgkin’s lymphoma diagnosis. “It was bittersweet. I think it was either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day that I received the phone call,” he says. “It was bittersweet because Hodgkin’s is what you hope for, but you never hope for cancer. As far as lymphomas go, I got lucky. Looking back, the timing was great too.”

A hockey player since childhood, Mehr immediately adopted a positive—and competitive—attitude towards battling cancer: “Older patients tend to resign themselves to only having a short time left. They start to think about regret and what they would have done differently in their lives. Younger patients don’t have the benefit of having already lived a long life,” he says. “There’s a different mindset. You have no choice but to move forward and beat cancer so that you can live that long life. You have to have a positive attitude to take on the Big C.”

Mehr says he learned who his friends were, and whom to surround himself with during treatment. “Knowing that I had extremely supportive, driven and ambitious friends in Victoria made it a lot easier to drive to the finish line and get back to the grind in Victoria,” he says. “I truly believe that if I had not come to Victoria and had never met those people just four months after moving here, I would not have been as driven to take on cancer.”

Mehr spent much of his time watching visitors’ reactions and body language in the cancer ward. He observed. He learned what made them comfortable, uncomfortable, happy and sad. He kept a diary of the most memorable moments from his treatment and turned them into stories. “First Choice Haircutters,” for example, makes light of losing his hair to cancer treatment. Mehr had been diagnosed earlier, Mehr says, he would have missed the opportunity to move to Victoria to do his BCom. He also would have missed becoming president of the Commerce Students Society in 2007. When he told his doctor cancer radiation treatment would have to wait a few weeks, it was because he had plans to attend a leadership conference, followed by a Commerce Students’ conference in Halifax. He kept those plans, then returned to go through four months of treatment and, ultimately, to beat cancer and return to university—all by the following semester.

Something else Mehr might have missed: a move to Austria for his final semester of studies. Since he lost a semester during cancer treatment, his final semester was in the fall, “when all of the international exchanges were taking place,” so he got to go to Europe and finish his degree overseas—not a bad way to wind up the program. “It was a new beginning and a great transition,” he says. He travelled through Austria, Germany, France and Croatia, to name a few. Mehr graduated from UVic in 2009 with a major in entrepreneurship. He now lives cancer-free in Langford with his girlfriend Kim and new puppy, Koby. He hopes to return to his former high school as a motivational speaker.

Mehr says the Big C taught him to live in the moment. “Life is full of experiences and it’s all about creating stories,” he says. “If you can tell a story about what you’ve done, it’s worth doing. And it’s OK not to know what’s going to happen. You have to enjoy the experience and stay positive. Change is inevitable. Those who can adapt the fastest will be the most successful in life.”

Roger Mehr (BCom ’09) with new puppy Koby and abroad in Dubrovnik, Croatia (above)
Like mentor, like mentee
Two former mentor program participants reflect on their time together

By Tiffany Sloan
Photo by Ben Oliver

When Brian Nutt, management consultant and president of Sayward Hills Solutions, first met April Gagnon (BCom ‘07), she was an undergrad student waiting tables part-time at a Victoria restaurant he frequented for lunch. Today, at the ripe old age of 23, Gagnon is a rising star at GE Capital, where she works in underwriting as a structuring manager. Through two co-op terms and three years of full-time employment there, Gagnon’s been regularly recognized and promoted, says Nutt, and she is currently a level-three candidate in the chartered Financial Analyst self-study program. As her mentor through UVic Business, he’s almost as proud of her accomplishments as she is.

“Her’s a very impressive young lady. She’s got very clear career goals and she knows where she wants to be,” says Nutt. “She’s the type of person you want to keep in touch with because you know she’s destined for great things.”

Gagnon has mentored several UVic students over the years, but Gagnon was his first “mentee” outside of the MBA program. Nutt was so impressed with Gagnon’s drive and ambition that—upon hearing of her acceptance into the BCom program—he volunteered on the spot to be her mentor, then arranged permission after the fact.

When their official mentoring relationship began at the beginning of her third year, in 2005, Gagnon was new to both business and mentoring, and wasn’t entirely sure what to expect.

“Like mentor, like mentee,” he said. “I really like helping people who want to help themselves. And when students enter a program like the MBA or BCom program at UVic, they’re serious—they’re there for a reason. I really like to see people like that succeed. And for the most part, they succeed on their own. But they can achieve more if they have a little bit of support around them.”

“Now, I’m a year to catch up and discuss new opportunities. It’s been fantastic to have someone who’s there to listen and to provide guidance. Someone who can look back on their life and their career choices and say, ‘If I could do it over, I would probably do something more like this.’”

“At first I thought it was just somebody who would maybe coach me on decisions in terms of figuring out what I wanted to do career-wise, but it turned out to be a lot more than that,” she says. In Nutt she found a friend and confidante—one to whom she could turn for both personal and career advice. And having that input at the undergrad level was invaluable, she says, to supplement the lack of work experience grads often have.

Gagnon describes her relationship with Nutt as an open dialogue spanning the two years she spent in the BCom program. They would meet for lunch or coffee every couple of months. “I’d say, ‘here’s my five-year plan’ or ‘here’s my adjusted five-year plan—Brian, what do you think?’ And he’d give me very honest, very blunt feedback, which I really appreciate looking back.” In fact, Gagnon and Nutt’s relationship has continued, and the pair still meets two or three times a year to catch up and discuss new opportunities.

Although a mentorship program wasn’t part of his own academic career at Camosun College some 25 years ago, Nutt is no stranger to the benefits of mentorship in general. “I had a few people in my early career—both in school and in my first few jobs—whom I know that, if it wasn’t for them, there’s no way I would have been able to do what I’ve done,” he says. “I’ll never forget those folks and I can recall very vividly some of the conversations I had with them.”

He has some of the same conversations with his own mentees—proof the best mentorship pairs aren’t necessarily based on identical career goals. “A lot of the things I learned from my mentors had very little to do with the job I was doing,” says Nutt. “It was mostly to do with how to work within an organization, how to work with people, how to prioritize and manage my time. It was giving me a perspective that wasn’t necessarily tied to the job I was being paid to do—it was how to be a professional and how to grow.”

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It’s midnight, and the beginning of day six of our journey. We climb in the freezing dark with the aid of head-lamps and trekking poles, and four or five layers of clothing, concentrating on our breath and staying in the rhythm. “Pole, pole” (Swahili for slowly, slowly), we remind each other, as the increasing altitude makes every breath and step more difficult. We can’t see beyond a few metres and the path seems endless. It starts to snow, becoming colder and icier as we go. And then, finally, we see them, just as the sun’s first rays appear: giant towers of ice. The snows of Kilimanjaro. We can’t believe the sheer beauty of this moment, or of these gigantic glaciers, which many say will be gone—evaporated—within the next 20 years. It starts to snow, becoming colder and icier as we go. And then, finally, we see them, just as the sun’s first rays appear: giant towers of ice. The snows of Kilimanjaro. We can’t believe the sheer beauty of this moment, or of these gigantic glaciers, which many say will be gone—evaporated—within the next 20 years.

Exhausted, we take a long moment for a hug and a cry. It is 6:30 a.m. on January 9, 2010. My husband Mike (BCom ’03) and I and our 10 teammates are standing on 5,893-metre-tall Uhuru Peak: the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro. We had three goals. One, to raise a lofty $150,000 to help the organization expand its programs (lofty because we started the campaign right in the middle of the worst economic downturn Canada has ever seen); two, to increase awareness of Power to Be in one single event. Two, to increase awareness of Power to Be in Metro Vancouver. And three, to have fun and ensure all 12 summit-team members would reach the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro and come back down safely.

I’m happy to report that on January 9, our summit day, we met our three goals. We also raised $20,000 over our target! We received overwhelming feedback upon our return from Kilimanjaro. Our campaign gained quite a following from individuals who were inspired, motivated and encouraged by what we were doing. How did the journey impact you and your team members? What did you learn? What are you planning next? Can we use your website for our climb? Can you present your story? And on it went. This feedback encouraged us to pursue another joint objective: to establish and lead our own social enterprise (a revenue-generating business with social goals whose surpluses are reinvested in the business itself or the community) based on our personal passion for climbing.

So here we are, several months later, at the helm of Climb for Change Social Enterprises, a global network (with both online and offline initiatives) serving several thousand Climb for Change leaders, their friends and supporters around the world. The network brings them together to share stories, news and lessons learned, and inspire each other to take action; to climb the mountains we all face in our lives.

Our official Climb for Change launch event takes place December 11, which is also International Mountain Day. After that, Mike and I will lead our next charity fundraising expedition from January 7 to 16, 2011 in Mexico. With a new team, we’ll be making a bid for the summit of Pico de Orizaba. At 5,636 metres, it is the third highest mountain in North America, and the second most prominent volcanic peak in the world after Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Ubora means freedom in Swahili. Mike and I feel as though we brought freedom back with us from Uhuru Peak: freedom to follow our passions while making a positive contribution to our world. This is only the beginning, and our mantra, stronger than ever, remains: “We all have mountains. We all are free. Climb on. Climb for change.”

Chantal and Mike Schauch and the Power to Be team on their way up Mt. Kilimanjaro (above); the team at the top of Uhuru Peak (right)
Shazia Karmali
By Krista Boehnert

Karmali entered the new UVic Business PhD program this fall, in its inaugural year. She plans to draw on both her public health-care background and experience in business research and practice for her research. With a master’s of science in public health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Karmali has a global view of health-care issues facing nations today. In addition to her studies, she has worked in the health industry in East Africa, Afghanistan, India, Canada and the UK—discovering that every country struggles with issues related to health care. She says the chance to study the public health system in the UK “offered a different perspective on issues not unlike those we struggle with in Canada.”

Prior to moving to Victoria in September, Karmali was project manager, population and public health, for the Provincial Health Services Authority. In this role, she was a key contributor to the planning and implementation of the PHSA Centres for Public Health, province-wide centres that house the expertise of multiple provincial agencies and programs, including BC Mental Health and Addictions and BC Children’s and Women’s Hospitals. Karmali says this firsthand experience in public health care will assist her as she embarks on her research.

“My research interests can broadly be described as the applications of organizational behaviour; organizational change, organizational structure, leadership and change management in the context of health,” explains Karmali. “Even though we don’t tend to look at the health industry as big business in Canada, it most definitely is, and it can benefit from the management and organization theories that help other enterprises.” Put like that, they don’t seem like strange bedfellows at all.

Guilherme Kleinert
By Krista Boehnert

Much like UVic: Business, Guilherme Kleinert’s life is built on four firsts of UVic’s new Master of Global Business (MGB) program, which launched in September 2010. Kleinert is no stranger to travel. When he was 15, he moved from his home, Panamá, Brazil, to a larger city, Porto Alegre, to get his high school education. He had to balance his studies with managing his own home at a very young age.

“It gave me a very good sense of independence and helped to build my personality,” says Kleinert of the experience. Perhaps it was that glimpse of a new place and culture that eventually resulted in Kleinert’s journey to Victoria. He says he’s excited about the opportunity to live, work and study in Europe and Asia as part of the MGB (both are new stomping grounds for him), and to meet classmates from around the globe, who will themselves offer lessons in global culture, as they negotiate the coursework together.

Kleinert won’t have much adjusting to do—he visited Canada once before on an educational exchange. Although much colder than he thought it would be, the Great White North left its impression. “Among all the countries I have visited or lived in, Canada is by far the country that takes the principle of equality most seriously,” he says. “This is one uniqueness I would point out.”

Kleinert’s dream is to link businesses worldwide, and he’s been working toward that goal for some time now. He has held posts at Ontario Exports, where he connected businesses with opportunities in Brazil, and in the international sales department at Braskem Petrochemical, which sells to 30 countries worldwide. With this experience and the MGB under his belt, Kleinert plans to continue working in the global business arena because, as he says, “I like to understand where people come from and where they are going.” One day, he plans to return to Brazil to work on attracting enterprise to his home country. But first he has some travelling to do.

Class notes

2008
Hanjia (Ashley) Bian, BCom has started her own organic food busi-
ness, the May Farm, in Suzhou, China (www.themayfarm.net).

2006
Darb Dhillon, BCom obtained his master’s in professional account-
ing (MHkcc) from the University of Saskatchewan in October 2009 and his Chartered Accountant designation in January 2010.

2002
Joanne Day, BCom was recently honoured as EnviroStar of the Year by Fairmont Hotels and Resorts out of more than 30,000 employees worldwide. She went to Nashville in June 2010 to train with Al Gore and his Climate Project organization.

2001
Jeff Bogensberger, MBA is currently living in Melbourne, Australia. He recently founded SOCO Games—a socially conscious gaming company. A mechanism built into all of the company’s social networking games automatically directs 10 per cent of its revenue to a fund that benefits causes around the world. SOCO’s inaugural game, Earth 2.0, launched on Facebook in September.

2000
Robert Ohlmann, BCom was recently honoured as EnviroStar of the Year by Fairmont Hotels and Resorts out of more than 30,000 employees worldwide. She went to Nashville in June 2010 to train with Al Gore and his Climate Project organization.

1999
Daryl Des Marais, BCom, spent the past year as a mentor for the UVic Business Plan Competition, the 4th Launch It Business Plan Competition, and was recently awarded the title of Platinum Expert Author for his business articles on www.evancarmichael.com and www.evancarmichael.com. He wishes his friends and fellow graduates a successful year.
Emily Yuen
By Krista Boehnert

Less than a year after graduating into one of the toughest global employment markets in decades, Emily Yuen (BCom ’09) is living her dream. “Thanks to her networks, and the knowing how to use them, she landed a six-month internship with the Bosch Group in Stuttgart.”

“I really wanted to work internationally, and I sent a lot of introductory letters,” says Yuen. “I was in Germany because of my involvement in the World Student Environmental Summit organization, and connected with MattButtenfield (BCom ’09), who works at Bosch. He let me know about the opening.”

Orr says Bosch, a multinational company operating out of 150 countries, is a great place to work. Based in the company’s power tools division, she tracks and analyzes sales data from several European regions. “There’s so much to learn about the systems in such a big organization. My marketing and management information systems classes are really helping,” says Orr. “My supervisor is very helpful, even offering to come with me to the immigration office.”

Orr plans to continue working overseas for a few more years. “She’s thinking about heading to Sweden for the 2011 WSES and London in time for the 2012 Olympics. Where she’ll be employed, she’s not sure. But she does know one thing: she’ll work it out through her networks.”

With the federal government proposing legislation to overhand regulation of the securities sector this May, it’s a time of change in the financial industry—and recent grad Emily Yuen (LLB/MBA ’09) has strapped herself in for the ride. Armed with a dual degree from UVic (a bachelor of law and an MBA), she’s currently an associate at Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, specializing in corporate and securities law. Yuen says she doesn’t know what changes the new legislation will bring, but she looks forward to the challenge: “I love the evolving and fascinating nature of my work.”

“Sustainability is a way of life here,” says Orr. “People live in smaller spaces; they use less energy and recycle almost everything. At Bosch, I see a lot on the social responsibility side. Everyone works hard. They take their work seriously and believe in perfection, but they’re also flexible and support work-life balance.”

Orr plans to continue working overseas for a few more years. “She’s thinking about heading to Sweden for the 2011 WSES and London in time for the 2012 Olympics. Where she’ll be employed, she’s not sure. But she does know one thing: she’ll work it out through her networks.”

One of the first things on Orr’s to-do list is strengthening her One of the first things on Orr’s to-do list is strengthening her corporate and securities law is highly engaging, partly because it draws on so many skill sets, such as drafting, negotiations, legal research and client relationship management,” says Yuen.

She credits the Faculties of Business and Law with giving her tools to succeed—in particular the MBA International Integrative Management Exercise (IMI). “An appreciation of cultural variations in the business world is one of the key elements to managing a client’s expectations when they’re situated in different countries,” she says. The LLB and MBA co-op programs also gave her a leg up, providing career experience while she pursued her studies.

Being that Yuen is at the start of her career, and practising in a field that’s ever-changing, you’d think she’d be at her limit. But you’d be wrong. Giving back to the community, she says, is important to her. She currently assists with fundraising for, a variety of organizations, including the Vancouver Hospice Society, the Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the Parkinson Society of British Columbia and United Way.

Yuen says she feels privileged to be helping the community as she pursues her passions in law and business. No matter what changes may come, she’ll be ready. 
Alumni and faculty basked under sunny skies as they toasted 20 years of growth for the Faculty of Business. At the Build Your Future professional development conference June 23 to 25, delegates from as far afield as Asia, Toronto and Calgary, and a strong Victoria contingent, reconnected with one another, their professors and members of the local business community. The sessions inspired and challenged us to think and learn, engaged us in lively discussions and helped us to continue building our futures.

Highlights from the first day included a compelling keynote address from Dr. Nancy MacKay on talent retention in organizations. MacKay, who coaches Canada’s top CEOs on individual and organizational performance, shared six strategies on how to develop an extraordinary leadership style, view talent strategically and become a company’s leading advocate for top talent acquisition and retention.

The business leaders panel provided a lively discussion on a variety of timely business issues, including the changing media landscape in Canada, the effect of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico on Canadian regulatory practices and ethics and culture in business. Each of the leaders shared a common message: follow your passions and engage with the right people. A big thank you to panel participants David Black, Peter Blake, Peter B. Gustavson and Dr. Rebecca MacDonald, and moderator Dr. A. R. Elangovan.

Day one wrapped up with a reception at the UVic Legacy Art Gallery downtown, which was a perfect venue for delegates to relax and enjoy one another’s company after a big day of learning. The Gallery offers a range of exhibitions from contemporary and emerging artists, with a focus on local talent. It is a great place to escape the heat, grab a drink and socialize with colleagues.

A special thank you to our conference sponsors for their support: Certified Management Accountants, UVic: Food Services and UVic: Residence Services. Thank you to all who attended Build Your Future. It was a pleasure to host you, and we hope the conference gave you the opportunity to continue your journey of lifelong learning.

For those who couldn’t attend, many conference sessions were recorded and have been posted on the conference website: www.uvicbuildingfutures.ca. This is a great opportunity to continue your learning and we hope the conference gave you the opportunity to continue your journey of lifelong learning.

In a poll of the conference delegates about the event, over 95 per cent rated the conference as “good” or “very good.” They stated they appreciated the event for both the professional development and networking opportunities. When asked how they would rate the conference overall, delegates responded: “The quality/experience of the presenters is far superior to any other conference I have attended.” “I would like to use this conference repeated every second year.” “Excellent conference. Lots of relevant current information.” “The business leaders and the talk by Peter Legge were superb and worth the money!”

Leanne Cadden (BCom ’01) presents a session on leadership and creativity.

Paging Lower Mainland alums

The Vancouver alumni chapter meets throughout the year and offers a chance to reconnect with old classmates and network with members of the Lower Mainland business community who have a connection to UVic. The group is currently building its membership and looking for long-lost alumni. If you know of Lower Mainland alumni who haven’t attended any of the group’s events, or who aren’t members of its online groups, please invite them to join.

Facebook Group Name: UVic Business Alums in Van
Twitter: twitter.com/uvicbuildalums
Email contact: uvicbuildalumsrevan@gmail.com

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Have you opened a new business recently? Email Krista (boehnert@uvic.ca) and she’ll add its name to our Buy Alumni directory. This listing is free and promotes your business to follow alumni.

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20th anniversary travel offer

In honour of the Gap Adventures and UVic Business 20th anniversaries this year, UVic Business alumni receive 20 per cent off trips booked by December 31, 2010. (“Trips can occur after that date.”) Book online at www.gapadventures.com and use the discount booking code “UVicalumni20.”

Are you looking for ways to promote your business? A special rate for alumni

Business Class magazine reaches a dynamic group of UVic Faculty of Business grads, faculty, staff, students and members of the business community twice a year! In the upcoming spring issue of Business Class magazine, we are offering you the chance to do just that. Our Alumni Classified section will give you the opportunity to promote your business with a full-colour display advertisement. Sound like the right fit for your business? Contact Karen Rice at Canada Wide Media Ltd. today at 604.205.1711 or krice@canadawide.com.
Getting to zero starts with ‘S’

By Dianne George

Almost since its startup, UVic Business embedded the concepts of social responsibility and sustainability into its educational programs to ensure every graduate was eco-literate. Today, Dr. Monika Winn and a faculty steering committee are taking that one step further and infusing sustainability and social responsibility into every aspect of the faculty. They are also helping it to become a carbon-neutral organization. The committee has a formal mandate from the dean to develop the new social responsibility and sustainability, or “S” pillar. “The faculty culture is very supportive,” Winn says. “We have the buy-in of the entire organization, which is really quite rare. ‘I want us to become a living lab for sustainability,’” says Winn, who is the new “S” champion, and an international leader in researching and developing socially and environmentally sustainable business strategies. “I’d like to showcase us as a leader that can live, breathe and act in a sustainable way, and be the thorn in the side of business schools to change and innovate.”

Winn is quick to point out there are many champions of the “S” pillar within the faculty—she is simply steering the ship. The committee is building on work already completed by many others, including Dr. Mike Valoline, under the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education. The team is working on several fronts to bring the vision to life: operational change, led by Dr. Basma Majerbi; education initiatives, under the direction of Heather Ranson; and research, under Dr. Angela Downey. “Operationally, we’ve made good progress reducing our energy consumption through running the facility [lights, heating, paper, recycling, etc.] but 80 per cent of our total carbon footprint comes from travel,” she says.

Winn points out that while flights are not included in the government targets, it would be less than honest to ignore this issue. “Since we are completely committed to building a global mindset, of being an international business school, it is something we have to address. We are developing a green fund to manage the impact.”

The concept is still in development, but eventually faculty, students and staff should be able to offset the impact of international flights by voluntarily donating to the fund, or by contributing in some other way.

Students are very active with their own initiatives; for example, Commerce Student Society and Sustainability Club projects, such as last year’s carrot mob in Victoria, wherein the community organized to support a local restaurant. All proceeds were used by the business to do environmental upgrades.

Students also engage through co-op work terms in the UVic Sustainability Office. And on international exchanges, students can offset their flights’ greenhouse gas emissions by volunteering in their exchange countries.

The education component has two main goals. The first is to support faculty members and make it easy for them to incorporate social responsibility and sustainability content into their classes. The second is to assemble a physical repository of educational materials to serve as a resource for faculty members.

Another front for change is research, and establishing a home or centre for “S” pillar activities. The establishment of a centre will help enhance the research cultures within the faculty and showcase its capacity and capabilities in social responsibility and sustainability research.

“We’re looking at major challenges as a society and I see our centre as driving innovation and providing hope and a positive way forward,” says Winn. “We’re just a tiny player, but looking at climate change and the development pressures that are out there means we have to do things differently—and that requires innovation.”

And the work now underway is the pragmatic side of providing that hope and moving forward.
Shatter the rear view
New work models may be the key to ending economic inertia

By Rachelle LeBlanc Quiney, MBA ‘10

While musing over the notion of looking to the future (the theme for this issue of Business Class), I couldn’t help but remember my patient-of-a-saint brother teaching me to drive on the back roads of our hometown.

I’d gone and bought a standard for my first set of wheels, even though I’d never driven anything but an automatic. Worried I’d roll backwards into a car behind me (with my luck, an expensive foreign import), I kept nervously checking the rear-view mirror. I can still hear my brother’s gentle reminder: “watch where you’re going, not where you’ve been.” It was sage advice, and it applies as much to the future of business as to my first lesson in driving a five-speed.

Given that we’ve all just watched an economic landslide, the likes of which most of us have never seen in our life-time, it seems the business world hasn’t been operating in a particularly sustainable manner. I can’t help but think the situation might represent an opportunity for economic redemption: a restart button for a bad situation. Who doesn’t love a second chance? We just need a bit of creativity to push through the remaining hurdles of the economic crisis.

I figure, with all the brand-new, shiny and amazing technology we’ve become accustomed to seeing in every facet of our lives, that perhaps the times, they are a-changin’. The Internet, and all sorts of other connectivity and collaboration tools, enable real-time work from just about any nook or cranny on the planet (apart from the entrance to my condo, frustratingly). People can accomplish a day’s work from their iPhones, Blackberries or laptops, and flexible work arrangements are letting them work when and where they want, which can increase productivity and employee engagement.

In my future, I see a little bit of everything. I have the attention span of a gnat, and as a communications professional, I really don’t have to be anywhere in particular to work: so long as I have a laptop, I could be at home, in a coffee shop or on a hammock in some island on the sun. Just throwing out some ideas here. Ideally, I’d like to see my career consist of anything from telecommuting to self-employment, or contract projects.

And I know I’m not alone: many of my peers feel the same way, and not only because at home they can get toast crumbs all over their desks without annoying anyone. Why should I sit in a boring office all day, using resources I don’t need? It would be much more sustainable if I typed away chez moi, and I’d be happier to boot.

Ultimately, the future is ours to create, so the way I see it, why not create something new, different and better? It might even be fun. It’s all about looking to where we’re going, not watching where we’ve been.
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