"Sometimes life makes me feel like I am spinning plates in a circus, in danger of them all crashing down! A strong sense of personal resilience allows me to manage these challenges and bounce back from any ‘crashes’. This book has given me both fantastic insight and practical guidance, allowing me to examine and further develop my own resilience. Highly recommended!"

**Gemma Todd, Head of Human Resources, Imperial London Hotels**

"A great quick-reference practical guide incorporating a useful mix of interesting new ideas and tried and tested favourites."

**Helen Rowe, Head of Brand & Communications Research, Kantar TNS**

"As an ex-serviceman and current business owner, the advice in this book will keep me moving forward on my toughest days."

**Ryan Green, Managing Director, Pebble**
Resilience is sometimes called ‘bouncebackability’, a term reputedly coined by Iain Dowie, then manager of football club Crystal Palace, who famously described his team as showing ‘… great bouncebackability’ when they overturned a losing position.

How do you bounce back from difficulties and failure at work? And how do you reduce the bouncing, so that the lows are neither so low nor so frequent? You might start by battling with perfectionism and changing your attitude towards mistakes. Without a need to get things right all the time, you’ll be more able to forgive yourself for trivial errors, and more prepared to join in with new, healthy activities that will enhance your resilience.

Of course, absolute accuracy is needed at times, as when writing a report or compiling figures, but not everything requires it. Conversations with colleagues, for example, or making a presentation do not require perfection – in fact, there may not even be such a thing – and they don’t need to be judged the same way.

Perfectionism can leave you feeling constantly dissatisfied and self-critical – and less willing to give things a go, even if it would be to your advantage to do so.
RESILIENCE AT WORK

THE BUSINESS CASE

Let’s look more closely at the business case for building resilience at work.

**Stress** is a significant cost to business, accounting for 37% of all work-related ill health cases and 45% of all working days lost to ill health in 2015/6*.

Resilience at work means recovering quickly from mistakes, dealing with difficult situations calmly and confidently, and rebounding after career disasters. A resilient attitude is thus the key to your progress at work. With more resilient people at work, the teams and the organisation itself become more resilient.

Resilient organisations are those that cope well with shocks and failures. For example, they build in spare capacity, so that if one part of the system fails, there is still back up. **Lean** is currently a popular idea, but too much stripping to the bone can be disastrous. People and their organisations need a certain amount of slack. It is much harder to be resilient when resources are stretched to the limit.

RESILIENCE AT WORK

THE COSTS & BENEFITS

Let’s explore in more detail what’s at stake. What are the costs and benefits for you and for your organisation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unresilient</th>
<th>Resilient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People lack confidence/ burn out</td>
<td>People bounce back from difficulty and failure more quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance is poor</td>
<td>Potential is recognised and made use of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lack of creativity leads to missed opportunities</td>
<td>Creativity and flexibility increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecision and isolation</td>
<td>Teams work better together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High sickness/ turnover</td>
<td>Staff stay longer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viral air of negativity</td>
<td>More attractive working environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor employer image</td>
<td>Good reputation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESILIENCE AT WORK

WHAT DRAINS RESILIENCE AT WORK?

What's the biggest drain on resilience at work? In a survey of 835 British employees 75% of respondents said it was managing difficult people or office politics (see table). This was closely followed by stress brought on by overwork and by having to withstand personal criticism.

Adapted from *Tough at the Top?* by Sarah Bond & Gillian Shapiro

A separate study published by EU-OSHA (2009) suggests that 50% - 60% of all lost working days are due to stress.
What drains you at work? Which of these can you start to tackle?

‘Your “I can” is more important than your IQ.’
Robin Sharma

‘I don’t measure a man’s success on how high he climbs, but on how high he bounces when he hits rock bottom.’
George S. Patton Junior
About the Authors

Janine Waldman and Paul Z Jackson are leaders in the application of Solutions Focus in the UK and around the world. As co-directors of TSF, they provide coaching, training and consultancy to clients including Care UK, Tate, Nivea and Reading Borough Council. Find more at www.thesolutionsfocus.co.uk.

Janine Waldman MSc FCIPD specialises in coaching and training. She has over 20 years’ experience in consultancy and organisational development, having previously held senior HRD positions in the UK and New Zealand. A fellow of the CIPD, she is a visiting lecturer on HRD and leadership programmes, and has taught on post-graduate programmes at Birkbeck College and University of Westminster.

Paul Z Jackson MA (Oxon) is an inspirational consultant, who applies his expertise in improvisation, accelerated learning and the solutions focus approach to programmes in strategy, leadership, teamwork, creativity and innovation. He draws on his experiences in journalism, comedy production and at the BBC to create impactful workshops that connect directly to the needs of the participants.