

BOOK REVIEWS

Go Beyond: Solution-Focused Pocket Mentor for the Work Evolutionists: Start Transformations Today – Book 1 by Elvira Kalmar

Darren Priest^a

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Go Beyond: Solution-Focused Pocket Mentor for the Work Evolutionists: Start Transformations Today – Book 1 by Elvira Kalmar

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Much has been written about the evolution of work, especially since the rise of Artificial Intelligence and the spread of working from home. Too often, however, these accounts frame the evolution of work as something done *to* us. By contrast, being a Work Evolutionist is empowering. It gives everyone—consultants, coaches, leaders, HR professionals, and individuals themselves—agency and self-determination to make a difference at the level at which they are best placed to do so.

The idea builds on and extends familiar concepts such as ‘job crafting’. In career coaching, I often use job crafting with clients who face role ambiguity: it reframes the anxiety of uncertainty into an opportunity to shape their role around their values and skills. *Go Beyond* goes further. It provides a three-part framework for action:

^a Darren Priest is a job coach and solution focused practitioner in Cork, Ireland. Email darren@darrenpriest.ie www.darrenpriest.ie

1. Redefinition of the Work(Place)
2. Supporting the Evolution of the Individual in the System
3. Supporting the Evolution of Teams

Each section brings together theories and ideas from OD, situating them in practical contexts. Some theories are reinforced, others questioned, which I found more enlightening and informative than expensive Masters-level study covering similar ground. The book is further enriched by the inclusion of tools, case studies, and exercises—practical anchors that bring its ideas to life.

A few of my favourite elements deserve mention:

- **Tool: The Resource Focused Welcome.** How many times have we sat in meetings where introductions are dull rounds of “something about ourselves”? This alternative is refreshing: each person states, “Why are we happy this person is joining our team? What will he or she bring that makes us more confident we will succeed together?” It transforms introductions into genuine welcomes.
- **Case Study: HR Portfolio Redesign (p.78).** This account ends with, “This HR team completely redefined the scope of their work and how they would do it.” That radical shift was made possible through developing a shared Preferred Future based on the real needs and wants of both leaders and employees.
- **Exercise: Our Belief System and What Kind of Organisations We Design.** It begins, “Imagine everyone working with you or in your company is a real Talent (with a capital T). How would the design of your organisation be different as a result?” That line alone brought a genuine smile to my face. It is simple, provocative, and full of possibility.

The ethos of the Work Evolutionist shines through in these examples: a belief that change begins in everyday conversations, interactions, and reframing how we view people and their contributions. This is where the SF influence is strongest. Rather than seeing organisations through deficit models or focusing on problems to be solved, *Go Beyond* invites readers to explore resources, preferred futures, and collaborative redefinitions of work itself.

Visually, the book is colourful, well laid out, and filled with diagrams and images that make its concepts easier to grasp. Its production values are evident, and it feels like a text designed to be picked up and used. That made it all the stranger to come across occasional typos: icons for Case Studies, Tools, and Exercises appear in a different order than they are introduced;

words such as “carrier” instead of “career” or “board” instead of “broad” slip through. These are quirks more than major flaws, and they do not detract from the overall quality of the book.

If there is a larger critique, it lies in the book’s incompleteness. By positioning itself as Book 1 and trailing Book 2 in detail, it feels like a beginning rather than a finished guide. That is exciting, but also a little frustrating. The innovative OD model introduced here is only partially developed. To fully apply its promise, Book 2 is needed. Until then, readers are left with tantalising possibilities and a strong foundation for practice.

Yet perhaps this is the cleverest part of the design. By embodying the Solution Focused ethos, Book 1 itself acts as a ‘preferred future generator’. It gets us imagining, experimenting, and trying on the mindset of the Work Evolutionist, even before the full model is laid out. It encourages agency, curiosity, and experimentation—qualities we need in our workplaces now more than ever. It is in the process of being published and I await it with eagerness. I hope the sequel lives up to the promise of Book 1—being more *Godfather 2* than *Grease 2*.

In sum, *Go Beyond* is a book that delivers a fresh voice for organisational life. It offers both practical tools and a new ethos for engaging with the future of work. While its reliance on a forthcoming sequel is a limitation, that very fact shows how ambitious its vision is. If Book 2 fulfils the promise of Book 1, we may well be witnessing a landmark contribution to Solution Focused organisational practice.

I strongly recommend this book for consultants, leaders, HR professionals, and individuals alike. If you work in or with organisations and want to shape them for the better, *Go Beyond* is more than a pocket mentor—it is an invitation to become a Work Evolutionist.

Go Beyond Book 1 is currently available on Kindle from [Amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de) at a reduced price of €19.99 for a black-and-white English edition. Check the links on the book website <https://www.gobeyond-project.com/book>.

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