

# Amanda builds better business leadership

### Q: Where do you work?

I work for The Executive Connection (TEC), a peer mentoring network for entrepreneurial business owners and CEOs. I hold monthly mentoring meetings with the members of my TEC group in their offices, and when not in meetings I operate from my home office.

### Q: How did you earn your first dollar?

Working as a labourer for my Dad who was a civil engineer building tennis courts, and at school holidays I worked in a cafe at Kings Beach Caloundra serving ice-cream.

### Q: What standard of education did you reach?

I've got a postgraduate certificate in the built environment majoring in interior design from QUT.

### Q: What was your first full-time job?

As a graduate interior designer in an architects office.

### Q: Is your current job the career you envisaged for yourself when you finished study?

There's no connection! When I was little I wanted to be a teacher, which is closer to my current role than a designer. I'm a problem-solver now and that is what being a designer is all about.

### Q: What made you choose this career?

I grew my own successful commercial design business, and I

### AT A GLANCE

**Name:** Amanda Cole  
**Date of birth:** 18.10.1970  
**Suburb of residence:** The Gap  
**Job description:** Business mentor and director

### SNAPSHOT

wanted to learn how to be a better leader, so I joined a group of business owners and loved the facilitation and learning opportunities so much I decided to take an opportunity to step into a chairman's role and run my own group.

### Q: How many times have you changed career?

So far twice.

### Q: Is there another career change in you?

I don't see a change, more an evolution. I will always be committed to TEC because I'm passionate about the change that happens as part of the process, but I'm working on another business opportunity. I have a portfolio career.

### Q: What would you do if you were forced to give up your current job?

Be a full-time mother, gardener and artist.

### Q: What has been the biggest success in your career?

I won the Telstra Queensland Young Business Woman of the Year in 2001 with my design business, but

my greatest achievement is working with the business owners and executives in my TEC groups. It's an extraordinary privilege.

### Q: What is the most pleasing aspect of your job?

I spend my days meeting with people and helping them understand the opportunities for growth they have in themselves and their business. Entrepreneurs are extraordinary people and I learn something from every conversation.

### Q: Are you actively grooming a successor for when you decide to step down?

Not at the moment as I've only been chairing my group for four years. Some TEC chairs have been with their groups for 20 years or more so I feel I'm only just getting started.

### Q: What tips do you have for people starting out?

Take the best opportunity you can find, you never know where it will lead you, and then give it your best because your attitude will get you noticed. "Fortune favours the prepared mind." (Louis Pasteur)

### Q: What tips do you have for people just beginning a business to manage staff and budgets?

Watch your cash flow. Give your staff clear roles, expectations and measurements and then hold them accountable if they don't deliver. Read the *Ten Minute Manager* books and implement it.



**MOTIVATING CAREER:** Amanda Cole works as a mentor with entrepreneurs and executives helping them to build their businesses