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Marilynne Deane Mendell  
President  
WinSpin CIC, Inc.

## On Relevancy

"Today, companies have to radically revolutionize themselves every few years just to stay relevant." Nolan Bushnell

"Existence is no more than the precarious attainment of relevance in an intensely mobile flux of past, present, and future." Susan Sontag

The quality or state of being closely connected or appropriate.

### Warning: Long Read

#### The Spark:

"You're not 75! Why aren't you fully retired?" That was a great question. Who retires? What does it mean to retire? Why retire? Clearly the list of people I've spent a lifetime with both near and afar appear to be leaving this planet daily. Queen Elizabeth II most recently. But then Sir Michael Philip Jagger three years my senior is still prancing around on the stage after heart surgery. Fortunately for me as an entrepreneur, I have the luxury of working as long as I want and as long as my clients still find my contribution relevant. **Is your business age smart?** The article highlighted will showcase many of the reasons intelligent companies retain older worker and in many cases showcase them.

**Do not go gentle into that good night, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage, against the dying of the light. Though wise men at their end know dark is right, Because their works had forked no lightning they Do not go gentle into that good night.** Dylan Thomas

#### Un-Retired Trend:

For various reasons the work pool has been sucking up the elderly. Perhaps not all of the folks over 65, but a great deal. Those of us who can build our own websites and download apps are helpful but the real reason is far more enticing. Knowledge and practical experience. Oh, and reliability. And the simple fact that 75 is the new 55. If, as the futurists like Peter Schwartz proclaim, **we are all going to live beyond 100**, then 45 years of hanging around playing golf or going to pottery classes will not satisfy the people who have managed to stay in shape and keep their brains sharp. The tight labor market and data shows mature workers are less likely to quit and therefore making this labor demographic

more in-demand. Fascinatingly, in the 70-74 cohort LFPR (Labor Force Participation Rate) the older the cohort the greater the growth - especially with regard to women. Tough on some of you hoping we will all retire at once, but a real benefit for employers looking for people to fill the gaps that seem to be unattainable through Handshake, LinkedIn... whatever. This is all partly due to the increasingly weird phenomenon of young people **moving in with their parents**. Why work when mom and dad can keep footing expenses. Stats show that these young Gen Z kids have no intention of leaving the home. All reports say that this cohort hates living at home but they just can't afford to move out. That still doesn't explain why 70% aren't working at all. No judgement here, simply pointing out that there are plenty of older folks willing and able to fill the employment gaps.

### **Faster Quicker Better:**

As an efficiency expert, I'm not claiming that all **75+ will fill every nook and cranny**, but consider this: we have all gotten used to the partial in the office/home work force. And, some of you have learned that consultants might be a less expensive way to increase bodies without the added cost of benefits. Time spent on teaching and locating new people lost to churn adds up. Hiring even a part-time semi-retired person to handle things like bookkeeping might be a smart ticket to success. Clearly I've yammered on long enough about the need for clear HowTos and proper on-boarding, but hiring someone who can step right in and make polite calls to clients, who can still pick up a pen and actually draw, and who can quickly connect dots that to so many at the principal level find obvious but a younger population might find themselves with a deer in headlights expression -- might seem like **a valuable choice**. She says, holding up her arms...I'm just saying....

### **Sustainable:**

Recycling. Reuse. The following list are jobs that might still be relevant and cannot be replaced by AI anytime soon: psychologists, caregivers, most engineers & architects, human resource managers, marketing strategists and lawyers. People persons. I loved the article **Metropolis Magazine** did a few years back on designers still working in their 90s. If one looks up architects dying in their 90s who were still practicing you'd find zillions. And that's just one field.

While automation appears to be taking over the world in a Star Wars fashion, reaching a human being still has merits. That intake of breath when a live friendly real person actually answers a help desk. It still makes a difference. **Do not throw out all of the older models**. The valuable resources available to all businesses with senior experience and willingness to contribute should change how searches currently work. Try posting more mature images of people on websites. **Find ways to make job descriptions more friendly towards an aging demographic**.

### **The Pitch:**


In reality I'm saying that I have a great deal to offer you as a would be client. If you're a mid-sized firm, you might need some business advice like how to do strategic plans, or how to get more publicity, or how to organize your shop to become more efficient. Maybe you need to re-brand or build a new website. I save clients oodles of dollars. Frankly, what I teach your team will more than cover my fee.

### **Gratitude:**

This year I solo-hiked both Sequoia and Yosemite National forests at 6K elevation and did seven miles per day, with a 40# pack, in temperatures that ranged from 30 to 85 degrees each day. I'm grateful for that. I'm eternally thankful for my clients who still find my expertise relevant and helpful. I'm thrilled to still be contributing as a teacher and

lecturer. And I'm fortunate to have a loving family with three amazing sons, and their wives and my four grandchildren-especially one grandson who just began a life at the University of Toronto. Go Ben! May you all be blessed with a healthy and long life that allows you to be fulfilled in every way that suits you! Not retiring, not going to do it....always available if you think my brain power might be helpful.

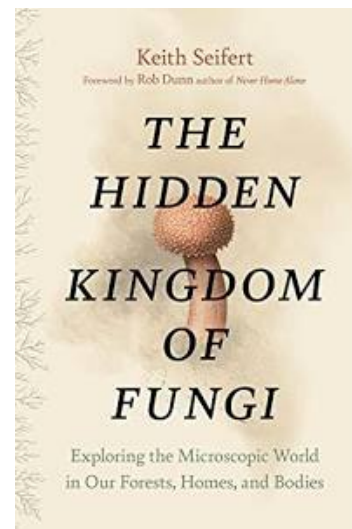
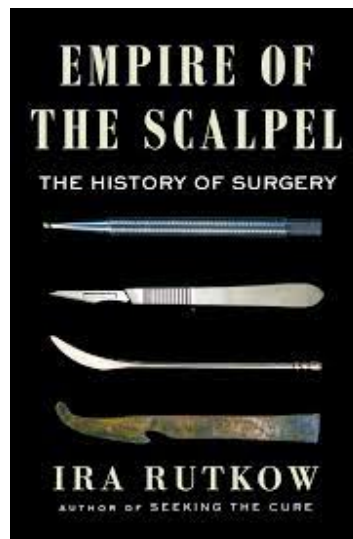
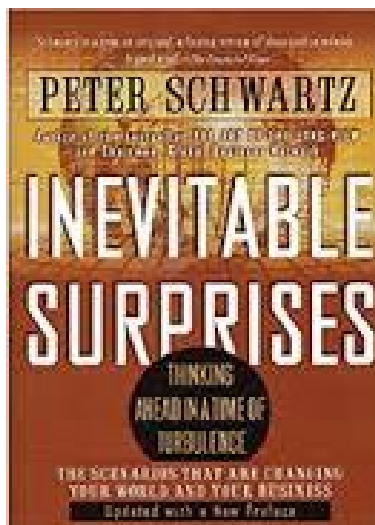
Thank you,



### Hard to Pick One Book

I found myself re-reading Peter Schwartz's book *Inevitable Surprises* (and of course *The Art of the Long View* is a classic) that he wrote right after 9/11 in 2003. I always like to see what he got right. When I've taught classes some students often say, "Well, he got 50% wrong." And I turn to them and say, "Yes, but he got 50% right and you'd be so far ahead had you listened." So, I think it's worthwhile to still gain insight from Mr. Schwartz's thoughts-even twenty years later. Also since the majority of us will at some time find ourselves in the unenviable position to have an operation, I suggest you read *Empire of the Scalpel* before quickly going under the knife. And finally, *The Hidden Kingdom of Fungi* has the most intriguing futurist opportunities. If you just read the last half of this book, you will be amazed at what's new and coming down the pike. I highly recommend you read all three!

Read More



We can always keep learning more and communication is key to everything we want to accomplish. Remember the average person may only read one book a year.

**WinSpin CIC, Inc.**

125 Caroline Street,  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
540.207.4045

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