

## Youthful mastery a game changer

The natural talents of the young can make them great managers, **Debra Bela** reports

TAKING sides is not an option for negotiation expert Martin Keetels. When asked if youth or experience are the best attributes for a company manager, he answers with alacrity and respect.

"I feel strongly, up to an extent, that age does not have a tremendous amount to do with how successful a person can be in an organisation," he says. "But there is something to be said for experience."

Keetels is the Australian Institute of Management Young Manager of the Year and, at 29, has risen from being a judge's associate to the joint position of national commercial counsel and national bid manager with office, medical and measuring instruments maker Konica Minolta.

Keetels studied arts and law at the University of Queensland and is now based in Sydney, where he is days away

from completing his Masters in Business Administration at Macquarie Graduate School of Management.

He is also the youngest manager in the Konica Minolta stable.

"Younger managers have an intuitive sense of what technology can bring to an organisation, introducing innovative ideas that weren't relevant to business five to 15 years ago," he says.

"One of the best examples of this is the rise of internet-based technology and how organisations can profit from those."

Australian Institute of Management CEO Vivienne Anthon says an evolving workforce is increasing the need for managerial capacity across a range of virtual and geographical sites, which should encourage companies to engage the "fluid intelligence" of young



**RISING FAST: Martin Keetels is Australian Institute of Management Young Manager of the Year.**

### MAKE A MATURE IMPRESSION

» Be yourself. Be genuine. Understand your strengths and weaknesses and have a strong idea of yourself.  
» Be prepared to make unpopular decisions when required.  
» Delegate effectively and don't be afraid to delegate to older people.

» Identify opportunities in non-traditional places. Use the perspective of youth to challenge the business to modernise. Being identified as a game-changer will be a huge advantage.

**-Martin Keetels, Konica Minolta**

ger managers. "Years ago, you would come out of university, spend time in the environment with older people and learn the craft. Now you are out working and potentially leading a group within two to three months. That's a systemic change," Anthon says.

Keetels' ambition for the next three years is to move into general management and within 10 years to become a leader of an organisation.

"It's not about age, it's

about competencies, our strengths and weaknesses," Keetels says.

Tiffany Quinlan, HR director with workplace specialists Randstad, says there is a risk that younger managers do not have the well-rounded experience of senior colleagues so the company must back them up.

"It's their enthusiasm and how they are in touch with the workers and working with a different generation of people that is a great bonus," she says.



## Finding balance in the boardroom

COMPANIES need to consider diversifying their boardrooms with more women to get the best results, says rising executive and entrepreneur Vanessa Gavan.

In the lead-up to International Women's Day on Thursday, March 8, the founder and managing director of Maximus International (above) says a mixture of both male and female executives will ensure companies cover the broader base of relationship types.

"With relationship types there is firstly the short-term transactional ones and secondly the long-term strategic ones, which are based on trust and loyalty," she says.

"There is a multitude of options in between. Not to say that women build better relationships than men, but it gives you that level of diversity that will put you in a better position with external stakeholders, the board and relationships across and within the business.

"Having a mix of styles in terms of the way people process and synthesise information in order to make decisions will ensure you manage the balance between risk and innovation.

"These organisations work better to capitalise on growth opportunities, business improvement and, ultimately, manage a more productive organisation."

In the past 10 years, Gavan has founded two organisations – Maximus International (2001), a business performance consultancy group, and Imprint Global (2006), a talent-management technology business.

She says women have an empathy that works well with other management styles.

"The more balanced a boardroom, the more capability there is for problem-solving and critical thinking."

### Executive, Professional & Management



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**Volunteer/Community Legal Education Coordinator**

Women's Legal Service (SA) Inc. (WLSA) is a state wide women's community legal service. WLSA provides legal advice, representation and community legal education to the most disadvantaged women in South Australia. For example, Aboriginal women, newly arrived women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and women living in rural and remote areas. The service also undertakes significant law reform projects.

WLSA is seeking a highly motivated Volunteer/Community Legal Education Coordinator for its volunteer program. This is a 0.8 FTE position and salary is to be negotiated based on experience. Salary packaging is available.

For more information and a copy of the application pack, please contact the Women's Legal Service on (08) 8231 8929 or wls@wlsa.org.au. Applications must address the essential and desirable criteria of the job and person specification.

**Applications close Tuesday, March 13, 2012.**

Applications to be addressed to:  
The Director  
Women's Legal Service (SA) Inc  
151 Franklin Street  
ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Email: wls@wlsa.org.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.



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**Applications close at 5.00pm on Friday 17 March 2012.**

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