



# “last word”

by Janine Adamson

## Scoring an authentic goal

**Have you ever asked yourself what success looks like? I for one realised a few years ago that it doesn't always equate to what you initially anticipate.**

Some context — I'm a serial planner. I'm the master of a spreadsheet or to-do list, in many ways my brain operates like a living Gantt chart. I spend my days allocating strict blocks of time to individual tasks and can become quite frustrated if I don't achieve everything on my list due to a curve ball or 10 thrown my way.

In many ways this is a positive attribute — administration and organisation are certainly my strengths. Given it's something I'm naturally good at, I've applied this methodology to my life as a whole, particularly my career. And coupled with being a dreamer, as you can imagine, my sights have been set rather high.

It's not that I want to be better than everyone else per se, I just yearn to challenge myself and to achieve something meaningful of which I can be proud. For a long time I believed the answer would be found in a job title, which in many ways, makes me feel rather sympathetic towards my naïve, younger self.

For years I went without

holidays, fought relentlessly for promotions and threw my entire being into the role at hand to systematically work my way through the marketing career to-do list. Climbing the ladder became somewhat of an obsession.

And I did just that — I made it to the dizzy heights with a 'Head of' job title to match. Yet the penny soon dropped that I still wasn't content. What I perceived to be success, in reality, wasn't.

At the same time, one might say the stars aligned because I was granted a one-off mentoring session through the AHDB. During this I was asked a very outright question — is the job you're doing and the company you're working for right now, helping you to achieve your long-term goals?

I had to be frank, they weren't, and that's with no disrespect to my former employer. It was all a bitter pill to swallow at first but pivotal in my learning; it was time to reconnect with my authentic goals and realign my desires. Which in many ways, is what led me to being the editor of this magazine.

I asked myself, what is it about my career that I truly love, what drives me? The answer being, meeting interesting individuals and writing quality copy which represents agriculture in a positive light; taking difficult often science-laden topics and making them accessible to wider audiences. I realised that I thrived doing what I'd originally set out to achieve — be a journalist. It's not that I'd wasted my years slogging away in marketing, I just had to reassess what success meant to me.

My career will always be a significant part of my life,

but by stepping back and re-evaluating, it became apparent that I'm more than a job title and can offer much more to the world than a flashy marketing strategy. Albeit, I can still bash out a cracking SWOT analysis if I wish.

Instead, I treasure opportunities to hone my wider skills in music and art, or my 'softer' skillset such as resilience and adaptability. But it's the small things, often centred around kindness, that make me feel successful. Supporting a friend through difficulties, solving a problem, expressing compassionate words when times are tough, living life without judgement of others, for example.

It's about being a caring, rounded person with an open heart; it's about inner peace and happiness. It's sage advice that no one remembers the person who works themselves to the ground (a thankless task), rather

the one who makes time to listen and be there for others.

By having this epiphany I've learned to live more in the present and to stop chasing the next big thing. And the greatest plot twist? Once I'd made peace with where I am, is when the opportunity to become CPM's editor came to fruition.

I have a newfound level of gratitude for the position I find myself in because I genuinely feel successful. I no longer have moments of FOMO (fear of missing out) or catch myself looking over the neighbour's hedge to see whether their grass is greener or not. The chances are, it's greenest where you water it!

Anyway, I read somewhere that success isn't linear and I have to agree. But equally, it's a highly variable, personal thing. However, let's be clear — I haven't become complacent or lost my ambition during this journey, far from it.



*Success comes in different shapes and sizes, and for me, sometimes it's in the form of a bassoon.*