

From Classical Failure to Rock Chick

Kate Hull Rodgers has worked with the bank through her consultancy company, HumourUs, for the past four years. HumourUs provides speeches, seminars and support in three areas: The Strategic use of Humour in the Workplace, Building Relationships and Performing Powerful Presentations.

New Year's may seem ages ago... but I'm still revelling from the huge resolution I made. It was my best resolution ever. I resolved NEVER to make another New Year's resolution.

Last year I resolved not to resolve something I had resolved before. So for the first time in 27 years, yes 27 years, I did not resolve to master the classical guitar.

This had become a bit of an obsession. It was born of some advice I received early in my career from an influential consultant. My high school principal.

"It never made me happy.."

At a parent-teacher meeting, he began by citing my accomplishments. They were many. I was a scholastic over achiever. Then he moved on to the changes that "had to be made." The principal spoke not to me, but to my parents. "Things come too easily for Kate." He told my parents to "push her to do something she isn't good at."



Advice is worth what you pay for it. The principal's was free, it was worth nothing. But still I set out to do something I wasn't good at.

I spent 27 years trying to learn classical guitar. I haven't got a musical bone in my body. I sounded like a metronome in a submarine. It never made me happy.

So last year I resolved to work to my strengths, not highlight weakness. I quit. I began advising clients "If at first you don't succeed, try something else." It sounded good, but felt like something my principal would have espoused.

There was more to this lesson than just admitting failure.

The next chapter came this Christmas when my big present turned out to be an electric guitar and amp. I looked at my husband in dismay, and dare I say, anger. "Bill, you know I don't want to play the guitar!!!! I've tried so many times." "Exactly." "Exactly what!?"

He smiled a cryptic smile. Only a man who can play nine instruments by ear can smile like that.

He winked at me and said, "Stop trying."

"Find your groove, not your rut"

So I've turned the amp up to a Spinal Tap 11 and rather than mastering music, I'm making noise. It's a lot of fun. When you are in the groove being good at things becomes easy. The trick is to find your groove, not your rut.

New Year's Resolutions by their very nature deem that we want to be something or someone else. If you must make them, flip the idea on its head. Resolve to KEEP doing the good stuff, rather than START doing the challenges.

Embrace the person you already are. This year I'm advising clients If at First You Don't Succeed, Try it Different.

If you can't master classical, become a rock chick. Make the dream fit you.

For more information see www.humourus.co.uk