

Location: Dili, Timor-Leste (and Singapore, and other places)

Current Gigs: Partner at Pluris (negotiation consulting firm promoting collaborative approaches); Director at SportImpact (social enterprise promoting human development through sport); Faculty at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore) and INSEAD, teaching negotiations, dialogue, facilitation and social entrepreneurship.

One word that best describes how you work: Impact-focused.

Current mobile device: 11-year old Nokia 1600. It's awesome: makes & receives calls, sends & receives SMS, no emails to read, original battery lasts a week, falls never breaks, gets lost always comes back. Only problem: Singapore just deactivated all 2G networks...

Current computer: Acer with good battery that allows me to work for hours on the move.

Social media accounts: LinkedIn, Twitter – but don't use them much.

1. What are your work habits? Tell us the things that can describe how you work?

Geographic: I work on different projects and I've found it helps a lot to focus on the project associated with where I am right now (city, office, etc.). I can also effectively work from home (or an airport or airplane...) on anything that does not require direct human interaction.

Under pressure: As my own boss, and trusting my sense of professional responsibility, I like to establish deadlines for myself (ideally deadlines I don't control fully), to make me work towards them with a healthy level of pressure that helps me focus and be more productive. Examples: schedule a meeting with a client, colleague or partner to discuss something I still need to prepare; schedule a course/workshop that I still need to create; etc.

Sequential tasking: I like diversity and often organize my day to work on different projects, without multi-tasking. Perhaps I start the day working with my colleagues at SportImpact and have lunch with them. Then I go to a client's office to work on a consulting assignment. And I end the day preparing a course or workshop.

Optimistic: I tend to think I can do more than I end up doing. That's why I need...

Marathons to 'kill' tasks: Sometimes I want to get something over with soon, something that has not been a priority and is ageing in the to-do list, so I block a whole day or more (at home if it is creative work – it typically is) and work long hours until done. I then go celebrate with a run.

Power naps! I love power naps (~10 minutes) and as much as possible organize things to take one after lunch (if not more).

2. What apps, software, or tools do you use the most?

MS Office, especially Excel and PowerPoint, and the Google Suite (mail, calendar, docs/spreadsheets), skype.

3. What's your workspace setup like?

I work a lot in different places, including on the move (airports, planes...) and at home, so I don't have 1 workspace. I have one workspace per main project (see gigs above) and typically they look like hot desks: I just sit down with the computer, a bottle of water, and a few papers with what I am working on.

If I can, I have a whiteboard nearby – it is a great tool for creativity, brainstorming, visualization, teamwork... I can remember many important ideas that emerged writing/drawing on a whiteboard (e.g., SportImpact's "zero-dollar approach" = just do it, no matter what, even when we don't seem to have appropriate resources).

I also spend a lot of time teaching and facilitating classes and groups – I like flatrooms full of whiteboards, with variable seating plans to keep participants active, engaged.

4. What's your best time-saving shortcut or life hack?

Live in Dili, Timor-Leste: no traffic jams, commutes of 15 minutes maximum, sometimes 3 minutes; less time wasted on unnecessary browsing/emails due to poor Internet access.

5. Where and how do you keep your to-do list?

In case you haven't noticed, I am quite old-fashioned low-tech. I use paper to-do lists for the short term (divided into each of my main projects). I have a paper calendar for the next 6 months to block times for meetings and other commitments (more and more with Google Calendar redundancy for email reminders).

For medium/long term plans, I use .txt files where I write ideas to work on when I can prioritize them (many will probably never be a priority in this life).

6. Besides your phone and computer, what gadget can't you live without and why?

I can live perfectly without my phone. Computer is more difficult to imagine.

I like to run with a watch (makes me go longer), and with a heart rate monitor when training for a marathon (makes me go faster/harder).

7. What things are you really good at? Both at home and at work? What's your secret?

I don't think I have a secret: I am super energized working on what I love, and privileged to be empowered to choose what to work on...

When teaching, I believe the positive energy and my focus on facilitation rather than lecturing are appreciated, as this helps engage audiences in more meaningful ways for solid experiential learning.

If I really want something, I stubbornly persist to make it real. This may include annoyingly following up with other people (so perhaps not a strength!).

I owe my years in management consulting at Bain and McKinsey practical skills with Excel and PowerPoint that have been extremely valuable over the years in a variety of contexts. My wife says I "think in slides" (probably not a compliment :)).

8. What are the characteristics of your current job? Upsides and downsides?

I have no "job", but a lot of work that I love. In 2008 I "retired" from management consulting deciding that from then on I would only work on what I felt passionate for, on meaningful things that I would do anyway even when not getting paid.

Key upsides: I feel totally responsible for my choices and cannot complain about any boss or client or anyone else; I am more aware of the impact of my work and more proactive increasing it; I have a lot of flexibility to define my calendar and schedule, what I am working on, when, etc.

Key downsides: No one is working to give me work – I need to create opportunities myself (and I don't love business development – I rather deliver); since I love many things, I tend to commit to a variety of projects and responsibilities and sometimes feel bit stretched (but I can only "complain" to myself and do something about it); no one is paying for my holidays, retirement, insurance, etc. – I have to plan for that.

9. What particular things are you working and focusing on at the moment?

- Creating the best learning experiences for my students and participants in courses on negotiation, dialogue, facilitation and (especially, as this is something new I've been developing) social entrepreneurship.
- Codifying SportImpact's Sport for Life project for world domination: how to replicate it around the world in the most effective and efficient way to maximize human development.
- This one is waiting in the to-do list: what to do with Pluris's negotiation and dialogue consulting and training to generate the most world impact.

10. Do you listen to while you work? What types of music do you like?

I like silence, especially if I am working on reading or writing. If I am doing something more "mechanic" I may enjoy fast-beat hard/punk rock for energy.

11. What are you currently reading? Books and articles?

I love reading but haven't read much fiction for a long time.

I read mostly non-fiction to help me change the world and help others empower themselves to change the world: on negotiation (currently *Negotiating the Impossible*, by Deepak Malhotra), facilitation (love everything from Thiagi), social entrepreneurship, systems thinking (currently the classic *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*, by Donella Meadows)... I tend to skim-read to get key ideas and frameworks quickly, as opposed to reading word by word. And I am normally "reading" half a dozen books at the same time –never finishing most, but always learning something new that I bring to my work and my teaching.

I like to read The Economist for world news and issues.

12. Are you more of an introvert or an extrovert? How does it affect your job?

I am a strong introvert. My energy is up when working with others, but I need time alone to recharge batteries. I get a lot of that from running and from traveling – love the quiet time on long flights!

13. What's your sleep routine like? Are you a night owl or an early-riser?

Clearly an early-riser. When not traveling and able to keep my routine I go to sleep at 10 or 11pm and wake up around 6am for a run. If I need to get creative work done, I may not run to benefit the most from the sharp brain in the morning.

And I love power naps! I sometimes take 3 naps in a day, but normally just one (it can be commuting in a cab). Just 10 minutes and the brain reset makes it super functional, focused, sharp – awesome productivity boost!

14. Where can we find you when you're not working? (How do you spend your free time?)

I love my work, so I work a lot. And as an introvert I like/need to disconnect in my free time.

I love sports, particularly running (also because it is so easy to keep doing when traveling), so you can find me running at sunrise by the beach around Dili (Timor-Leste capital) or in Singapore's Botanic Gardens.

I spend a few weeks per year visiting my parents in Portugal, typically working a bit from their home (like in the good old days when I lived with them).

Once per year or so I take two weeks off to disconnect from "normal life" and discover new places, new cultures, new people, switching off from email and phone. Just came back from Nepal where I had a wonderful time hiking in the Annapurna region, spotting rhinos at Chitwan National Park, visiting Buddha's birthplace, spinning prayer wheels in Buddhist temples... and enjoying a lot human connections.

15. From what and whom do you get inspirations and motivations?

I am privileged to work with wonderful people, especially at SportImpact. My Timorese colleagues have incredible, infinite positive energy and we energize each other by spending time together and through rituals like powerful high-fives.

Seeing the impact on other people inspires me a lot and lifts me up from low moments when everything seems hard, slow, bureaucratic...

I also get a lot of inspiration from other people's projects, talks, quotes, etc., especially from social entrepreneurs.

16. What's the best advice you've ever received?

My mom told me the wisest words in important life decisions ("retiring" from jobs): "If that makes you happy, then go ahead!"

17. I'd love to see Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank founder, answer these same questions.