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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

# Lessons on Sharing Your Gifts with the World

The year is 2007 and John Maloof was busy compiling his book about Chicago's northwest neighborhoods. On this particular day, he was hoping to find new photos from the 1960's that he could use in the new book.

However, what he found was far more intriguing...

After purchasing a box full of negatives from a local auction house, Maloof started developing some of the images. When the negatives were finally processed, he was stunned by the results. They were simply incredible and what was more, there were thousands of them! More than 30 000 photos in the boxes alone.

Maloof was certain that whoever had taken these photos was surely one of the most prolific and talented American photographers of the last century. However, when Maloof searched the photographer's name, he was unable to find any indication of its owner. Only after extensive probing did Maloof ascertain that the photographer was one Vivian

Maier. He also ascertained that nobody had ever heard of her and furthermore, her obituary never even mentioned that she was a photographer. She was nothing less than a mystery and an unknown world-class talent at the time.

## **“The Greatest Photographic Discovery in US History”**

Further discovery by Maloof indicated that Ms. Vivian Maier was employed as a nanny for wealthy families based in Chicago and New York for over 40 years. During her daily errands, excursions with the family children and trips to other cities in the United States, Vivian took nearly 150 000 photos of people and architecture.

Vivian’s work and history fascinated Maloof - to say the least. Eventually, after processing thousands of images, he collected 100 of the best photos and posted them online.

The reaction was unbelievable, people simply loved the photos. Major newspapers called to publish stories about Vivian’s work and wanted to find out how Maloof discovered the images. Filmmakers even decided to film two documentaries which included *Finding Vivian Maier*. Galleries started exhibiting her work throughout the United States, Europe and as far as Asia. The discovery of Vivian Maier’s images has often been referred to as the greatest photographic discover of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Whilst this story raises plenty of questions, not just about Vivian's past, it also offers a time for reflection and questions our own willingness to share our gifts with the world.

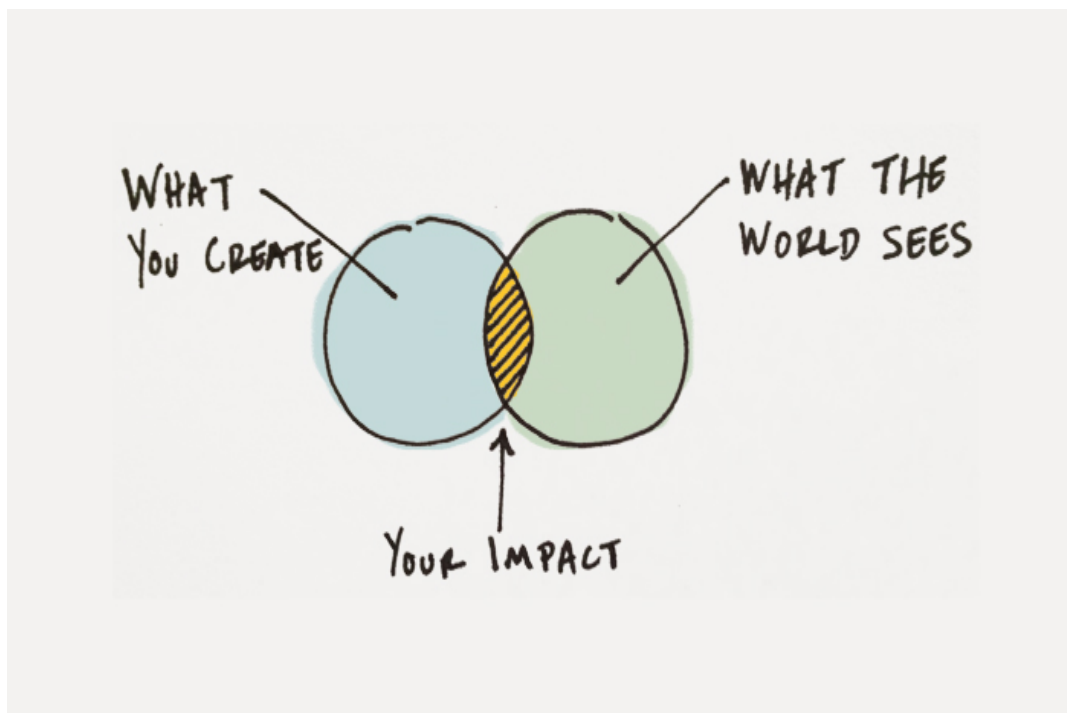
## **Why We Should Share Our Work**

We will never know why Vivian decided to hide her work away in boxes. Perhaps she did not feel it was good enough. Maybe she intended to share it, but did not know who to reach out to in order to do so. Perhaps she simply loved to create and intended to keep her work private.

Regardless of her reasons, two things are certain. Firstly, the world is a better place because she decided to create something. Secondly, you should not wait for someone like John Maloof to share your work with the world. The story is a wonderful reminder that we all carry some brilliance inside ourselves. Fact remains that nobody owes it to you to present your work to the world for others to see.

Think about it this way. How easily could Vivian's work have been forgotten? How many other brilliant creative, artists and thinkers have their work hidden away in boxes or tucked away in attics covered in dust?

# What You Create and What You Share



We often lose sight of the fact that the world can only benefit from what it can see. Which talents are you keeping tucked away in boxes? Which ideas are you hesitant to share with the world?

There might be various reasons underlying your hesitation. Maybe it is fear of the unknown, anxiety dealing with possible criticism or even justifying your talent to others. Whatever the case, we have a responsibility to share our work with the world and contribute our talents to make the world a better place.

Choose to share your brilliance with the world. You most certainly have it.