

## SENIOR FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

Alert. Relaxed. Collegial.



[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kayakers\\_in\\_Redwood\\_City,\\_California.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kayakers_in_Redwood_City,_California.jpg)

### Recap of 6/30/20 session with Belva Martin: Resilience For A VUCA World

Dear Senior Fellows and Friends,

Tuesday's session with Belva Martin addressed the topics of individual and organizational resilience in a way that resonated with members of three generations, each of whom is doing different work and is contending with unique challenges. We began by considering the Army concept of VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous). Although the acronym originated in conjunction with the end of the Cold War, it is now in use across the coaching world, for obvious reasons.

After our round of introductions, Belva used a few slides to guide discussion of traits, characteristics, and behaviors of resilient people before the group split into breakout rooms to discuss what resilient approaches to two scenarios might look like. Diane Blumenthal provided notes from the Scenario 1 breakout that illustrated the sorts of behaviors the group thought would constitute resiliency in that situation:

- Check in with staff.
- Brainstorm action that can be taken to reinvigorate the paper.
- Let young staff implement their ideas.
- Share whatever knowledge you have about the owner's intentions for the paper.
- Be realistic about what's happening at the paper and prepare yourself for future jobs.
- Try to engage the owner.
- Encourage negative people to leave and help them find another position.

- Encourage staff by appealing to their professionalism and desire to share important, truthful information with readers.
- View what's happening as a blessing in disguise and transition to using a blog or other media to communicate information.

Lora Allen's take on the session was as follows: "I enjoyed the discussion on resilience. Belva's slides were right on point and relate to any sector. We can learn to adapt and thrive."

The full deck, including the breakout exercise descriptions and resources for further learning, is available here. Note that Belva's last page refers to an audio series on resilience produced by USC's Sol Price School of Public Policy, "Leadership Thoughts LIVE: Resiliency During Times of Change." Those 12, hour-long sessions are available here.

At the end of the session, Belva proposed another way we could look at VUCA in the context of our own lives - Vision, Understanding, Clarity, Agility. Based on the group's high energy at the end, it was clear that a transformed point of view is not only possible, but easier to imagine as we come together.

### **Participant affiliations**

Accredited ISO KM Auditor  
ASPA National Capital Area Chapter  
Basic Concepts Ltd.  
BM Martin Solutions  
Charlestown, RI Town Council  
Giffords  
U.S. Army  
U.S. Department of Education/Federal Student Aid  
U.S. Department of Education, Retired  
U.S. Government Accountability Office, Retired

Participants joined from Wickford, RI, Columbus, OH, Colorado Springs, CO, and the DC Metro Area. Please consider joining us in the future.

Sincerely,  
Kitty Wooley



Belva Martin