

THE ALBINO



CHAMELEON

The Things That Make You 'You'
Can Become Your **SUPER POWER!**

Kirsty Anne Ferguson

AVIATION'S #1 GLOBAL INTERVIEW & CONFIDENCE COACH

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INTRODUCTION

**A humorous, inspiring excursion into the question
‘Tell me about yourself?’**

This book is an adventure, one that will uncover your unique story piece by fascinating piece. My profession is as an Aviation Interview Coach, however I’ve been called a ‘personal publicist’ a ‘confidence cheer-squad’ and the ‘oracle of interviews’. My clients even refer to me as the ‘O... of interviews’ (referring to a certain megastar talk show host who we won’t name). As coach to the top guns and airline pilots of the world, I’ve learnt a lot about what we share as human beings. How each of our stories differs yet contain elements that connect us. Your story, just like mine, is unique. It matters.

**Even if you think you have nothing special to offer,
I insist that you do.**

My mission through The Albino Chameleon, is to help everyone say to the world ‘**this is me!**’ and even look forward to the question ‘Tell me about yourself?’

*“Normal is nothing more than a setting
on the washing machine.”*
Whoopi Goldberg



Ben the Chameleon Fable

IN 1453, ON A SMALL ISLAND OFF MADAGASCAR, a panther chameleon named Ben was born to parents Steve and Jenny.

The Kingdom of Pardalis had never known an albino. Ben was albino. Almost transparent, apart from a pretty splash of green that would light up Ben's face when he was embarrassed ... which was often.

Large parts of the kingdom were incredulous that Ben could not hide his feelings. Something so natural to chameleons. It was difficult, even for the elders of the community, to decipher the thoughts or intentions of other chameleons since they could all emit their desired effect at will.

Ben was transparent in more ways than one. He had nowhere to hide. He could only be Ben. Despite this, he was popular. His even manner was reflected in his consistent colouring. He was considered thoughtful and pleasant, but most of all, honest. He couldn't trick anyone even if he tried.

On one predictably sultry evening in late spring, horrible news spread throughout the Kingdom. King Furcifer had died in his sleep. For as much grief and chagrin this news brought to some, others were artfully plotting behind the veil of rocks and trees. Who, they whispered, would be the next leader of Pardalis?

Unlike most kingdoms, Pardalis was a democracy of sorts. The popular vote would elect the next king or queen, who would reign until death. As was the custom, the strongest candidates were paraded before the masses. They displayed their most attractive patterns and colours. Ben watched the proceedings with concern and of course, it showed.

“What's wrong Ben?” asked an elder.

“How do we know who is trustworthy?” Ben asked. “They all look like amazing candidates, but chameleons can display anything they choose, so how do we know which one wants the best for Pardalis?”

Other elders gathered around the conversation. Ben was politely speaking his mind, and his thoughts resonated with the wise, old chameleons.

More and more chameleons joined the huddle around Ben,

ignoring the grand posturing at the core of the important community gathering. The popular little chameleon had struck a nerve and before he knew it, Ben was swept up by the excited crowd and carried through the streets.

Ben's face glowed spectacularly.

The only chameleon unable to be anything other than himself, was now to be King. His 'flaw' had become his greatest asset.

Ben reigned over a blissfully happy Pardalis for many years. He never really got used to being addressed as King Benedict I, and his face would glow green...every time. And the crowd would laugh and cheer... every time!

David Everett – Entrepreneur, Science Advocate, Surfer (my new hubby)

THE CHAMELEON CONUNDRUM

People feel uncomfortable spouting their own wonderfulness and much of the time they don't know what makes them wonderful or unique in the first place. A big part of my role as a behavioural coach is to help people understand or define their attributes or in other words, their story.

I work with people from all walks of life, preparing them for everything they will face during the daunting process of getting a job.

The weird thing is they come to me with very similar issues. No matter which role they are applying for, it boils down to the same thing in a few different guises, the most common concerns centred around the questions:

“What do I have to offer?” and “Tell me about yourself?”

Every time you head off feet first into a new job or promotion interview, you have to deal with the gargantuan task of talking about you. Usually right at the outset with no chance to warm up or get a feel for the person you are facing across that desk.

What you have to offer is not purely about your career, and that is often where the confusion starts: what to include or exclude (and you haven't even started talking yet). We are much more than what we do for a job. This question comes into play in many aspects of life, like fronting up on a date or trying out for a sports team. Let's flip it. You are selecting a tradesman for a home repair, a real estate agent to sell your home or a

babysitter. Now it is you conducting the interview, and I bet this question is up the front somewhere in one form or another.

The two things crucial to know about yourself as interviewee are: what do I want? And what do I have to offer? My premise is that knowing the latter will facilitate answering the former. I wonder how many of us have taken the time to define those things? If conducting the interview, you again need to know what you want and in turn, to find out what they have to offer. The thinking remains the same, no matter which side of the conversation you find yourself.

Just like Ben, in our day-to-day interactions we are attempting to be seen and understood. In order to do that we each have to build solid relationships, continue to grow and learn and attain a fairly good level of self-knowledge. The conundrum we face? **How do we both fit in with society and stand out**, at the very same time, all while being true to ourselves? To start to understand how we might do this I am going to pose questions. Questions that if acted upon, may well lead to a greater understanding of your own distinctive story and your offer. The ability to clearly and impactfully tell someone about yourself will be a by-product of building the story of you.

Building your story will unmask you

The Albino Chameleon was born in an attempt to resolve this double dilemma, this confounding conundrum. By offering ideas, inspiring stories and the right questions, I hope to throw a little light on each of our stories as individuals. Shining that light on your talent, interests, attributes and motivations could lead, well, anywhere...



Building Your Story

You've Already Started

CHOOSING THE COLOURS OF YOUR CHAMELEON

A STANDARD RUN OF THE MILL Chameleon uses camouflage to protect and disguise itself. Discarding that camouflage is difficult; it's confronting, even confusing, but very necessary in this 'building your story' voyage.

Taking an edit of those superfluous ideas, beliefs, and relationships still hanging about out of pure habit is challenging. Other people's opinions, beliefs and objectives will form part

of that camouflage, they colour and influence our views and perceptions.

Once stripped away we have access to our original form, refreshing our thinking and objectives, realigning and redefining our chameleon colours.

*“There is always someone taller, blonder, t
hinner, richer, funnier with decidedly better teeth.
There is, however, nobody in the world just like you.”*

Kirsty Ferguson

THE FUTILITY OF COMPARISONS

“There is always someone taller, blonder etc...” is clearly a quote for the girls, a version of which could apply to anyone.

It’s a quote I use regularly when coaching to illustrate the futility of comparisons. Comparisons eat away at confidence and exacerbate self-judgement.

*“Why judge yourself when the rest of the world
is more than happy to do that for you?”*

Anonymous

I prefer instead to be my biggest ally. Using my differences like little bits of armour I carry around as reinforcement. They remind me not to care too much about the distraction of others. After all, who wants to be a normal everyday chameleon?

The angst and energy wasted by attempting to be the same, having to be the very best or needing to fit in can be redirected to more purposeful and personal aspirations.

Taking solace in the knowledge that while I may not be the absolute best at any one thing, I am very accomplished at a wide variety of things. This is called being a 'generalist'.

Is being the best better? Does it make for a happier life or make one more capable?

Reality shows us that the opportunity to be the expert or the highest achiever in any field is limited. If that is the only value we place upon ourselves or others, our world would lack diversity, we would overlook the contributions of those who think or act differently. Rather than striving to be the best under a benchmark that others have set, I prefer to commit to the things I want to do, irrespective of the thinking of the day. To put my own unique spin on them. So far that has served to create the same or similar sense of achievement.

When starting my business, I was often reminded to "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer." I took that to mean, "Know your competition and watch them like a hawk." Compare, analyse and stalk them in order to stay ahead of them.

I did that for a while as it appeared to be a common business tactic, however I quickly realised they were watching me! Not surprisingly, they were doing a lot of the same things I was doing and therefore creating a circle of sameness. Sometimes I felt as if I was reading my own copy, just on a different website.

That made me angry—angry and frustrated. How dare they!

I would rail around the office, asking, “Don’t they have a unique thought in their heads?” Going on and on, winding myself up and I am pretty sure, aggravating anyone within ear shot.

I was creating my own cycle and not a very effective one. So I stopped. Against the business norm, against my mentor’s advice, I stopped watching them all together.

Gradually that shut out the noise of my competitors, and it was a relief.

I asked my team to monitor the key plagiarizer (ok, maybe a little latent resentment floating about) and only tell me what they considered would be of interest to me... eventually my colleagues also ceased that practice. We were not learning anything from ‘Plagy’ and all it achieved was a distraction from our genuine focus and mission.

There are downsides to accepting the unlikelihood of being the expert at anything. We must then accept the unlikelihood of being the first to do anything. Most things have been done before. It’s more important to decide what you are going to do with what you have, and to do it with your individual style.

From a purely observational standpoint comparisons seem to create a sameness. “Ooh, that’s what they are doing, it must be ‘on trend’ so I should be doing it.” Trendsetters however do precisely the opposite. Trendsetters do things in their own way, on their schedule, with their vision, against the norm. They lead, irrespective of the standards of the day.

Often they appear immune to the criticism they are bombarded with on social media, the bullying at all levels of school and the glass ceiling or discrimination in the workplace. On the other hand, I am just as sure they are not. As I did, they stopped looking at their competition. They stopped looking at the negative comments, the trolls, the criticism and the plagiarizers.

They stopped worrying about their level of education, their unusual look or lack of experience. A newfound sense of confidence and direction replaced the suspicion and distraction the practice of comparison evoked.

‘Block’ is a social media function I consider a friend. Use it liberally in your edit process.



THE COMPARISON EDIT

Creating clarity around your chameleon colours.

Who do you follow, like, or associate with
that does not lift you up, listen, inspire,
make you happy or support you unconditionally?

Find them, then block them.



Find out more about
the book at
interviewchix.com

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