



Opportunities abound but you

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IN the land of opportunity, harvest time is now. I was in Perth recently for a weekend to catch up with some former Brumby's colleagues and to do a spot of fishing in that beautiful part of the world.

As we headed out in the luxury Riviera boat to Rottnest Island, I was struck by the relatively small size of Perth's CBD and that the skyline of North Sydney seemed larger than the whole of Perth CBD. This reinforced the fact that

Perth is one of the most isolated cities in the world without the depth of population to support their mining boom.

When we anchored at Marjorie Bay I was amazed by the number of luxury boats tied up.

The boat we were on was worth around \$1.4 million, whereas the value of a lot of the other boats started at \$5 million.

Since the UAE's downturn, Perth is one of the top spots for the purchase and resale of luxury boats, which is due to Western Australia's mining boom.

The amount of gas to be developed in northwestern WA is

equivalent to 100 years of the energy that comes out of Saudi Arabia, without even considering the mineral wealth.

On the Monday night I stayed in Perth's CBD, it was difficult to find a hotel room and the rates were more than twice those in Brisbane or Sydney.

We had to book well ahead to get a taxi the next day. Our cab driver told us we were lucky to get a taxi – it was quite common for people to miss their flights.

At the airport lounge, those in luminous vests outnumbered the usual large number of "suits" by a huge margin. Flights were

do have to seek them out

taking off every hour, presumably to mining towns, laden with FIFOs (fly-in, fly-outs). There were lots of Brits, Kiwis and retirees who had re-entered the workforce to take advantage of the boom times.

One Kiwi I spoke to spends two weeks working in the mines and two weeks living in Bali, which is far cheaper than returning home or renting a flat in Perth.

On the flight back to Brisbane I watched the Woody Allen movie *Midnight in Paris*, which has as its central theme the idea that the best opportunities in one's life exist right now despite

people's sentimental reflections on past golden eras.

With the current international economic woes, you can either wait out the uncertainty or you can start now the new golden era that is under way.

You need to identify those opportunities that suit your skill set and take advantage of them.

Back in Brisbane, I observed the airport had a similar high quota of hi-vis dress.

Queensland is a few years behind what is happening in WA, but has just as much, if not more, potential. Are you ready for the growing pains we are about to

experience that are so evident in WA? What can the new LNP Government do to avoid some of Perth's issues?

For Queensland businesses the real skill is to identify the opportunities and jump in.

The most obvious ones are in recruitment, the sale of luxury "toys", airport transfers, accommodation, etc; while in the FIFOs opportunities exist in entertainment, fitness, gourmet food and focused retail. What are the gaps you can identify?

Like Woody Allen's main character, take advantage of the opportunities we have now.