

Workshop Presentation -"Co-operation, Communication and Trust" Complementary Programs NESA 2003 national Conference

In the brave new world of:

- Active Participation
- Complementary Programs
- Job Seeker Accounts
- Customised Assistance
- Partnership Building
- Synergies and
- Regional and Industry "Profiling"

the question that I would like to ask many Job Network Members is this:

Do you have a relationship with your local Group Training Organisation?
If you don't – you should have.

Let me give you a few reasons why:

Group Training employs over 38,000 apprentices and trainees across the country.

Nation-wide – there are some 180 group training organisations with extraordinary grass roots contacts and networks.

GTO's account for nearly a quarter of all indigenous and disability trainees and apprentice placements.

GTO's are builders of social and training infrastructures across hundreds of communities.

GTO's play a key role in school to work transitions and in managing structured workplace programs;
and

GTO's specialise in "community" and business partnership building.

And they "industry profile" and monitor local skill shortages better than any NAC could ever hope to do.

In this era of "complementary programs" and renewed and improved "Co-operation, Communication and Trust" – it stands to good reason then that the "joining up" of Job Network Members and GTO's makes for good commercial and business sense.

At the moment – I believe the "shared understanding" between the two sectors is minimal (apart of course from the 12% of GTOs that are Job Network Members).

Indeed, in some jurisdictions – there are yawning gaps in the understanding of what each other does.

It is absolutely critical that better information and marketing exchanges exist within both sectors as to the value of potential partnering arrangements with each other.

The recent policy changes to Job Network 3 which will see GTO's treated on an equal basis in respect to referrals and the welcome adjustment to the JPO policy which places GTO's on a level playing field will hopefully intensify activity between the two sectors.

However – there are a number of other areas that deserve to be put under the spotlight.

A key one is with the New Apprenticeship Access Programme (NAAP).

NAAP is basically one of the few pre-vocational programs in existence for a myriad of "disadvantaged" labour market client groups.

GTA and Group Training Organisations have been pre-eminent in successfully rolling out this program since its inception 7 years ago.

With the “client for life” approach now upon us – it makes sense to me that a number of Job Network Members should seriously investigate the value of a program like NAAP and in partnering with a local GTO to deliver the program.

Moreover, GTO’s “specialise” in providing short, medium and long term employment solutions – depending on the individual clients needs.

Consequently, I believe GTOs’ represent real and new opportunities for how Job Network Members may “profile” their employment lists.

GTOs are committed (more than most) to long term employment and training solutions – as such they should be active and welcome participants in the Active Participation model – they can help dig people out of the customised assistance / intensive support black hole and offer genuine employment and training opportunities that previously may not have even been on the radar screen of the Job Network Member.

If we are all about securing better long term structural solutions as opposed to quick-fix short term outcomes – then I believe the benefits that can accrue to Job Network Members through partnering with and engaging their local group training organisation are many-fold. This renewed “emphasis” on “co-operation, communication and trust” is welcome.

Equally welcome is the intense focus on the importance of partnering and the need to investigate hooking up with complementary programs.

The past decade has ushered in enormous policy change in the delivery of employment and training services – in the stampede to totally change the landscape within a competitive environment– some have wondered whether we have forsaken some co-operation, communication and trust.

In seeking to encourage Job Network members to cast their net wider, to engage other groups in their community in efforts to find employment and training solutions to their clients needs, I believe a more genuine and broader “whole of community” approach can be delivered to Job Seekers.

And Group Training can and should play a key role in this new era of active participation.