



I was approached by Shellharbour City Council when the CEO was given a copy of my book, *Culture Fix*. When we met in person he had marked up almost every page of it!

The organisation had a strong set of values and the Executive Manager: People and Culture was tasked with producing learning programs that not only provided managers with practical leadership skills, but also with the skills to build and evolve great team cultures in line with their values.

The organisation has an indoor and outdoor workforce, so a common approach and multiple scenarios were required to connect people to each other and ensure that the learning is relevant for all.

I worked closely with the Executive Manager and her team to do the following:

- Read and understand their strategy, including their vision and values
- Understand the work done on culture
- Understand their language, opportunities and challenges faced by the council
- Understand the external factors affecting service delivery
- Understand the politics of the area and the expectations of councillors
- Understand the 'voice' of the council to ensure that this was consistent.

I created two distinct programs. The first focused on human-centred leadership and the practical skills that managers could use to get the best out of the individuals on their team. The second focused on the skills required to build vibrant team cultures. This involved specific team building exercises that could be replicated by managers regardless of where they worked in the organisation.

We ran three tranches of each program over an 18-month period and created such a buzz that people in non-management roles also wanted to get involved! The work also spawned a culture club - a group of employees dedicated to working with each other to continually improve the way that the organisation gets things done. The club still meets to this day!

Key learning outcomes:

- Managers understand the core skills required to lead
- A practical toolkit to help managers lead
- Managers understand what culture is and how to build and evolve vibrant team culture
- Executives and managers who know how to spot the culture that they have and the steps required to change it (if required)
- Development programs can be fun!

Key organisational outcomes:

- Improved engagement
- Managers better able to set expectations
- Improved performance AND performance management
- Reduced attrition of key staff
- Reduction in the 'them and us' mentality between indoor and outdoor staff
- Strong connection to values
- Increased pipeline of leaders.

Learnings for you:

- Public sponsorship from the CEO can work wonders for program commitment
- Bespoke programs ensure that the organisation and its employees get exactly what they need within their context of work
- Create easy to understand practices and exercises so that the content is immediately applicable day-to-day
- Find ways to bring managers from across the business together to generate empathy for each other's roles and responsibilities
- Co-creating the materials with an external expert ensures that you get the latest thinking and it adds credibility to your programs
- Create an experience, not a program, to ensure that it's something that people talk about for weeks and months.

Feedback from client:

"We engaged Colin over two years to support the delivery of our Leadership and Culture Program. Over 100 leaders were able to be part of the bespoke program delivery in building conscious leadership and great cultures in our organisation. This program was aspired to by our leaders and it was brought to life through Colin's unique delivery where he combines practical knowledge, clear actions, accountability and his ever-present humour in a call to change. It was inspiring, challenging, entertaining and powerful. The impact he made was tangible and I couldn't recommend him highly enough."

Kelly Stehr, Executive Manager, People and Culture