Leading Issues Journal

In this Issue

Time to Focus Learning on the Team

By Dr David Clutterbuck

As organisations continue to focus on how to capture human and organisational capital, Dr David Clutterbuck, one of Europe's most prolific and well-known management writers and thinkers discusses how this can be achieved with the premise that all organisations must be learning entities, or they die.

He explains that "The critical link between individual learning and organisational learning is the team. It is in the team that learning by the individual is most easily shared with others. It is in the team, too, that the organisation's aspirations and objectives can best be translated into learning goals and learning approaches."

How can teams best manage their learning?

Clutterbuck suggests that a "key part of team learning strategy is developing the learning networks that permit and encourage teams to cross-pollinate...To become a learning organisation, it is necessary to promote the freeing up of people to participate in a wide variety of teams at the same time. In this way, they can learn from the task, from the other individuals they work alongside and from the alternative resources to which those people introduce them."

More significantly, Clutterbuck argues that one of the most effective ways of sharing learning across teams is through mentoring. "Done well, this becomes a mutual learning opportunity with extensive spin-offs, both for the people directly involved and their team colleagues. In practice, well-managed mentoring is reflective space that bridges different pools of experience."

Pointing out that "the study of the learning team is a remarkable unexplored terrain," Clutterbuck believes that "the focus of learning will increasingly shift towards the team over the next decade," where "Learning how to learn together" will become the major focus in an organisation.

	Time to focus learning on the team
	By Dr David Clutterbuck

Dr David Clutterbuck is one of Europe's most prolific and well-known management writers and thinkers. He has written more than 40 books, and hundreds of articles. Co-founder of The European Mentoring Centre and of The item Group (the leading independent provider of internal communication solutions), David also runs a thriving international consultancy, Clutterbuck Associates, which specialises in helping people in organisations develop the skills to help others.

Time to Focus Learning on the Team

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If we are to accelerate the pace and quality of learning in organisations, far more attention needs to be placed on learning within the team, says David Clutterbuck.

Once upon a time there were only three ways of learning at work. You experimented for yourself, you were apprenticed to an experienced craftsperson or you learnt by observation and discussion within the work team. The idea of sending people to training courses is a relatively new invention and it is probably past its peak. Among the many problems with the classroom approach are that it is rarely timed to meet the specific learning the individual needs right now, that it tends towards the theoretical rather than the practical (not always a bad thing *per se*), and that it does little to address the work environmental issues that so often confound attempts to implement what has been learned.

These are well-documented complaints and many organisations are widening the portfolio of learning approaches to tackle them. In particular, e-training or e-learning (it had to come!), the just-in-time, customised offspring of computer-based training, shows great potential — especially as artificial intelligence engines develop to the point where they direct us to appropriate learning as and when we need it.

However, these advances only tackle half the problem. They perpetuate the focus on *individual* learning at the expense of the potentially more valuable learning of the team *as a whole*. The average tenure of an individual with an organisation is increasingly short at all levels from bottom to top. Concentrating on the education of individuals helps to fulfil the new psychological contract, whereby the organisation and the individual expect to add value to each other while they are in association. But once the individual has gone, so has his or her learning. The new techniques of knowledge management in part address the issue. They allow for the organisation to capture some of the factual and technical competence of the employee. But they cannot capture the *wisdom* —

the experience of applying experience the employee has accumulated.

The notion of the learning organisation originates in this desire by organisations to capture and distribute the accumulated know-how of their employees — a desire that is increasingly being challenged by employees who see this intellectual property as belonging by rights to them. The reality, of course, is that all organisations are learning entities, or they die. What counts is the effectiveness of how the organisation acquires, distributes and applies learning. Effectiveness of acquisition applies both within the organisation (learning people create) and outside (learning that they harvest from a wide variety of other sources).

The critical link between individual learning and organisational learning is the team. It is in the team that learning by the individual is most easily shared with others. It is in the team, too, that the organisation's aspirations and objectives can best be translated into learning goals and learning approaches. Yet the study of the learning team is a remarkable unexplored terrain. Very little work has been done internationally to identify how teams can best manage their learning.

I am not alone in believing that the focus of learning will increasingly shift towards the team over the next decade.

A key part of team learning strategy is developing the learning networks that permit and encourage teams to cross-pollinate. The most effective medium for doing so, however, is not by the techniques of knowledge management, with their emphasis on electronic data capture and storage; it is through the real-time dispersal of people.

To become a learning organisation, it is necessary to promote the freeing up of people to participate in a wide variety of teams at the same time. In this way, they can learn from the task, from the other individuals they work alongside and from the alternative resources to which those people introduce them.

One of the most effective ways of sharing learning across teams is through mentoring. Done well, this becomes a mutual learning opportunity with extensive spin-offs, both for the people directly involved and their team colleagues. In practice, well-managed mentoring is reflective space that bridges different pools of experience.

One of the most valuable processes to emerge out of our research and its application has been the development of the team learning plan. Appraisal systems typically identify a number of areas in which the individual can improve and may (or may not) form the basis of a personal development plan.

Once the mechanics have been worked through, it is not unusual for the employee to be left largely to his or her own devices as to how to fulfil these personal development objectives. At best, there is an understanding between

the employee and the manager about intentions to provide learning opportunities — either classroom, or new tasks or both.

Our experience is that teams can be taught how to manage their learning processes more effectively, and this can make a major contribution to organisational performance. Over the next few years, we expect the emphasis of training for teams to move away from how to do the job towards how to add value. Learning how to learn together will be an essential part of this.

How Individuals can Learn

Extract from 'Mentoring in Action' By Dr David Clutterbuck

According to Clutterbuck, the three main options for individuals are: Self-Tuition ; Learning from others in your organisation; Learning from external sources.

The Mentor Option, however, the fastest growing developmental tool at senior management levels has a number of key benefits over traditional training and development approaches. Clutterbuck briefly explores what is mentoring, what are the deliverables and what is required to set up a mentoring programme.

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How Individuals can Learn

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The three main options for individuals are:

Self-Tuition - for example, going on courses. This mode of learning is most effective when you have someone to act as a sounding board, with whom to talk through the issues. This discussion can stimulate further insight and reinforce the applicability of the learning

Learning from others in your organisation - the most effective self-learners establish a wide learning 'net' comprising people whom they regularly approach for learning. Surprisingly, the most valuable people in the learning net are not those directly senior to you, but your peers and often your direct reports. Consider asking your team members, 'What can I learn from you today?'

Learning from external sources - at the top it becomes more difficult, or more sensitive, to turn to your colleagues. This reticence may lead to the senior executive finding him or herself trapped into cycles of non-productive behaviour where there is no safe outlet. In this situation, an external mentor can provide an unthreatening sounding board for you to question assumptions and

behaviour that colleagues would not, or could not, challenge.

The Mentor Option

Mentoring is currently probably the fastest growing developmental tool at senior management levels. It has a number of key benefits over traditional training and development approaches.

People in very senior positions can rarely afford to take significant time away from their work. If they do attend, say, a two-week course at a top business school, they frequently find that the learning is not sufficiently customised to focus on their current issues, in their timescales. Mentoring overcomes both of these problems, usually taking place in regular slots of perhaps two hours, spread over a long period. It is a process driven by the learner, not the teacher.

Effective director mentors require a special mix of skills and abilities. They need to have had relevant experience - a chest full of wisdom, upon which they can draw, having 'been there, felt it, done it'. They need to have a portfolio of developmental skills, ranging from coaching and counselling to networking and facilitation - and the ability to use elements of these with appropriate timing. They need a number of personal attributes, not least of which are a high degree of integrity, a natural empathy, and an easy communication style. They should also show respect for others and their values, have the ability to work through unstructured issues and be able to listen.

The mentor may act as a sounding board or as a critical friend. His or her role is to provide 'reflective space' in which the executive has the opportunity to review key work and personal issues, to consider options for behaving differently and more effectively, and to test out ideas in an unthreatening environment with someone, who can be trusted both explicitly and implicitly.

Properly used, the skilled mentor makes a difference not only to the performance of the individual director or executive, but to the board as a whole. Developing boards and individual directors will be one of the core challenges for tomorrow's company. How well they meet that challenge will determine how well they compete, grow and position themselves for the future.

Mentoring: What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is one of the fastest growing methods of developing skills and talent in European organisations. It can be seen as the most intimate of learning approaches. One useful way of describing mentoring is that it is a means of assisting transitions in thinking patterns. Research into successful mentoring programmes indicates that they are normally:

- Relatively formal in the overall organisation, but with a great deal of flexibility

- Focused on clear learning objectives
- Supported by initial training of mentor and mentee
- Seen to benefit the mentee, the mentor and the organisation
- Introduced in a structured, planned manner

What are the deliverables?

The payoff from a mentoring programme will normally be a mixture of the following:

- Easier recruitment of the best talent
- More rapid induction of the new recruits
- Improved staff retention
- Improved Equal Opportunities performance
- Increased effectiveness of formal training
- Reinforcement of cultural change
- Improving networking
- Reinforcement of other learning initiatives
- The requirement and schedule

A mentoring programme requires an investment of resources to instil mentoring as a natural part of 'the way we do things'. This would involve:

- programme planning and development
- how should the programme be launched?
- who should it be aimed at?
- what are the methods for evaluating success?
- responsibilities of mentor and mentee

Responsibilities and Accountabilities of Boards and Directors

Extract from 'Mentoring in Action' by Dr David Clutterbuck

What is required to help people within senior management take the step from thinking like a manager to thinking like a director?

Based on Clutterbuck's findings of director's attitudes towards their own development, he suggests that there are six stereotypes: **The Arrogant:** 'I've learned all I need to know' type which is fortunately a shrinking category; **The Complacent:** 'I've not got that many years to go';**The Harassed:** 'I simply don't have the time to think about my own development' which is probably the largest grouping; **The Guilty:** 'I've got this development plan, but I haven't done anything about it' which comprises another large group; **The Development Fanatic:** who absorbs every management guru's latest book, reads Harvard Business Review, keeps several learning logs and is doing another PhD; **The Balanced Developer:** who relates learning to personal and business needs, emphasises learning by teaching and spends as much, if not more, time thinking as reading.

With the view that "If a board isn't developing in competence it is unlikely that the company is," Clutterbuck focuses on how a Board can create a Board Development Plan.

Back to November 2001 Leading Issues Journal	Extract from 'Mentoring in Action' By Dr David Clutterbuck

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Responsibilities and Accountabilities of Boards and Directors

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Not so many years ago, when a manager made it to the executive suite there was an assumption that the need for learning had largely passed. That isn't a tenable view any more. Increasingly, boards of all varieties are placing on the

agenda the development of both the board as a whole and the individual directors. They are also taking seriously the issue of how to help people within the senior management cadre take that critical but extremely difficult step from thinking like a manager to thinking like a director.

They are driven by a number of realisations. There is pressure from the general public to remedy the apparent disdain and indifference that businessmen and, more particularly, 'fat cat' directors and chief executives inflict upon their consumers. The flurry of corporate scandals around the world has fanned public concern into public outrage. Regulations to address public concerns about irregularities have been tightened up in the City and other financial centres. In the UK two high-profile committees, Cadbury and Greenwood, were established to review best practice and, despite criticism from some quarters about the focus on the financial elements of corporate governance, many plcs have adopted their recommendations. Furthermore, shareholders have begun to flex their muscles more adeptly and in the United States policies have been altered as a direct result of shareholder actions. This intensive spotlight on the machinations of the boardroom has undoubtedly heightened awareness of director's own responsibilities and accountabilities.

Our experience of director's attitudes towards their own development suggests that there are six stereotypes...

The Arrogant: 'I've learned all I need to know' type which is fortunately a shrinking category

The Complacent: 'I've not got that many years to go'

The Harassed: 'I simply don't have the time to think about my own development' which is probably the largest grouping

The Guilty: 'I've got this development plan, but I haven't done anything about it' which comprises another large group

The Development Fanatic: who absorbs every management guru's latest book, reads Harvard Business Review, keeps several learning logs and is doing another PhD

The Balanced Developer: who relates learning to personal and business needs, emphasises learning by teaching and spends as much, if not more, time thinking as reading.

How to develop boards and directors

If a board isn't developing in competence it is unlikely that the company is. Yet relatively few boards have written Board Development Plans - detailed descriptions of the collective competence the board will require to face future

threats and opportunities, and how these will be acquired.

To create a Board Development Plan, the board needs to gain insight into:

- The current and desired quality of debate and questioning: achieving the right level of focus, constructive challenge and probing is not easy. Continuous improvement is critically important
- The quality, relevance and comprehensiveness of information provided. A variety of studies have passed comment on the poor quality of the documentation which many companies provide to their boards. The right balance between exhaustive detail and executive summary ensures that the discussion is well-informed
- The balance of capability and roles around the table. There are at least 14 key roles that need to be played within the effective board. Not everyone has to play all of them - indeed, it would require a chameleon to do so - but they all have to be covered. They also need to be respected and valued by the board as a whole, as part of the essential diversity that makes for meaningful debate
- The degree of 'collaborative independence' shown by the members. By collaborative independence we mean the ability to take an independent, objective view of the company as a whole and as a sum of the parts. For executive directors this means effectively leaving their functional allegiances at the door when they engage in a board discussion. For non-executives, it means that, although they have been nominated by a particular external entity (eg, a shareholder group, a large individual shareholder or bank) their duties are to the company as a whole. This last point is particularly topical as increasing numbers of non-executives believe that the company is not the shareholders but the stakeholders. The term 'stakeholder' embraces a wider audience than shareholder and could include suppliers, customers and the local community, for example
- How the board relates to stakeholders (in particular, employees and shareholders), especially in terms of communication and credibility. In many companies, employees have little or no idea what the board does, how it adds value, nor even who is on it and why!

Key Issues Facing Law in the 21st Century

Key issues facing the legal profession in the 21st century were identified in a wide-ranging Discussion Paper released on 14 September 01, by the Law Council of Australia.

The results of a two year study by a special Law Council Taskforce headed by President, Anne Trimmer, the 2010 Discussion Paper examines, among other things, the type of environment the legal profession faces in the next 10 years, the threats and opportunities this new environment generates, and how best to

prepare for the future.

Put together after close consultation with legal practitioners, members of the judiciary, academics and regulators and drawing on the experiences of the American and Canadian Bar Associations, the Discussion Paper canvasses the present funding of legal education, the changing impact of technology on the legal profession, hours of work and pay, career satisfaction, equal opportunity, the need for a balanced lifestyle, clients and billing practices and calls for national uniform standards.

"The Discussion Paper sets out to establish, through research and interviews, the key drivers of change that will shape the future of the legal profession over the next 10 to 20 years," Ms Trimmer said. "It should be used as a means to excite further debate within the profession and the community about the place and role of lawyers in a modern society."

"I would like lawyer organisations, law schools, law firms and the wider community to use the material in the Discussion Paper as a means of generating discussion and outcomes. While there are issues covered in the Discussion Paper that lend themselves to future policy development by the Law Council, there are also many issues that can be taken up at a local level."

The Discussion Paper says legal practices in the 21st century will be infinitely different from the workplaces of the last century, which were characterised by long hours, formal structures and billable hours. This is largely because of the expectations and aspirations of legal practitioners themselves. This is particularly true of women, who constitute the majority of law school graduates, and members of the so-called generation X who favour an appropriate work-life balance - recognition, variety and challenge - over money.

The Discussion Paper also establishes that one issue of major concern to lawyers is the 'paradox of change.' Lawyers are grappling with the challenges of deregulation, competition and technology while, at the same time, emphasising the core values of the legal profession. "This is not only because they go to the essence of being lawyers, but also because adherence to these core values may provide lawyers with a competitive edge against other service providers."

Ms Trimmer also says "The Discussion Paper recognises the increasing need to develop uniform standards in all areas of regulation of the profession as the profession becomes increasingly mobile, and with the growth of firms practising across state borders."

In its profile of the legal profession, the 2010 Discussion Paper also reveals that:

- 73.3% of all legal practitioners are male.
- 68.2% of employees in legal aid offices and community legal centres are female.

- Women are over-represented in the lower levels of the profession and under represented in the senior ranks and they leave in disproportionate numbers.
- Women lawyers generally earn less than their male counterparts.
- New technologies have created instant, cost effective access to legal resources making time spent less relevant in determining legal fees.
- Billing practices impact on clients as well as lawyers who face immense pressure to meet billable target hours.
- Most Australian solicitor practices are small: 56.3% have no more than 4 staff but 1.1% of practices employ 31.5% of all practising solicitors.
- Property including conveyancing is the most commonly practised area of law and commercial law earns the highest level of fees.
- Solicitors performed an average of 71 hours pro bono work during 1998/99. During the same period barristers undertook an average of 132 hours. A key factor among young lawyers when applying for jobs is the opportunity to participate in a pro bono scheme.

Source and copyright: Law Council of Australia

To view the Executive Summary of The 2010 Discussion Paper and and the full Discussion Paper, click the link for the Law Council section of the publications page. From here, you will be able to access both items:
http://www.lawcouncil.asn.au/publications.html#LCA

Bringing Home the Truth

By Justine Daly

Bringing Home the Truth was written by Justine Daly for *Reportage Online*, the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism's (ACIJ) web magazine dedicated to high quality independent journalism. The ACIJ is part of the University of Technology, Sydney and is a non-profit organisation aiming to promote high quality journalism, particularly investigative journalism.

Justine Daly is a South African journalist who recently completed her Masters in Journalism at the University of Technology, Sydney. During her time in Australia, Ms. Daly became interested in the 'Stolen Generations' issue due to its potent influence on many Australian's everyday existence. Ms. Daly has since returned to live in South Africa and continues to explore social justice issues in her work.

Four years after Sir Ronald Wilson presented to the Federal Government *The Bringing Them Home Report*, he reflects on the criticism that the Report has received, how it changed his life and why the Government refused to support it.

"What they found shocked the nation, revealing Australia's neatly airbrushed history of forced removals. During the peak period of the assimilation policy, the 1920s and 50s, almost one child in three was taken

and institutionalised.

Two-thirds were under the age of five.

The lucky ones told of being fostered into good homes with all the benefits of a Western upbringing, but said they always felt like outcasts, shunned by both white and black.

Others told stories relating the torment of physical or sexual abuse at the hands of their carers, while some, middle-aged and with families of their own, had only just discovered their Aboriginality.

"It changed my life," Sir Ronald says. "Having middle-aged Aboriginal women weeping in front of you before they could even start to tell you their story, then to think I represented the race that had done these things - it was awful. Yet I was overwhelmed with a sense that they trusted me."

The great pity about the public's focus on the finding of genocide is that the report's other important conclusions and recommendations have been undermined.

Of the report's 54 recommendations, an apology from the State and Federal governments acknowledging Aboriginal Australians' suffering, and some form of monetary compensation, were at the top of the list."

Bringing Home the Truth

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Sir Ronald Wilson

Genocide… It's one word among thousands but taken in isolation it damned an entire report, says Sir Ronald Wilson.

More than four years after Sir Ronald presented the Bringing Them Home report to the Federal Government, the furore surrounding the inquiry into the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people remains undiminished.

Recently Paul Kelly, international editor of The Australian, wrote: "The Bringing

Them Home report gave the victims a voice they had been denied and it highlighted a moral issue for the nation; yet its methodology was so flawed and its verdict of genocide so extreme that it provided no resolution to the injustice it identified."

Sir Ronald expressed shock at Kelly's view, adding that anyone who misunderstood the use of the word "genocide" has misread the report, allowing three or four pages in a 689-word document to colour their entire perception of the issue.

"I challenge anyone who challenges the methodology of the report, given the resources and time that we had. We reported the evidence we were given and we reported it faithfully", he said.

Referring to a conference in Western Australia in 1936 that focused on promoting assimilation, the report found that assimilation slowly eradicated Aboriginal culture by forcing Australian children of mixed descent to grow up in Western society.

Sir Ronald points to laws passed in the same state the same year that extended the Aboriginal affairs protector's legal guardianship over Aboriginal children up to the age of 21 and extinguishing any capacity, legal or otherwise, that the parents had to stop their child being taken away from them.

"It was genocide," says the former president of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Committee. "Although I didn't know it in the beginning, there's no doubt."

To make the point he notes the definition formulated under the 1948 Genocide Convention, which describes genocide as the destruction of the nature and character of one group by merging it with a larger group.

"In retrospect it's a pity we used the word. I guess we were concerned about making the case for reparation as strong as we could. But the validation for using it is still there — I've read it again and there's no reason to think that it would be any different if we were doing it again today."

Sir Ronald readily admits he had no idea what he was getting himself into in May 1995 when the then Labor government commissioned him to head the inquiry, alongside the Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner, Mick Dodson.

Controversial from its inception, the report upset those who did not want to be reminded of Australia's dark history of white rule — that period between 1910 and 1970 when 45,000- 55 000 Aboriginal children were taken from their families and placed in foster or institutional care.

Over the course of two years Sir Ronald and Mr Dodson travelled throughout

the country calling for Australians in every capital city and many rural Aboriginal communities to come forward and give evidence.

During that time they examined more than 1000 written reports and received 777 submissions from individuals and organisations.

What they found shocked the nation, revealing Australia's neatly airbrushed history of forced removals. During the peak period of the assimilation policy, the 1920s and 50s, almost one child in three was taken and institutionalised.

Two-thirds were under the age of five.

The lucky ones told of being fostered into good homes with all the benefits of a Western upbringing, but said they always felt like outcasts, shunned by both white and black.

Others told stories relating the torment of physical or sexual abuse at the hands of their carers, while some, middle-aged and with families of their own, had only just discovered their Aboriginality.

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The great pity about the public's focus on the finding of genocide is that the report's other important conclusions and recommendations have been undermined.

Of the report's 54 recommendations, an apology from the State and Federal governments acknowledging Aboriginal Australians' suffering, and some form of monetary compensation, were at the top of the list.

However, despite most Australian churches, and all state and territory parliaments (except for the Northern Territory), apologising for past policies, the Federal Government has persistently refused to apologise on behalf of all Australians, and has ignored the report's recommendations of compensation.

And despite the government's promises to allocate $63 million in funding to aid "practical assistance", by May last year, only $13 million had been spent.

Sir Ronald blames the Government's lack of support on the fact that the idea for the inquiry originated while Labor was in office,

"They didn't have that sense of ownership as they would if it was their idea, so they poured cold water on the usefulness of the report."

According to Sir Ronald, the process of saying sorry has been proved throughout the world as a significant healing gesture, and, although an apology acknowledges the suffering of others, it does not have to imply guilt.

"John Howard doesn't think it's appropriate to say sorry for something that happened a long time ago and was in accordance with the laws of the time. Well, the report deals with contemporary suffering — people who have been away from their mothers for 30 years or more. Healing can only take place when the successor to those who made the laws expresses their regret and recognises the suffering caused."

By giving the Stolen Generations the chance to recall painful childhood memories, he believes the Bringing Them Home report has already kick-started this healing process.

Families have been reunited and many Aborigines report a sense of finally finding their true identities. But until a formal apology is made, the past will always overshadow the present.

Even today many indigenous Australians suffer from loss of self-esteem, lack of parenting skills, domestic violence and substance abuse — the festering symptoms of an unbandaged wound.

"People don't get over this kind of excessive control, it just kills their spirit," Sir Ronald says.

He says he will never forget one young man who appeared before the Inquiry:

David, 25, had been fostered by a wealthy white family that did everything it could for him, but at the age of 15 he asked a white girl to his school dance and "all hell broke loose".

Fearing further rejection, he turned to drugs and crime, and by his early 20s was a "complete wreck". By being brought up in Western society he had become stuck in the middle - estranged from his Aboriginality and rejected by his adopted culture.

In David's submission was one short sentence: "I love mum and dad, but I don't know who I am."

For Sir Ronald, this sums up Aboriginal anguish. "I don't know who I am — that's just about the worst thing you could wish on another human being. Because without knowing who you are and where you come from, you're adrift."

This article was written by Justine Daly and published on 14th June, 2001 on Reportage Online, a web magazine of the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism's (ACIJ), part of the University of Technology, Sydney. Photo courtesy

of ACIJ Reportage.

The Success Factors - Managing Change in Regional and Rural Australia

The Success Factors - Managing Change in Regional and Rural Australia - a Report by the Regional Women's Advisory Council describing the key ingredients for managing change was released on 27 September 01.

The Council members are Jenny Hawkins (NSW); Janice Richardson (TAS); Elaine McKeon AO (QLD); Jenny Russell (QLD); Sue Middleton (WA); Elspeth Radford (SA); Moira O'Brien (NT); and Margaret Smith AO (NSW) and Cathy McGowan from Victoria. Established in September 1999, the Council advises the Deputy Prime Minister about issues affecting women in regional Australia.

*In 1999, the Hon John Anderson MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services, asked, "What is it that makes some regional, rural and remote communities 'work' while other communities struggle?" and "How can Government support communities?". As he consulted with communities around the country, he noted two quite different types of response to change.

The first type is presented in this study as 'successful at managing change'. It is characterised by an enthusiastic 'do it yourself' approach. The residents of these communities are 'up and at it' people.

The second general type of response is seen in communities that appear to be overwhelmed by change and have not as yet, begun to deal with it. The Minister wanted to know what made the difference.

The Minister asked the Regional Women's Advisory Council (the Council) to identify and advise on the characteristics of communities that successfully deal with change.

Action research was conducted in seven diverse communities across Australia, covering each State and the Northern Territory. Each was considered by external observers to be successful. The communities chosen were:

- Denmark (Western Australia)
- Griffith (New South Wales)
- Ceduna (South Australia)
- Hamilton (Victoria)
- Devonport (Tasmania)
- Tennant Creek (Northern Territory), and
- Cloncurry (Queensland) *

Launch Speech by Cathy McGowan

The Success Factors - Managing change in regional and rural Australia Report by the Regional Women's Advisory Council :

Executive Report &Major findings of the study and implications

The Success Factors - Managing change in regional and rural Australia Report

Launch Speech by Cathy McGowan

The Regional Women's Advisory Council was set up two years ago with representatives from all around Australia. The main purpose of Council is to give advice to government and Dept of T&RS. Our special project has been to provide "advice on managing change in rural, regional and remote Australia (tripple Rs)" The result is this report - The Success Factors.

The research project

In an early meeting Minister Anderson outlined his interest in the topic and posed the question "from your perspective, as women, why are some communities managing change well, and others not so?"

The Regional Women[1]s Unit in the Department of Transport and Regional Services managed the research project (and funded it). There have been a number of stake holders:

The research team Independent facilitator, researchers, case study communities, and our local co-ordinators
Communities in Australia both rural and non rural are very keen to learn the results.
All Governments (Federal, state and local) envisaged the results would have significant input into policy.

Process of research

Seven diverse communities were selected and we began a year ago in Denmark, WA in August 2000.
We have used action research methodology and open systems theory;
Local co-ordinators were involved as partners who were able to "harness" the movers and shakers in the community.

And the results are very practical Individual community reports, today's launch of the main report and a technical report is also available.

Key findings

<u>First</u> **Feelings**

The way people feel about their community has the most significant impact on a community's ability to manage change. This isn't rocket science. We have always know that feelings are important. Take the stock market for example: it's conventional wisdom that the level of confidence is directly related to movements in the market.

The research showed that when a community feels positive,
… where there is a level of trust,
… pride, joy, commitment and courage
… celebrations,
… optimism,
… sense of fun,
… of involvement,
… applauding success,
… they have managed success.

The women were very clear and strong on this point! Feelings about one's community and its success in managing change are very closely related; that a sense of belong to the community is very important, so too is caring for people and the environment and doing good for all people.

In the same way, poor change management is related to where there are negative feelings, disillusionment, sense of powerlessness, dislocation, reluctance to be involved, and a sense of no support.

<u>Second</u> **Role of Volunteers**

The research has highlighted the special role of volunteers in creating these positive feelings in the community. Where people have a sense of connectedness and inclusion, they are prepared to become involved and these feelings becomes self-generating.

Adversely if there are feelings of powerlessness or exclusiveness, there is a feeling of frustration and unwillingness to become involved, volunteers tend to burn out, new volunteers are hard to find.

<u>Third</u> **Other factors**

Another interesting finding in the research was the importance of diversity. Not only of skills, age, backgrounds and experiences, but also of the economic base.

There are many examples in the research where communities are diversifying their economic base, creating new enterprises and the result, often results in joy-filled festivals and celebrations, such as in Ceduna, the very successful Oyster festival. Women have played an important role in creating and developing these opportunities. It's very appropriate that many of these women of action are profiled in the book "Women Taking Action" also being launched today.

Strategy where to now?

The regional statement issued by our Minister three weeks ago announced an innovative, strategic and planned approach to managing change in regional Australia. This framework, coupled with The Success Factors and a number of other report (Small Town Renewal - RIRDC report) offers great hope for the continued growth and development of regional, rural and remote Australia. The Report outlines three strategies

… Target communities where change is or can be perceived to have impact
… Particularly pay attention to involving young people and encouraging & supporting them to be part of volunteering
… Train (enhance) community people in the skills of working in an inclusive way have communities working with each other.

Role/s for Governments

Government[1]s role is clearly to be a partner, to support, and encourage.
… To help with the targeting of communities.
… Where appropriate, to provide a starting point,
… To facilitate the financial and social infra structure roads, telecommunication, health education, etc.
… To support voluntarism in our communities.
… To make it easier, not harder.

For all levels of government it is essential that recognition be given, and people understand that the way government works its practice and policy - can and obviously does - impact on feelings in community. Government is a player.

Researchers & Academic Institutions

The Success Factor report, clearly makes the link between feeling good and successful managing of change. Now we need to better understand the economic implications of this. For example the benefit cost implications between policy interventions.

Role for Media

For all our friends in the media, we need your help to get the message out to

those who couldn't be here today tell the story; inspire others to "begin".

Our role -women and men in rural communities

The magic of this report is that it is for us! It is about what we, in this room, our friends and colleagues can do.

First to those who are "doing it" warm congratulations and thanks. Trust what you know, your experience. Our request is that in a spirit of generosity, you share your knowledge and mentor others.

For those who live in communities where things are hard, and for those who want to know where to start, may I be bold enough to offer a few suggestions:

1. Get involved. Only needs two other people (3's a great start)

2. Start with something easy: a coffee morning, cupp-a -tea, BBQ, dinner party, picnic, garden walk.

3. Invite others think diversity - think young people, new comers to the community. Invite others "in"

And when's *A great time to start would be October 15, World Rural Women's Day.* To celebrate WRWD why not do something special, generate those positive feelings, but make it easy.

Remember that Government are our partner check out the website grantslink.. or ring (free call) Country link 1800 026222 and ask them to send some information on programs. Contact the state based Rural Women's Networks.

In conclusion thank you to all our partners in this research project. It has been a major undertaking and as Chair of the Regional Women's Advisory Council I am proud and pleased to work with all our stakeholders. We have walked the talk of partnership, respect and commitment.

And finally ... my hope is that **The Success Factors** does for rural, regional and remote Australia what spring does for the cherry tree.

Executive Summary of The Success Factors - Managing change in regional and rural Australia Report

The purpose of this research was:

To identify the critical success factors, particularly those relating to community

capacity (human capital) that facilitate the economic/ employment, social and environmental outcomes for communities experiencing change.

In 1999, the Hon John Anderson MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services, asked, "What is it that makes some regional, rural and remote communities 'work' while other communities struggle?" and "How can Government support communities?". As he consulted with communities around the country, he noted two quite different types of response to change.

The first type is presented in this study as 'successful at managing change'. It is characterised by an enthusiastic 'do it yourself' approach. The residents of these communities are 'up and at it' people.

The second general type of response is seen in communities that appear to be overwhelmed by change and have not as yet, begun to deal with it. The Minister wanted to know what made the difference.

The Minister asked the Regional Women's Advisory Council (the Council) to identify and advise on the characteristics of communities that successfully deal with change. In response, the Council commissioned an action research project in regional, rural and remote communities across Australia, during 2000 and 2001. The Regional and Rural Women's Unit within the Department of Transport and Regional Services managed the project and were active members of the research team..

Action research was conducted in seven diverse communities across Australia, covering each State and the Northern Territory. Each was considered by external observers to be successful. The communities chosen were:

- Denmark (Western Australia)
- Griffith (New South Wales)
- Ceduna (South Australia)
- Hamilton (Victoria)
- Devonport (Tasmania)
- Tennant Creek (Northern Territory), and
- Cloncurry (Queensland).

Rapid global and national economic and social change has profoundly affected rural and regional Australia. Such changes as migration to the coastal belt, relocation of services from smaller to larger centres and industrial restructuring along with improvements in efficiency, have left rural and regional Australia scrambling to adapt.

Evidence of the impacts of these changes includes:

- young people are leaving to find education, employment and greater

self-esteem
- volunteers are ageing and burning out as demand for their services increases, and
- others are reluctant to get involved.

Previous studies have shown that not all communities are coping well with the changes and the resulting uncertainty - but some are. The seven communities in this study were selected because they were judged to be relatively successful at managing this change and could be expected to be able to identify the major factors that had contributed to their success.

A program of action research was conducted in these seven communities, with women who were selected by the communities themselves. Women have long been the backbone of community volunteering and are responsible for many of the success stories in Australia today. The views of these rural and regional women needed to be heard clearly and strongly.

The project was done in two phases. The first phase involved the first three communities and explored all the factors/variables and the best way of approaching them in rural and regional Australia. The second reviewed all the findings of the first phase and developed a standardised research format and process to apply to the remaining four communities. The research comprised workshop and questionnaire components and had the explicit joint purposes of making a contribution to:

- knowledge about the factors in successful community development, and
- the communities with which it worked, through its action component in particular.

It integrated workshop and questionnaire data in its search for the major factors in, and barriers to, success at managing change, including and testing all major factors and barriers found in previous studies, in the words the women in the exploratory phase used in their workshops.

The major finding of this study is that the way the women feel about their communities:

- makes the largest direct contribution to ratings of success at managing change, and
- is the link between the factors involved in being successful and those ratings of success.

Conceptual factors ◀▶ sense of community ◀▶ **positive feelings** ◀▶ success

Questionnaire data showed the factors, grouped into their concepts, led to a sense of community that then led to positive feelings about the community and ratings of success. However, the workshop data showed that when the women

became more positive, they also had a greater sense of community and determination to do more. Factors in success, a sense of community and feeling positive spiral upwards together to produce more success.

While feelings have been implicated as important factors in other studies, this study appears to be the first to identify them as the single most important success factor in managing change. This is demonstrated by the following findings:

- positive feelings make the largest contribution to high ratings of success
- negative feelings make the largest contribution to low ratings of success
- trust was the only factor that made an additional contribution to success, and
- the reluctance to get involved was the only factor that made an additional contribution to a lack of success.

Statistical analyses found that the factors that make the largest contribution to 'positive feelings' are volunteering and a set of factors that lead to more ideal communities (called 'ideals' in this report). These ideals are:

- a sense of belonging, or in this case, sense of community
- caring for, and cultivating, growth
- 'doing good' for all people, and
- appreciating beauty and the importance of leading full lives in a healthy environment.

Confirming previous studies, we found that the factors that make the largest contribution to the set of ideals are:

- working in responsible, democratic groups
- trust and an environment that encourages this trust
- strong community leaders, and
- creativity.

The barriers that make the largest contribution to the development of negative feelings about communities are:

- economic rationalism at the local level (demonstrated by 'not including the broader community in future planning', and 'not planning for the next generation of leaders and volunteers')
- superficiality ('the amount of drug and alcohol use'), and
- 'inadequate support for rural and regional Australia' (which is linked to, or results from, economic rationalism at the national level).

The identification of economic rationalism and the reluctance to get involved as major barriers illustrate trends that have developed in Australian culture over time. The workshop data also showed that social polarisation, described in this

report as 'making distinctions between people', is a widespread barrier. This finding supports another recent Australian study and suggests there has been a major shift in Australian culture - there was no evidence of social polarisation twenty years ago.

The women also frequently mentioned social engineering as having had a significant impact on their communities. This reflects recent economic and social changes and confirms that these changes have profoundly affected rural and regional Australia.

This study has reaffirmed the vital importance of volunteering in rural and regional communities. However, it also shows that the reluctance by many to make a commitment is significantly reducing the rate of volunteering. When younger people in particular see others being reluctant to get involved in community activities, it reduces the chance that they will volunteer.

As demographers suggest, smaller centres will continue to be most affected by social and economic change and they are at greater risk of becoming demoralised over time. Younger people need more opportunities to create and implement their own ways of increasing the community's options, viability and quality of life.

The study suggests a strategy to simultaneously achieve:

- an increase in volunteering
- a reduction in people's reluctance to get involved, and
- more widespread success.

The critical factor is to get more people involved. Volunteering is contagious - it leads to more volunteering. The strategy translates into a further program of action research focusing on smaller centres and young people - the future leaders.

This program requires an additional workshop component to train a selection of rural and regional people in the best principles and practices of action research. This would:

- avoid potential problems
- build further capacity to manage change successfully
- reduce dependence on outside resources, and
- increase the chances of sustainability.

The workshop could itself be a motivating and energising experience, generating more of the positive feelings that have been critical to success in managing change.

Major findings of the study and implications

Some of the following findings of this study would appear to have implications for policy-making at all levels of government, and for organisations working in rural and regional Australia.

1. The demographic and industrial diversity of rural and regional Australia was confirmed. Communities also identified a diverse range of barriers they had encountered. People from different generations and backgrounds felt differently about changes in their communities. The extent of this diversity confirms that 'one size definitely does not fit all' in rural and regional Australia.

2. Volunteering has consistently been identified in the study as a critical factor for the future success of rural and regional communities. It has been the single most important factor in people feeling good about their communities, and hence working for their communities' greater success. Yet the rate of volunteering is declining at a time when it is most needed to increase. Older volunteers are burning out and younger people are being discouraged from participating by the prevalence of barriers that make them feel negative about their communities.

3. The most serious barrier identified was people feeling negative about their community. The second most serious barrier was the reluctance of some to get involved. When young people see this reluctance in others, they are less likely to volunteer themselves. The women put 'giving kids opportunities to be involved' high on their list of important factors - they consider it critical that these opportunities are provided. Young people can work together in responsible groups, creating and implementing their own solutions to the dilemmas they face. In the process, they gain a sense of purpose. These dilemmas include inadequate educational and employment opportunities and a lack of recognition of their achievements. If youth continues to desert rural and regional Australia, where will the next generation of leaders and volunteers come from?

4. Economic rationalism contributed most powerfully to negative feelings. Communities want to, and given half a chance can, overcome their barriers - particularly those at the local level. Discrete problems, such as the level of drug and alcohol use, have led some to develop negative feelings about their communities. However, they have also been the catalyst for older volunteers to initiate community action. Broad State, national and international policies or philosophies, such as economic rationalism, present greater difficulties for communities. However, even here, some had made successful efforts to compensate for losses incurred within their communities. Once again the critical point is that some communities need opportunities to get started on the process of feeling better about themselves and developing success stories.

5. This study has improved our understanding of how best to strategically intervene in rural and regional communities. It has also demonstrated that communities have significant knowledge and resources available to work together to successfully deal with change. Communities have no problem

identifying their leaders who can turn barriers into opportunities. With a little topping-up of this knowledge, and advice on how to avoid potential problems, more communities can successfully manage the changes, and resulting challenges, they are facing.

From Family to Region - Building Links for a Sustainable Future

By Cathy McGowan, President, Australian Women in Agriculture

Cathy is the national President of Australian Women in Agriculture, (AWiA) the peak organisation representing women with an interest in agriculture. She is also the chair of The (National) Regional Women's Advisory Council. This Council advises the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services on policy issues relevant to communities in rural, regional and remote Australia. In September 01, The Australian Financial Review nominated Cathy McGowan in the NGO section as one of the five most powerful people in her role as President of AWiA and Chair of the Regional Women's Advisory Council.

The speech, "From Family to Region - Building links for a sustainable future," was presented by Cathy McGowan as part of the Darling Downs Sustainable Regional Development Seminar Series by the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) in Toowoomba on June 4th, 2001.

Based on her experience of being part of the 6th generation of farmers in northeast Victoria, working and living in the community with other farming families around the Darling Downs, Cathy explores what sustainable regional development needs to incorporate and be based on. She argues that various levels of understanding are critical for such development to occur as she moves from the big picture, the local economy and environment, to the microcosm, the family unit and the individuals therein.

"It is my assumption that in regional Australia - People can and do make a difference; people can and do learn and change, and people gathered in families make a particular type of difference. Their emotions, their goals, their needs and aspirations, their values, their history and their relationships all have a big role to play in sustainable regional development."

She advises that governments "Put families at the heart of policy," that Regional Universities can research, document and articulate local knowledge. While Universities can "teach us new and different skills; of conflict resolution of

succession planning, they can reward and acknowledge the characteristics of community building and sustainable development."

Her conclusion, "Our role is to remind others that it will be the people, working in their families and communities who create sustainable regions, " is echoed in "The Success Factors - Managing Change in Regional and Rural Australia" introduced above.

"The way people feel about their community has the most significant impact on a community's ability to manage change... The research showed that when a community feels positive, … where there is a level of trust, … pride, joy, commitment and courage … celebrations, … optimism, … sense of fun, … of involvement, … applauding success, … they have managed success... In the same way, poor change management is related to where there are negative feelings, disillusionment, sense of powerlessness, dislocation, reluctance to be involved, and a sense of no support." (The Success Factors Report)

From family to region - building links for a sustainable future

By Cathy McGowan

Cathy McGowan

Cathy McGowan was born and raised in North East Victoria, Australia. Cathy completed her undergraduate degree at Monash University in Victoria, where she majored in Economics and History.

She was awarded her Masters degree in Applied Science in Agriculture and Rural Development from the University of Western Sydney at Hawkesbury (NSW) where she studied the role and contribution of women to Australian Agriculture. Cathy is now employed (on a part time basis) by Hawkesbury supporting post graduate students.

However her main work is as a rural community consultant. In this capacity Cathy has worked for 16 years in the fields of social, community and political research. She has particular expertise in the area of participatory approaches to community consultations. Cathy has undertaken projects with a diverse range of agricultural organisations, including the dairy and wool industries. She has researched and presented position papers for various community and government agencies on rural development issues both in Australia and

overseas; she is a skilled trainer and has developed training material for community and industry organisations.

Her research experience covers many topics including, social issues impacting on the dairy industry, the delivery of support services in rural areas, such as child care and palliative care for farm families, rural health issues and leadership skills.

She is currently commissioned by the Horticulture Research and Development Corporation (HRDC) to develop leadership programs to enhance women's contribution to the horticultural industries. In this context she is working with farmers, manufactures and industry organisations.

Cathy is the national President of Australian Women in Agriculture, (AWiA) the peak organisation representing women with an interest in agriculture. She is also the chair of The (National) Regional Women's Advisory Council. This Council advises the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services on policy issues relevant to communities in rural, regional and remote Australia.

In October 01 the Women in Dairy project won an international award for excellence in extension (given by the Australian Pacific Extension Network) Cathy has been one of the managers of this project. The Australian Financial Review nominated Cathy McGowan in the NGO section as one of the five most powerful people in her role as President of AWiA and Chair of the Regional Women's Advisory Council. (AFR Sept 28th, Power in Australia). On Oct 15 - World Rural Women's Day, the Governor General launched a book in Orange, NSW "Ordinary Lives Extraordinary People" by Margaret Carroll which profiles a number of rural people, including Cathy McGowan.

Cathy enjoys farming and gardening and actively participates in local community projects such as landcare.

From Family to Region - Building Links for a Sustainable Future

By Cathy McGowan, President, Australian Women in Agriculture

Darling Downs Sustainable Regional Development Seminar Series, University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Toowoomba June 4th, 2001

"If we keep going in the same direction, we shall end up where we are headed."

In this inaugural lecture, I am proposing that families play a pivotal role in regional development. I will be offering practical suggestions on ways of involving families; suggestions based around family friendly processes for regional development and sustainability.

I am delighted to give this address for a number of reasons. "From Family to Region - building links for a sustainable future" My first reason is personal. Toowoomba and the Darling Downs are an important part of my life and that of my "family". Members of my extended family live here. It is a place for holidays, adventures and family connected-ness. Through the efforts of my sister-in-law I have been introduced to some of the history of this most historic part of Australia. I have come to know the many characters and stories which form the basis of our shared national ethos. These include the locations and stories of Mary Grant Bruce Billabong, Steel Rudd's and the Durak family. I have a personal interest in this community building a sustainable future.

The second reason is professional. I work in the area of Rural Sociology. In my work as a rural community consultant, I strive to better understand why we do, what we do and how we can do it better. Currently, I am employed at the University of Western Sydney at Hawkesbury (NSW) in agricultural and rural development. One of the subjects I 'teach' is based around the skills of building sustainable communities. Many of my students are parents, they are also residents of regional Australia and their priorities include sustainable families living in sustainable regions.

Another reason is my interest in public policy and working with governments to support rural communities. I am Chair of the (Federal) Regional Women's Advisory Council. This group works with the Department of Transport and Regional Services and provides advice to the Deputy Prime Minister Mr John Anderson. We are currently undertaking a major research project, The Success Factors, which is investigating strategies for managing change by rural communities.

And my other interest arises from being the president of the peak, national, non-government organisation, Australian Women in Agriculture. One of the core values of AWiA is caring for people, rural families and communities and the environment, and the enhanced development to ensure the viability of future agricultural productivity.

I have a strong commitment to the role of families in all their forms and their ability to build the foundations for a strong, sustainable future, in our regions.

My life to date is firmly located within the context of family, in community and in sustainable development. I am part of the 6th generation of farmers in northeast Victoria. I live and work in the community in which I was born. My grandparents, aunts and uncles live within half an hour's drive. Like many families in my community, and families around the Darling Downs, we "care" about where we live. Our family members are active in land care, in the fire brigade, in the local Middle Indigo Primary School. Close relatives have been active in local government and on many community groups. As a family we have made a long-term investment to our community. In many ways I am shaped by my community and by the environment in which I live.

It is my belief that people who "care" for the land, farm differently – and families who "care" for the land, farm and live differently.

I believe families, and farming families in particular, bring some unique perspectives to the concept of development. However I do not want to paint too rosy a picture of 'families', or gloss over problems that exist, rather to set a scene for building sustainable regions, based on my own experience of working with farming families.

In my experience, families as a social unit combine and bring into a balance economic, social and environmental ways of being. They work across age and gender; are committed to the long term - they have kids!; handle and manage complexity; they work in a voluntary capacity; are generous; are skilled, are multi-functional.

For regional development to be sustainable it needs to work across traditional disciplines and to be in balance with economic, social and environmental factors.

Members of farming family, usually have extensive local knowledge of the land, the seasons, people and resources. Local families know things about the land and about the sociology of working together. They have experience of working together, with neighbours, in good times and in hard times, of working together to survive and overcome fire, flood or drought. They manage conflict.

Sustainable regional development needs to be able to understand its local environment and to empower people together–to work cross their differences.

98% of Australian farm businesses are family businesses; these are groups of people – men, women, children, grands and teenagers working together. And farming families are productive – entrepreneurial, risk takers, self-employed. These families are interdependent and together they form communities and associations. They have enormous economic power.

Sustainable regional development needs to be firmly located in strong local economic development.

I believe, and it is also my experience that in the design, planning and application of regional development, and particularly sustainable regional development, families as a unit are largely ignored. Their potential and actuality is rarely recognised or acknowledge. They are taken for granted. This is particularly my experience with farming families. As a unit they become invisible. Occasionally, recognition may be given to the mythical individual male 'farmer' also known as the 'land holder'.

The major players become the 'paid' people, the professionals, the ones with a financial interest. I have yet to experience the selection criteria for a position on

one of the regional development planning groups where the skills of mothering and community building are recognised - wanted "practicing mother with references from her children"

It is my assumption that in regional Australia -

People can and do make a difference; people can and do learn and change, and people gathered in families make a particular type of difference. Their emotions, their goals, their needs and aspirations, their values, their history and their relationships all have a big role to play in sustainable regional development.

But…. If we keep going in the same direction we shall end up where we are headed. If we continue to ignore the complexity and inter-relationships between individuals, families and communities we shall miss the opportunities offered to work with them to create the future. Our mistake will be that we make the assumption that families are unimportant, and we fail to give them the resources they need to grow and develop, and to help them access to skills and training.

Things do change…and…people do change. We can change our direction. It's not too late …Bill Ford, Junior, great, great grand son of Henry (this story was reported in the Bulletin 22 May 2001). Expressed his goal for the Ford Company as being able to…

"Build totally recyclable cars which clean the air as they drive and are produced from a new eco factory, where birds nest."

So, if the car industry can change, can develop such a vision of sustainability, I believe its possible for us as well.

In managing this change there is a strong role for government and institutions such as Universities.

Current Government Policy - Put families at the heart of policy. Make it easier for families, rather than harder for families. Build public policy around child care and family friendly work places. Acknowledge that families are made up of individuals, who have opinions, often these are differing opinions. Provide opportunities for individuals and 'units' to be consulted. It's important for governments to ask people what they want – listen to their answers and do what they say. To understand their goals and help them work towards achieving their own aspirations – to make it easier not harder. Work in partner-ship with families.

Assume most families want to stay 'put' in their own environment, that they want to belong, that they care about where they live and care about their community. Most families want to continue to live in rural, regional or remote Australia. If they are farming they want to stay farming. The role for government

is to help them do this rather than making it harder.

An important role for government is to understand that individuals in families can be both separate and together. They can be both part of a family and an individual. As individuals they have different interests, skills and experiences; Different things to offer a community. Different goals and aspirations. Different ways of being together.

They also share common values. They are generous and keen to share their knowledge and experience. They can handle complexity and manage change,

They will survive,

They are economic beings, as well as social beings,

They care for the land, and for each other,

They want to live in a society as well as an economy,

They may not be "very" good at all this stuff but they are "good enough."

How do we 'go about' the business of putting the family at the heart of sustainable regional development?

It means we, as a community can work from our strengths, not our weaknesses. Working with families and with their goals and expectations, provides the strongest possible motivation for the community and business to create the sort of future it needs and wants.

And the motivations can be for money, for education, for security, for a social life, for meaningful work, for community recognition, for a healthy lifestyle and for a future for their children.

And at the community level – what would it mean if we put families first? We would acknowledge 'local' knowledge, networks and experience. We would provide opportunities for locals to be together and build relationships.

We would welcome newcomers to the community and invite them to share their skills and knowledge. We would work with women, with young people; we would engage schools and sporting clubs. We would work with men. We would work together and we would work separately.

We would be solutions focused. Articulate our assumptions and expectations. Be clear about our values. Make our families and the individuals – all of them – visible. Our language would be inclusive of men and women, young and old and across occupations.

Some Government programs are already working in this direction. It's important to build and support them. Farm bis (AFFA); Building Stronger Families and Communities (FACs) Regional Solutions (DTRS) and RTC – regional telecentres.

Lets have a national plan (similar to the salinity action plan and the national competition policy) for sustainable rural communities and regions built around the assumptions outlined above. Reward institutions and authorities which make it easier for families and for individuals to work together across generations and differences.

However, there are some barriers to achieving this most desirable 'future'.

We need to think clearly about what we measure. Governments tend to value efficiency over effectiveness; communities and sustainable regional development tends to value effectiveness. In my experience, this mismatch of expectations leads to confusion. As a result we – that is communities working with government, are not clear about what we are trying to achieve – we are not clear of the goals we are striving for. We need to agree on what we are going to measure what success will look like.

Stereotypes of people and regions limit our effectiveness. In a recent survey, children were asked to draw a picture of a 'farmer' and 3% drew a farmer as a woman. This is a stereo type of who produces our food and manages the land. Most women come to farming by marriage – they are farmers, partners in the business and the family and frequently, they have different career paths and skills. We speak of 'the farmer' and the stereotype is of a white Anglo male. Rural Australia is not homogeneous, nor are its families the same. We must acknowledge and learn to work with difference. We must do the research and investigation that gives us an accurate picture of our people and regions.

Role for Universities

Regional Universities can begin by undertaking this research, and to document and articulate local knowledge. Help us to 'see our selves'. Help us to gain the knowledge of who we are, what we do, how we like to work, our preferences and our differences.

Regional universities can teach the theory and practice of Australian rural sociology to those who work with rural communities. Universities can help make this knowledge accessible to professionals working - as land care facilitators, as advisors in natural resource management, as doctors, bank managers as newspaper editors. Universities can run short courses; one-day events and workshops for presidents of local community groups; offer induction programs for visiting doctors, nurses, clergy or bank managers. They can hold up the mirror that allows us to see ourselves, to learn from our own experiences and set our own direction.

Universities can create spaces, such as this forum, for new ideas to emerge, new partnerships to be foraged, and new relationships to grow.

They can provide jobs and a focus for young people in rural Australia. They can help challenge the stereotypes of family, of farmer, of gender, of rural.

They can credit the skills and local knowledge we all have. Teach us new and different skills; of conflict resolution of succession planning.

They can reward and acknowledge the characteristics of community building and sustainable development.

There is a role for all of us in setting a new direction for sustainable regional development…to know and trust that…rural families will always be with us. To know that we – as families – are not going anywhere else. That our roots are too deep. Our connections are too strong. That we have made a commitment to be here for the long term. That we have a vested interest in sustainable regional development.

Our role is to remind others that it will be the people, working in their families and communities who create sustainable regions. With skill and assistance we will use technology and science as tools, we will build the relationships, the sense of confidence, of belonging.

There is a Chinese saying that "If we keep going in the same direction, we shall end up where we are headed" I want to be part of a movement to change direction.

References

Emery M, 2001 The Success Factors for managing change. Department of Transport and Regional Services, Canberra (Copies via Country link 1800 026222)

Women Taking Action - Making a Difference in Regional and Rural Communities

This Report also produced by the Regional Women's Advisory Council profiles about 74 women from all over Australia who are managing change in a manner discussed in the previous items.

To view Women Taking Action click here:
http://www.dotrs.gov.au/rural/women/women_taking_action/index.htm

Having a Life: Work, Family, Fairness and Community in 2000

By Barbara Pocock

Dr Barbara Pocock from the Centre for Labour Research, Department of Social Inquiry at Adelaide University authored this Report which was released in May 2001. This report examines what work is doing to Australians, by means of research amongst 150 Australian women and a small number of men.

Dr. Barbara Pocock has been teaching and lecturing at Labour Studies, now Department of Social Inquiry, since 1987. She has been involved in unions since her working life began twenty years ago, and has worked in a wide variety of jobs: shearing sheds in New Zealand and Australia, the NSW public sector, the banking and researching the textiles clothing and footwear industries and as Workers Rights Officer at the United Trades and Labor Council of South Australia. She has been a workplace representative, conference delegate, committee member and full-time union officer in a variety of settings and industries. Barbara is a senior lecturer with extensive research experience. In recent years this has included research about the labour market, the labour movement and trade unions, gender pay equity, gender politics in unions, and industrial relations issues more broadly.

To access the Report, Having a Life: Work, Family, Fairness and Community in 2000, click here:
http://arts.adelaide.edu.au/social_inquiry/download/HavingALife.pdf

Beyond 2001-Child Care for Australia Report - Early childhood services in Australia

A Report, *Beyond 2001-Child Care for Australia* by the Commonwealth Child Care Advisory Council was released in September 01.

According to Senator Vanstone, Minister for Family and Community Services, the Report shows that early childhood services are fragmented, calling for a national vision and a framework to improve early childhood services in Australia.

"Child care gets a massive investment through the Federal Government's Child Care Benefit, however child health services and preschools are a state government responsibility...The report argues that we need a national framework for early childhood services that recognises the importance of children's early years as a foundation for life. We need to improve the status and standing of children and their carers. The best interests of children should be a central focus of Australian society. We need to look at ways to improve staff retention and training to support the highest possible quality of child care service in Australia. We need to improve access for those who most need early childhood education and care, including children at risk and those with additional needs." (Senator Vanstone)

The need for a more co-ordinated system is also supported by a number of other organisations, including the recently formed Australian Council on Children and Parenting and the National Investment in the Early Years network.

To access the Report, Beyond 2001-Child Care for Australia click here:
http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/childcare/services-chldcare.htm

Political Intentions - 2001 Australian Federal Election

November 2001 Special Election Edition

The major political parties were given the opportunity to state their views on a number of significant issues by key organisations in the lead up to the 2001 Australian Federal Election . This special edition features the Parties' responses to surveys of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA); The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the Australian Education Union (AEU). Also included is a section about which issues the peak lobbying bodies are wanting the parties to address. An Electorate and Candidate profile is followed by a link to the Women's Electoral Lobby's analysis of the political parties and their policies.

SURVEYS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Survey of Political Parties Position on Aid and Development for 2001 Election

A Survey of Political Parties Position on Aid and Development for 2001 Election was done by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid. ACFOA asked the major parties 20 questions to gauge their position on Australian Aid programs, Human Rights, Global Economics and building a more equal world and Reconciliation.

To view, link to: http://www.acfoa.asn.au where the Survey is listed.

ACOSS COMPARISON OF PARTY POLICIES

"Responding to the challenge: The responses of the major political parties to the ACOSS Federal Election 2001 priorities" - go to http://www.acoss.org.au/info/2001/312.htm

The Australian Council of Social Service today released a summary of the policies of the major parties on Australia's key social priorities based on their responses to an ACOSS survey. ACOSS President Andrew McCallum said: "ACOSS sought responses from each of the major parties on how they intend to deal with 24 major social policy challenges facing Australia, however voters have been left in the dark on some major issues."

The Coalition - a response that relies heavily on the past record of the Government:

* This is disappointing given key social indicators which show widening inequality. The failure of the Coalition to offer new polices beyond their commitments earlier this year in Australians Working Together that would substantially reduce unemployment is particularly worrying given that the number of Australians who

have been in receipt of unemployment benefits long-term is higher now than five years ago."

* The Coalition does, however, provide positive examples of its record in areas such as attempting to reduce the unmet need for community services for people with disabilities, making home care for older Australians a priority, and some progress is promised in these areas in their election platform."

The Labor Party - shows a willingness to address gaps in the provision of mainstream human services: * Labor's response to the ACOSS challenges includes proposals to strengthen our public health system, to find ways to make housing more affordable, to restructure social security payments, and to improve the relationship between the Government and the community welfare sector. Labor also advocates a substantial long-term strategy to boost education skills across the community. "

* However these policy commitments are not matched by financial commitments. For example, a very small commitment is made to training for unemployed people, despite "jobs" being a centrepiece of their platform."

The Australian Democrats - overall, a positive response with strong policies:

* In particular, the Democrats have very good policies to deal with reducing the number of people living in poverty. ACOSS welcomes the Democrats commitment to increase unemployment benefits and other social security allowance payments by around $20 a week and to resist any tax cuts for high income earners until all social security payments have been raised to at least the level of the Poverty Line."

The Australian Greens - a brief, but very positive response. On education, the Australian Greens are calling for a $4 billion boost to public education to bring total education spending in Australia up to the OECD average."

"This ACOSS comparison of the major parties' policies is necessarily a qualified one as it is based on their responses to the ACOSS survey and information and policies released to date."

"In keeping with the non-partisan stance of ACOSS, we will not be scoring or ranking the parties. Nor will we comment further on the parties until after the election. The full response of the parties is available from the ACOSS website. It is up to the voters to decide."

Source: ACOSS

Australian Political Party's Commitment to Women

The ALP, the Coalition, the Democrats and the Greens were each invited to provide a 500 word statement to the Australian Education Union (AEU) Federal Women's Conference outlining their commitments on issues of particular concern to women.

Included in this segment are statements from the The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP for the Australian Labor Party; Senator Amanda Vanstone for the National/Liberal Coalition; Senator Natasha Stott Despoja for the Australian Democrats and Senator Bob Brown for the Greens. **Australian Political Party's Commitment to Women**

The ALP, the Coalition, the Democrats and the Greens were each invited to provide a 500 word statement to the Australian Education Union (AEU) Federal Women's Conference outlining their commitments on issues of particular concern to women. Below are the statements they provided.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY

Thank you for the opportunity to wish you well for the AEU Federal Women's Conference 2001.

Labor's priorities for the next election are jobs, health and education.

We believe that these are the central issues with which our Federal Government ought to be concerned. Instead Australians have been burdened with an unfair and unnecessary tax in the GST along with dramatic funding cuts to the essential services provided by government.

As the election campaign begins, you will hear Kim Beazley talk a great deal about our themes, and with them the details on how Labor plans to fix our once great public hospitals, rebuild our schools as learning centres of excellence and create meaningful jobs for the Australian community.

We know that the GST has hit hardest those who are least able to afford it – young families, pensioners, charities, and people on low incomes. Labor fought the introduction of the GST every step of the way, but now that it is here we must make it fairer and simpler.

We'll make it fairer by removing the GST from some essential items, including women's sanitary products, and simpler by making it easier for small business to comply with their GST requirements.

John Howard seems to spend an awful lot of time telling Australians that there is nothing he can do about the problems which affect them. We've heard him say this about petrol prices, the living standards of older Australians and the demise of our regional centres and, most recently, the problems confronting Ansett.

Labor <u>will</u> take responsibility for the problems facing Australian women and some of the detail on how we'll do this has already been released.

We've have detailed proposals for:

- rebuilding Medicare through a 24 hour hotline and proposals for improving funding by working with state governments
- better monitoring of quality care in our nursing homes,
- scholarships for high achievers to improve the quality of our teachers
- and support for banking, telephone, postal and community services to assist the regions.

Labor will also ensure that women are 'front and centre' of the decision making of the Federal Government, including a revitalised Office of the Status of Women, improved structures for consulting women about their needs and improved support for women's community organisations so that their needs can be reflected in the action of governments at the Federal level.

We'll also look at a range of measures to assist Australians in balancing their work and family lives. A strengthened Industrial Relations Commission, acting as a fair and balanced umpire, a National Early Assistance Strategy for Children and an inquiry into working life will all be part of a future Labor Government's agenda.

Of course more details will be announced during the official election campaign but it's clear Labor is committed to protecting the rights of women and ensuring they are a key factor in the decision making process.

Labor will tackle the issues facing Australian women head on. We won't shy away from them and we won't try to force women back to the 1950s.

Labor understands the problems many women face in this new century and new millennium, and we have the policies and long term strategies to deliver solutions.

The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP
Shadow Minister for Industry, Innovation and Technology
Shadow Minister for the Status of Women
Federal Member for Fremantle

LIBERAL/NATIONAL COALITION

The Coalition has provided to the women of Australia the most female-friendly government this country has ever seen. And it is in that context that I am extremely proud of what has been achieved under this Government.

Women's employment is up, participation in the workforce is increasing and unemployment is down.

Women have broken the 80c in the dollar barrier and now earn 84.3 per cent of men's adult full-time average ordinary-time earnings.

In child care over the last four years, we've spent 30 per cent more in real terms than was spent in the last four years before we came to office and importantly, we have increased the flexibility of services available.

In education, women now make up 58% of under-graduate commencements, and 51 per cent of post-graduate commencements. There has been a spectacular increase of 43 per cent in women's participation in vocational education and training. We have also seen a massive increase in the number of women undertaking traineeships and apprenticeships.

Of course, with a sound economy, lower interest rates, lower taxes and increased family payments, there are more real dollars available for women to spend as they choose for themselves and their families.

In the 2002-02 Budget, and additional $30 million over four years was provided to the Office of the Status of Women for four specific initiatives that will directly benefit Australian women:

National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault

$16.5 million over four years for a national approach to combat sexual assault against women. The measure will establish partnerships with other governments, key organisations and service providers to develop, test and implement strategies that address the increasing incidence of sexual assault in the community. This will include campaigns to promote community awareness, sharing approaches to combat sexual assault and promote 'best practice' across jurisdiction and agencies, and funding of time limited projects.

National Leadership Initiative

$2.4 million over four years to increase the participation of women in leadership positions and to promote leadership by women in other areas, particularly rural, indigenous, marginalised and disadvantaged women.

Women's Development Programme

$5.6 million over four years to expand and enhance the engagement of women, women's organisations, and targeted research in government policy formulation. The programme will also support women's capacity building and mentoring activities.

Informed Choices for Australian Women

$5.5 million over four years to develop a women's information strategy, including a data warehouse, research and policy publication series and web-based information for, and about, women. The Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women hosted the National Conference *Australian Women Speak* in August 2001. The conference explored economic-self-support and security for women, optimal status and position of women, eliminating violence in women's lives; and maintaining good health and wellbeing throughout women's lives.

The Commonwealth has also made a major commitment in the important area of domestic violence by committing $50 million to ***Partnerships Against Domestic Violence*** to test innovative preventative measures and best practice to prevent and address domestic violence.

Current major initiatives for *Partnerships* include addressing the impact on children of domestic violence; strengthening programmes to ensure perpetrators of domestic violence put an end to the violence; and community education for mainstream, indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The National Indigenous Family Violence Grants Programme ($6 million over four years) helps local indigenous communities to act to reduce family violence. A mentoring team helps grants recipients with advice on project management, self-documentation and self-evaluation.

Senator Amanda Vanstone
Minister for Family & Community Service
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women
Senator for South Australia

THE AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS

Over the period of the 2001 Election campaign the Australian Democrats will be launching new policies on education and women. These policies will continue the long tradition of the Australian Democrats in favour of a fairer education system for women and girls, and for a properly funded public education system that offers a quality education for all, regardless of income or gender.

The Australian Democrats have long resisted the notion of 'user pays' in education policy, and have fought hard against the introduction of fees, and education funding systems that disadvantage public schools.

The Australian Democrats have also long been led by women, and our party has actively supported a greater role for women in public life. We also recognise that, if girls and women are to make their mark, many things need to change in the world of education and work. Women remain disproportionately concentrated in particular occupations and industries, and this affects their pay and life chances. The Australian Democrats have also called for pre-school teachers (almost exclusively women) to receive pay rates that match primary school teachers.

It is also the case, that most women will find themselves balancing caring responsibilities with work, for significant portions of their working lives. But we know that it is getting harder – not easier – for many households to balance care and work. Many face growing insecurity, over-work or under-employment, and many Australian workplaces – despite much talk - are not family friendly especially in view of increasing actual hours of work.

'Work and Life' Policies

In recognition of this, the Australian Democrats first policy announcements in this election campaign have dealt with work and life. We have announced two new programs and four new policies designed to reduce the length of the working week, spread the work around, and to assist working families.

The Democrats see these issues as key 'work' issues for this decade. We propose two initiatives to ensure real progress. The first will stimulate real change in workplaces and fund innovative projects that reduce hours and create jobs, and the second creates a national system of paid maternity leave.

A 'Fair Hours Fund'

Workplaces that, by negotiation with their employees, can settle on arrangements that convert long hours jobs into new full-time or part-time jobs, will be rewarded with 50% wage subsidies for these new jobs. This will reduce long hours, create new jobs and reduce benefit payments. By spending $244 million we can create 80,000 new jobs and take unemployment well below 6 per cent. And we can improve the working lives of many thousands of Australian families by reducing their long hours and systematic patterns of unreasonable paid and unpaid overtime.

Paid maternity leave

We propose Government funding of paid maternity leave for around 12 weeks at the federal minimum wage of $412 for women in paid work, and encourage employers to top this up to women's individual normal earnings through local agreements. While paid maternity leave is only part of the picture in terms of work and family balance, it is an important benefit. Parental leave – for both women and men - to care for growing children and other dependents is also important. But paid maternity leave recognises that late pregnancy, birth and early maternity should be met with the opportunity for leave for all women who wish it. It is especially important for women on low incomes. Our scheme represents an important advance.

These two initiatives would assist many Australian families and households. The Democrats have also announced policies that deal with significant challenges in our labour market at present:

- Reduce working hours in the longer term to a 35 hour week;
- Increase job security by providing the right for casual employees to convert to permanent status if they wish after 12 months as casuals;
- Improved part-time work conditions so that part-time employees have full pro-rata conditions that compare to those of full-time employees;
- Work and family reviews of awards and agreements by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission to ensure that they genuinely assist work and family balance.

Senator Natasha Stott Despoja
Leader of the Australian Democrats & Senator for South Australia

THE GREENS

Equality for women is a core commitment of Green parties around the world. We have been honoured with the gifts and passion of so many outstanding women like Petra Kelly, co-founder of the German Greens; Ingrid Betancourt, courageous Greens presidential candidate in Colombia next year; and Christine Milne, Greens MP and first female leader of a political party in Tasmania, to name but a few. Six of our 10 elected MPs in Australia are women as are five of our eight Senate candidates in the coming election.

The Greens are about the future - not just the three years before the next poll, but the long-term. Charting a secure future means closing the gap between rich and poor on the Earth. In the short term it means the United Nations should coordinate the community of nations in bringing those responsible for the US terror attack to justice before an international court. It means treating asylum-seekers, fleeing terror, with humanity and generosity.

It also means putting young people's needs and prospects at the heart of our politics. Several young Greens are elected to local government and standing as candidates for the coming election. Our policy is that young people from the age of 16 years should have the right to vote and hold public office if they choose.

We strongly support public education at all levels and recognise its particular importance for women and girls. We challenge Labor to return Australia to the OECD average of spending by similar nations – that means injecting an extra $4 billion per annum into public education (schools, universities, TAFE and adult learning). We say reverse Mr Howard's tax cuts to the big corporations and restore corporate tax rates to 34%; that's $3 billion. And if Labor carries out the bipartisan promise to tax trust funds, ducked by Mr Howard, there is the other $1 billion for public education.

The 'reform' of the industrial relations system, which we opposed consistently, is a disaster for women. It cuts away industrial protections in favour of employer flexibility and the gap between men's and women's pay is beginning to widen once more. We support pay equity for women. We support women's right to work and receive pay equity; paid maternity leave is a necessity and quality child care should be readily available to workers at low cost.

Other Greens policies include:

- Women's right to make informed choices about their lives; we oppose the changes to sex discrimination legislation allowing the states to determine which women have access to IVF.
- Restoration of funding to WEL and women's units in the public service which were cut by the Howard government.
- A positive role for education to create a better and more peaceful society by developing our understanding of gender issues and eradicating discrimination against women. We would oppose any simplistic 'catch-up' legislation arising from the Senate Inquiry into the Education of Boys for this reason.

- Programmes to encourage girls to continue sporting and recreational pursuits beyond early secondary schooling.
- National funding for Safecare, the innovative West Australian approach to prevent child sexual abuse.
- Abolition of the GST and, in the meantime, helping small business and community groups with the compliance burden by allowing those with a turnover of less than $2 million per annum to keep the first $1000 of GST collected.
- Decisive action to save the climate, protect the forests and keep our food, air and water clean and safe.

Senator Bob Brown
Leader of the Greens and Senator for Tasmania

Source: AEU Federal Women's Conference

PEAK BODIES COMMENT

Peak Bodies Comment

Peak bodies around Australia have their say on the issues that party policy and campaigning should address. The list of peak bodies include:

- Aged and Community Services Australia
- Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Australian Consumers Association
- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Education Union
- National Farmers' Federation
- Tourism Taskforce
- Catholic Welfare Australia
- National Union of Students

To view this list by the ABC go to:
http://abc.net.au/public/elections/2001fed/peakbodies/default.htm

Surce: ABC

PROFILE OF CANDIDATES AND ELECTORATES

Candidates A-Z Index

Full list of the candidates standing in this election:

http://abc.net.au/public/elections/2001fed/electorates/candindex.htm

Electorates A-Z Index

Profiles, history, 1993 results, comments from Antony Green, ABC's election analyst:

http://abc.net.au/public/elections/2001fed/electorates/nameindex.htm

Electoral Pendulum Table

A Table showing federal seats classified from safest to most marginal for both the government and the opposition.

http://abc.net.au/public/elections/2001fed/electorates/pendulum.htm

Source: ABC

Strategic Voting

Women's Electoral Lobby 2001 Federal Election Campaign

The Women's Electoral Lobby has been focusing on five areas: work and family, child-care, GST/superannuation, education and health. You may like to visit the WEL wesbite www.wel.org.au to check out their political 'whether reports'.

The WEL website also has information about how to use your vote to make a statement and the value of voting below the line in the Senate: http://www.wel.org.au/election2001/vote/strat.shtml

Source: WEL

Indigenous Election Issues and Candidates

Leading up to the elections *Speaking Out* on ABC Local Radio Sunday nights 9-10pm has featured Indigenous issues and Indigenous candidates for the Federal Elections. If you are wondering what all the major parties platforms are on Indigenous issues that go to the Speaking Out Election Special: http://www.abc.net.au/message/speaking/articles/elections.htm

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