



ANNE PATTILLO

Helping to transform people and organisations ...

A client asked me the other day about the other sort of work I am involved in – and it struck me that many people I work with only know about the work I am carrying out for them.

In my work we often talk about people working in silos, so I decided it was time to come out of mine. TRANSform is the result – this will be an occasional newsletter that will outline some of the projects I have been working on.

Over the past 13 years I have worked with wonderful clients who call on me for a diverse range of projects. It is great fun to be working with a range of committed organisation that are prepared to take significant steps to improve their performances, their connection to their

community and the development of their people and culture.

As you can see my work takes me from fish to facilitation, action learning to strategic planning, working with intimate teams and in public forums. And while I am vitally concerned about encouraging learning and change for others, I recently put my own on the line and am pleased to say I have just achieved the Certificate in Public Participation from the International Association of Public Participation.

From fish to fantastic

How do you transform a team that does not want to change – a team whose catch cry is “we have always done things like this?”

That was the issue for South Pacific Tyres/Goodyear in Melbourne when it wanted to make changes in its shared services team. This team provides all of the financial processing services to the company's production plants, distributors and sales outlets in Australia.

The Financial Services Manager identified a need to reinvigorate relationships, focus the performance of the team to better address the developing needs of the company.

What I found is that the 30 staff who worked in three teams in the division – retail credit, wholesale credit and accounts payable – had very entrenched positions. A third of the staff had been with the company for over 15 years. The teams did not interact – there was too much history, too many judgements and too many established patterns.

In recent years, the team had gone through a number of structural changes – it had been downsized and both the location and

annepattillo
CONSULTING

PO BOX 683
WELLINGTON
NEW ZEALAND
TEL +64 4 473 2702
FAX +64 4 473 2703
MOBILE +64 21 456 255
EMAIL anne@apconsulting.co.nz

continued over

TRANSform

continued

structure had been reorganised, but essentially it had changed very little.

Because it was a place of 'family secrets', I organised to meet with every staff member. We then created a map of the current environment and introduced a series of interventions to build purpose and team values. The important issue was to make things transparent and encourage a desire for change.

With a designer, we created a visual reminder of their purpose and values for staff to use around their desk, workstation, reception and meeting areas. The purpose posters were presented at a special ceremony by the Financial Services Manager. I was blown away when I walked in to the office again and found the posters everywhere around the office. This was obviously something the staff felt they could share.

During the four-month project, we did simple things. Staff worked together on practical projects, building relationships across the team. We ran skills development and team specific workshops as well as working with managers to develop their skills.

As part of that development, I gave the four managers a gift of a book that I had been reading called FISH. The FISH philosophy

is guided by four simple tenets: Play, Make their day, Be there, Choose your attitude.

When I came back a month later, the four books were tattered and torn – the entire staff had read them. And for some people, the book was lifechanging particularly for one staff member "My first word on a Monday morning was a swear word. Mondays are still hard, but now I choose my attitude."

And the process also had other effects – one team member told me that one of his colleagues had not talked to him in three years, yet that day she had said hello and asked about his weekend.

The important thing is that customers are happier. A customer feedback survey showed immediate improvement as a result of the project. And the team is now being considered for more work opportunities within the company.



Learning in Action for Community Probation

When the Community Probation Service was designing its training for managers, it decided it wanted to incorporate good leadership learning in the everyday activities of managers.

I worked with the Service to pilot Action Learning inside the service, working with a group of seven South Island Managers on a common project – the redesign of the Performance Management system.

Action Learning takes a structured approach, using small groups of people to reflect on and learn from everyday practice. It uses the group to support the development of processes, to check the results and then move on. One of its strengths is that there is a quick turn around from action, reflection to learning and action.

During the CPS four-month pilot, we used team meetings to establish the pattern, bring the issues into the open and develop

and use the resources of the group. Things were not always straightforward – as often happens, members of the group changed and the weather got in the way of several of the meetings.

The end result showed that relationships became more robust through the process. These were people who knew their stuff but relished being able to have the chance to think about how they approached their work. Some described it to me as being able to move from worry to learning. It shifted style and approach and allowed the team to try different things.

The team completed their work on the Performance Management system and the success of the pilot means CPS is now looking at using Action Learning in other areas of the Service.

Open Space in Oz

The tenth annual international conference for Open Space Technology was recently held in Australia – run, of course, as an Open Space meeting.

Open Space Technology is an alternative method of running meetings offering a fast, affordable and simple way to hold more productive and meaningful meetings.

The philosophy behind the meetings is that participants decide what to talk about based on what is important to them, and it is particularly well suited when the meeting is focused on a complex issue, that generate passion or even conflict.

Delegates from eleven nations attended, including Haiti, Sweden, India and the US. As part of the activity of meeting, delegates decided to move away from a paper-based report and instead produce a cd of the conference proceedings, which was easier to transport round the world. The event was also videotaped and it's planned to produce a documentary in the next few months.

The key theme of the conference was the use of Open Space to lead and manage organisations. This has emerged as more organisations and people use the 'technology' for meetings, find it effective, and are now looking to use it in a wider role.

What we are finding is that Open Space is a useful shortcut – it makes more effective use of meetings and reduces the cost to organisations. The vision is to encourage leadership, build responsibility, action and connections.

It is great to see so more practitioners of Open Space now in New Zealand – it was pretty lonely at the beginning. Open Space Technology has been used in a number of major projects.

Housing New Zealand Corporation approached the development of the housing strategy with a clear vision of creating partnerships. We organised an Open Space Technology meeting to discuss what was needed in the strategy.

The participants included government agencies, property developers, tenants, tenancy managers and third sector housing providers as well as staff from Housing New Zealand Corporation.

A series of working groups were set up after the meeting to develop strategy and this is still in progress.

Is that one "t" or two?

Actually Pattillo has two "t's" and two "l's" too.

The spelling of my name often confuses people – but this is not something new.

The name was first found as Pattillo in Fifeshire in 1305. We are said to be descended from the MacIllich's who claim descendency from Angus, grandson of Somerled, Lord of the Isles and the original name was Pattiloch or Pattillock.

However, spelling variations of the name not only causes confusion in everyday life, it has also confounded the experts. Researchers have found themselves stumped when variations include Patiloch, Pattiloch, Patillock, Pattillock, Patillo, Pattillo, Patullo, Pattullo, Petillo, Petillock, Pettillo, Petullo, Petillock, Pettiloch, Petillock, Pettillock, Pitillo, Pittillo, Pitillock, Pittillock, Pitullo, Pitillock, Pittillock or Pittillock.

In the interests of clarity ... and to ensure that I actually get my emails ... I have got a new email address that gets around the spelling problem. I am now **anne@apconsulting.co.nz** – with no Patilo, Pattilo or was that Patillo in sight!

Attached below is one of my new 'transformed' cards, complete with upto date details.

annepattillo

CONSULTING

Everyone has their say at the Mental Health Foundation

Every single member of staff, the board and key stakeholders have had a say in the plan that charts the strategic future of the Mental Health Foundation.

The Foundation is the leading national provider of health promotion activities in the mental health sector. It is a national organisation with offices in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

To achieve a planning process that would engage a wide range of key people, I designed an approach that began with using Open Space Technology.

The Foundation wanted an open process and invited its entire staff, a number of key stakeholders and the board to the Open

Space forum. The Board then worked on the specific development of the plan. The final draft was feedback to the staff and active feedback was given. The revised and improved plan was then signed off by the Board.

This plan is a key communication tool for the Foundation. It is the principal working document for its future direction.

Some of the key features of the plan are for the Foundation to develop a consultancy capacity, implement a working well programme; and strengthen its policy capacity.



New Zealand children are acting as fire safety advocates as a result of a New Zealand Fire Service strategy aimed to promote fire safe behaviours.

Come on guys, get firewise!

Over the past few years, I have worked with the promotions group within the Fire Service to develop the strategy that will significantly change the behaviour of New Zealanders and reduce the incidence and consequence of fire.

The project involved internal changes as well as external elements – away from short term, short focus, location specific plans to a sustainable long term, strategically focused plan to change behaviour.

We carried out an environmental assessment and then I facilitated a strategic planning workshop with the extended fire safety group. From that, I developed and wrote the National Fire Safety Promotions plan.

The key element of the plan was to work with children and the core at risk groups. The plan provided a platform for both national and regional approaches.

The initial success of the strategy and its implementation is marked by a survey showing a significant number of children are able to recall fire safe behaviour and encourage their families to put in place key features such as installing smoke alarms and working out escape plans.

Thank you to those clients who agreed to the release of their stories for TRANSform.