



ODSPOT

Centre for Organisation Development *Newsletter*

Summer 2004

The Shared Journey Graduate Development

When one of Australia's largest organisations asked CfOD to design a program to help introduce and integrate their graduates into their team culture, CfOD included discussion and exploration of the archetypal change journey in the program.

The myth of the archetypal change journey is a universal story that has recurred time and again, in various forms and across many different cultures. It involves cycles of change that include a call to the challenge, venture into new and unknown territory, trials and turbulence, dissolution, discovery and triumph, which results in the integration and application of personal change.

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Speaking strongly to those facing the challenge of the unknown, the archetypal change journey provides several important lessons for graduates. In organisational life, the journey is shared and the dynamics of the team is integral to the success of the

shared vision of the organisation. Large and complex organisations, with large and complex issues are challenged to manage environments which balance many economic, technical, social and community demands. As a way of reflecting this multi-layered environment, we draw heavily on mythical metaphors for organisational life, said Mike Allen, the designer and facilitator of the Graduate Program.

A metaphor is a common experience we can all relate to and a useful way of illustrating a point or creating a shared point of reference for complex concepts. Through metaphor and narrative, participants are encouraged to examine their own work-style motivation and its impact on team dynamics, and to integrate into the organisation by earning how to manage their own expectations and the expectations of their managers and colleagues.

Importantly, the program also enhances the graduates ability to align with the organisations values, enabling them to contribute fully and increase their commitment to the organisation in the longer term.

The added value in addressing the retention levels of graduates within organisations is that individual graduates are encouraged to examine the personal contributions they can make to the organisation in

Continued inside

Contact Us

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stories from the field

Inaugural OD Group Conference 2004

CfOD is excited about sponsoring this unique inaugural event for Australian OD practitioners. The conference offers all of us the opportunity to come together as a community of practice.

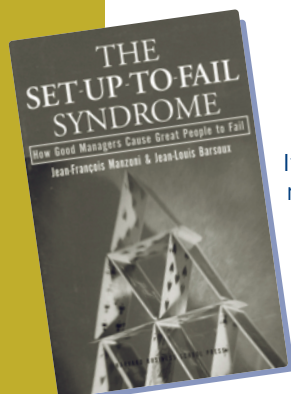
The theme of the OD Group Conference is 'Stories From the Field', to be held on 30 July at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre.

Local and international speakers will include: Organisation Development luminaries, John Batros from Swinburne University and Naomi Raab from RMIT. International

speaker Dr Richard David Hames, and Peter Tunjic and Andrew Donovan from Thoughtpost who will form a provocative panel discussion about leading edge research and practices. Dr Liz Mellish will give practical insights into the use of Appreciative Inquiry. Roland Naufal, CEO of Villa Maria Society, will present a case study on a whole-scale cultural change process he led in his own organisation.

To register your interest, please contact edwina@cfod.com.au. The full brochure will appear on our website www.cfod.com.au

BOOKS from the CfOD library...



THE SET-UP-TO-FAIL SYNDROME

How Good Managers Cause Great People to Fail

by Jean-François Manzoni and Jean-Louis Barsoux HBS Press, 2002 ISBN: 0-87584-949-0

It seems that no matter how hard some managers try, certain employees will never measure up. Despite hours of coaching, intensive follow up, and even extra attention, their performance fails to improve. Are they just poor recruits? Not according to management experts Jean-François Manzoni and Jean-Louis Barsoux.

In their new book, *The Set-Up-to-Fail Syndrome: How Good Managers Cause Great People to Fail*, the authors explain how the cause often sits with the managers themselves, who unwittingly sink an employee's chances for success by prematurely labeling them as a 'low achiever'.

Based on ten years of research, the book outlines why employees start to live down to their boss's expectations. Erroneous first impressions can become ingrained by a specific event such as a missed deadline, a lost client, or a bad presentation – which can sow the seeds that an employee's performance needs monitoring. Alarming, Manzoni and Barsoux highlight that performance labels do not take years or even weeks to form but can be triggered within days.

Most bosses faced with a seemingly poor performer begin to pay extra attention to the employee's work. Deprived of breathing space, the employee starts to feel frustrated and under-appreciated, often responding by reducing unnecessary contact with the boss. Thinking, mistakenly, that the subordinate's withdrawal confirms that they are indeed a weaker performer, the boss begins to increase their involvement in the employee's affairs. Progressively, the subordinate begins to doubt his or her own thinking and ability. This ugly cycle continues until a perfectly capable employee gives up any dream of making a meaningful contribution to the company. The employee has been successfully set-up-to-fail.

Managers must learn how to enter situations with an open mind, how to approach difficult conversations, and ultimately, how to stop the downward spiral in order to cure this syndrome. *The Set-Up-To-Fail Syndrome* outlines steps that can act as a guiding framework to help stop the downward spiral.

For anyone with influence on an individual's potential, this book offers powerful ways to improve performance – and quality of life – in any organisational setting.

Copies of this book are available from the CfOD Library.

Get Qualified in 2004!

Certificate IV in Assessment & Workplace Training

Our accelerated five-day program for people who have a basic understanding of training in the workplace has been so successful that we have decided to continue the program this year. Group sizes are small to ensure a flexible, relaxed and accelerated learning environment.

Program Dates

Weekday Programs	Dates 2004	Weekend Programs	Dates 2004
Day 1 & 2	Thurs 12 & Fri 13 Feb	Day 1 & 2	Sat 14 & Sun 15 Feb
Day 3 & 4	Thurs 19 & Fri 20 Feb	Day 3 & 4	Sat 21 & Sun 22 Feb
Day 5	Thurs 26 Feb	Day 5	Sat 28 Feb
Day 1 & 2	Tues 2 & Wed 3 Mar	Day 1 & 2	Sat 13 & Sun 14 Mar
Day 3 & 4	Tues 9 & Wed 10 Mar	Day 3 & 4	Sat 20 & Sun 21 Mar
Day 5	Tues 16 Mar	Day 5	Sat 27 Mar

To find out more about this five-day program, please contact CfOD on 9645 4466 or email services@cfod.com.au

The Shared Journey Graduate Development continued

addition to their technical skill. Fundamentally its about integrating the whole person into the whole system rather than seeing the graduate as a set of skills that can be bolted onto the current operation.

Feedback from the organisation and participants indicates that

this self-awareness based approach to graduate induction has been a resounding success.

If you would like to discuss development options for graduates within your organisation, please contact Mike Allen at CfOD on 9645 4466.



Elaine Sowerby

TALENT MANAGEMENT

Elaine Sowerby is an exceptional facilitator, who brings a rich balance of senior management and organisation development experience to the CfOD team. With over 20 years' experience in senior executive roles, Elaine understands the pressures and issues that managers face.

Elaine's passion is Talent Management – attracting, retaining and developing all people in the organisation so that they work at the peak of their ability to achieve the results required by the business, and the implementation of systems and processes to enable this.

'This isn't just about the "stars" in the organisation,' Elaine explained 'but all of the solid performers and also those that may have temporary performance issues. For me it is about unlocking the success in every person and aligning that individual need to tangible organisational results.'

Elaine is known for developing and implementing new organisational talent management processes and systems, and fine tuning existing ones to more adequately reflect the business direction. She has designed and implemented performance management and succession management systems, learning and development, coaching and mentoring programs, and one-to-one issues-based coaching.

Her skills as a project manager and consultant have seen her work with a number of local and state government organisations, where she has forged a reputation for making a tangible difference to individual and organisational performance.

A pragmatic facilitator, Elaine confronts the essence of an issue and challenges the status quo to stimulate fresh ideas and encourage individual growth aligned to organisational need. Importantly, she adds value to decision-making by delivering tailored solutions, and is adept at translating broad corporate directions into a set of reinforcing strategies for higher performance.

Her formal qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts (Hons), Post Graduate Diploma in Organisation Behaviour and Graduate Certificates in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Elaine's real life organisational experience and passion to create sustainable workplaces in which people thrive and business results are achieved combine to make her sessions challenging, engaging and results-focused.

If you would like to speak with Elaine about improving individual and organisational performance, please contact CfOD on 9645 4466.

The Local Government Online Peer Support Program

The Online Peer Support Program meeting in December was a great success with representatives from all the charter members organisations and prospective members attending. It was a fantastic opportunity for the charter members to network and exchange thoughts regarding the rollout of the program.

Apart from the benefits to staff and managers, other possible applications of the program discussed included councillor mentoring, new employee induction, and how to create a culture for younger work colleagues to grow and feel supported through the mentoring process.

If you would like to know more about the Online Peer Support Program, please contact edwina@cfod.com.au

Is Your Modifier Misplaced?

'I talked about stocking the stationery cupboard with my clients ...'

'Our own fishing boats supply us with the freshest of fish cooked to perfection while you wait in a light crisp batter.'

Can you spot a dangling, squinting or misplaced modifier? Do you know when to use 'which' and when to use 'that'? Are your bullet points parallel in structure? Where do you place the apostrophe? Do you know why your PC is telling you that you have written a sentence fragment?

If you are unsure of any of the above, perhaps your organisation needs to consider a writing course. CfOD conducts Business and Report Writing for a wide range of

clients in both the corporate and government areas. We can tailor the course to suit your organisation's specific requirements, and our team of trainers includes: science writers, academic writers, English teachers and tutors, and specialist marketing, business and corporate writers.

To find out more about our range of Business and Report Writing courses, please contact our office on 9645 4466.



From left to right:
Sally Caulder, Executive Director of Community & Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip;
Gabrielle Reilly, Manager Organisation Development, City of Yarra; and
David Spokes, C.E.O., City of Port Phillip.

Traditions, transitions & transformation

by Margaret Devlin

Managing Director, Centre for Organisation Development

I heard the following letter, read by mythologist and author, Joseph Campbell, from Chief Seattle to the President of the United States of America in 1852.

The president in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. But how can you buy or sell the sky, the land? The idea is strange to us. Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow; all are holy in the memory and experience of my people. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters, the bear, the deer, the great eagle; these are our brothers. Each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The waters murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers; they carry our canoes and feed our children. If we sell you our land, remember that the air is precious to us. That the air shares its spirit with all the life that it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. This we know; the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to earth, all things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life he is merely a strand in it, whatever he does to the web he does to himself.

Your destiny is a mystery to us. What will happen when the buffalo are all slaughtered? What will happen when the secret corners of the forest are heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills is blotted by talking wires? The end of living and the beginning of survival. When the last red-man has vanished with his wilderness and his memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, will these shores and

forests still be here? Will there be any spirit of my people left?

We love this earth as a newborn loves its mother's heartbeat. So if we sell you our land love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it. Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you receive it. Preserve the land for all children and love it as god loves us all. One thing we know there is only one god. No man - be he red-man or white-man - can be apart, we are brothers after all.

When I read this letter, I am moved by the simplicity of the message, the complexity of its meaning and its relevance to current political and organisational life. As OD practitioners, we are called to manage the implementation and impact of cultural transformation, which often means reminding our leaders to honour the traditions of the past or risk alienating the very people they need to follow them. At the same time we are encouraging support for people so they can make the transition into an unknown, 'mysterious' future, letting go the security and comfort of what they know to trust their leader's foresight.

As an integral part of our organisational systems, we must be both the container for others' anxiety through the transition process and hold the focus of the shared vision for the future clearly without being rigid. We need to encourage people to plan for sustainable change as well as stay open to what emerges out of the consequent turbulence. Perhaps a focus of 2004 can be the challenge of staying present within the paradox and ambiguity of our work and celebrating the courage and perspective we must have to do so.

OD Group Update

We capped off a wonderful year for the OD Group with seafood and champagne feast and a discussion which generated some great ideas for the 2004 program.

The most popular subjects from 2003 included a discussion on Emotional Intelligence by John Batros; a presentation on The Aging Workforce in Australia presented by Warwick Heine, the CEO of the City of Greater Dandenong; and a stimulating session with Melbourne's Playback Theatre, - a group of professional actors and musicians, who use a unique form of improvised theatre to tell the stories of the group.



The OD Group Playback Theatre session in November was one of the most popular for 2003.

We start the OD Group 2004 program on February 11 with an exciting session considering the correlation between Aikido and change leadership. The session will feature a demonstration by chief instructor of Aikido Shudokan, Joe Thambu, and will be followed by a discussion on the links between aikido and change leadership practices.

Change leadership practices fostered by Aikido include cultivating self-knowledge, practicing the paradoxical art of planning, speaking the language of mastery, letting values drive your decisions and turning failure into success.

The OD Membership Group provides a space for people who have an interest in OD to share ideas, concepts and experiences. If you would like to know more about the OD Group, please contact fiona@cfod.com.au

ODSpot is a forum for discussions and issues relating to Organisational Development. We will highlight your workplace initiatives, innovative programs, industry developments, academic research and practical tips.

ODSpot welcomes your feedback, ideas and contribution. Please send comments, letters and articles to fiona@cfod.com.au.

We look forward to hearing from you!