



# Sector Readiness and Workforce Capacity Initiative

## *Developing Leadership Effectiveness in Uncertain Times*

### **Session 4**

# **Process and Strategies to Build Ownership in Change**

## Process and Strategies to Build Ownership in Change

In Session 4 we are going to develop our knowledge and skills in regards to processes and strategies to build ownership in organisational change.

As we think about our own experiences of how to build ownership in organisational change and what the research has said, frequently we find that the very thing we are wanting to shift or improve doesn't happen or not in the way we expect.

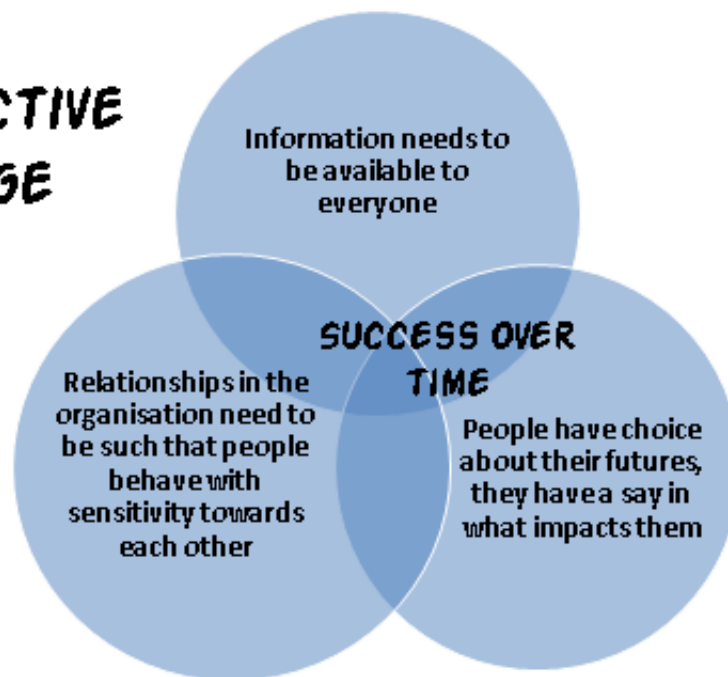
We are going to discuss why change efforts fail and what the thinking is that perpetuates old ways of working and therefore has an impact on the success of any organisational change.

We will build on the sessions we have already covered and touch on the work of Meg Wheatley specifically in relation to the type of leadership that enhances ownership of change in organisations – once again taking into account the complexity of human systems.

We will also cover some of the effective group engagement activities applied in the Art of Hosting processes and provide an example of how a small indigenous community in Cape York is using Learning Circles and participative leadership approaches to grow the capacity of their leaders and the whole community.

Refer to the articles on the Clearinghouse for more information.

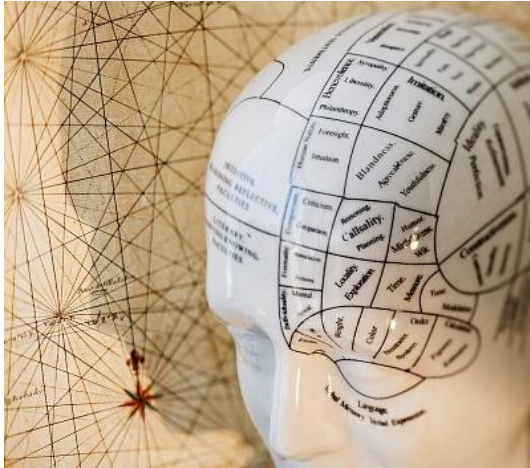
## **EFFECTIVE CHANGE**



**Acknowledgments:  
Meg Wheatley 1995**

Experience and research informs us that if organisational change is to be maximally effective/impactful, then three conditions will apply:

- 1) the first of these is that information is freely available to all members of the organisation,
- 2) that relationships within the organisations are such that people behave toward one another in mutually respectful and sensitive ways, and
- 3) that the sense of self of the people in the organisation is such that they feel that they are in sufficient control of their lives that choices about their futures will not be made without them being consulted in some genuine and respectful way (Boas, 1998).



"Too many leaders fail to realize that the old ways, their mental maps, aren't giving them the information they need. But instead of acknowledging that, they push on more frantically, desperate to have the old ways work.

When human beings work from fear and panic, we lose nearly all of our best reasoning capacities. We can't see patterns, think about the future, or make moral judgments." (Wheatley 2011)

We can see across the world, that only yesterday leaders and the systems they are in appeared to be responsive and adaptive, yet now are experiencing profound change. Worse still, leaders in those organisations have found that familiar their patterns of response to the unexpected issues are proving less and less useful for sustainability and the pursuit of their desired future. (Pourdehnad & Bharathy, 2004)

In her interview with Art Kleiner in Strategy and Business online magazine, Meg Wheatley discusses the issues facing leaders of today. She described her many conversations with senior leaders and executives and noted that many feel "lost in the wilderness" (Wheatley, 2011). As we know sometimes the only way to survive at this time is to admit that you're lost. Once leaders realise they can't rely on what they have done before, it's possible to look clearly around and seek information that will help to rethink what to do. A lesson we all need to learn is that "You don't have to change the situation you're in; you have to change your mind about it". (Wheatley, 2011)

In any situation where the past ways of thinking and work are failing, this is a time to call together everyone who might have the information that's needed to construct a new map – a new way forward. It is important for leader to include people at all levels of the system — that is anyone who plays a role that's relevant.

In organisations today we are facing increasingly complex problems that have no easy answers. This is the time when we need to be brave enough to seek out perspectives from all parts of the system. It takes a lot of courage for a leader to say, "Our problems were caused by complex interactions. I don't know what to do, but I know we can figure it out together." (Wheatley, 2011). However if we do ask others to have input into the issues facing the organisation, people will appreciate being included and having their ideas sort – in this way new relationships are developed and solutions are found.



Complex  
problems  
require  
complex  
interactions

You have to call  
together those  
who are relevant  
to the change



Having a good understanding that there are complex issues at stake whenever you change a part of an organisational structure, process or systems is key to effective leadership during change.

Any organisation is literally the sum of the whole, yet continually influencing, impacting, and affecting each aspect of the whole system including the people. Each of the multi-determined selves that make up its whole, its organisational self, and its identity are important to consider. Like individuals, organisational systems are simultaneously creating, using, affecting and being created by their social and technical selves, moving through the same transitions we do. However, this is further compounded by their dependencies on market forces and the external environment. Their context is shaped as a whole and by the sum of, all that is contained within. This can be both overwhelming and exciting.

Imagine leading the whole or parts of an organisation, in which it's possible to explore the many possibilities. How individuals within organisations take in, understand and process their experiences, consciously and unconsciously, and how they make sense of what they learn from these processes are critical to how they survive and thrive and, as a result, how the organisation will thrive and survive. Therefore creating work environments where people will thrive has a direct impact on how the organisation as a whole functions, and ultimately, whether it performs or not.



IN THIS COMPLEX WORLD, LEADERS ARE  
UNCERTAIN AND DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

In a world where leaders are uncertain about what to do - **Participative leadership** can provide a solution to many emerging issues. Being open and willing to work with leadership in a different way is often a challenge for those used to taking up their own authority and making the decisions.

Participative leadership requires:

- Involvement in decision-making improves the understanding of the issues involved by those who must carry out the decisions.
- People are more committed to actions where they have involved in the relevant decision-making.
- People are less competitive and more collaborative when they are working on joint goals.
- When people make decisions together, the social commitment to one another is greater and thus increases their commitment to the decision.
- Several people deciding together make better decisions than one person alone.



## Participative Leadership

A Participative Leader, rather than taking autocratic decisions, seeks to involve other people in the process, including staff, peers, supervisors and other stakeholders. Most participative activity is within the immediate team.

Old command and  
control ways of  
doing things are  
not working

This approach does  
Not work, People  
Aren't motivated



The old models of command and control — budgeting, strategy setting, forecasting, incentives, evaluations — are not effective in a changing, volatile environments which is what we are now facing in many organisations. Leaders are frustrated — not sure where to turn. They are also afraid that they don't have the immediate solutions to the problems they face. Their teams are no longer motivated by the ways that have worked in the past. Instead, their people are feeling driven by imperatives from their boards and managers.

It is often the case that people find themselves doing things that feel meaningless or that waste time — or that they know from experience that what they are doing won't lead anywhere. Leaders are in positions where they have to implement continuous cutbacks, and to produce more results with fewer resources. This creates a terrible pressure but leaders and many of their teams believe they have no choice but to respond to these demands.





Those leaders  
who are  
succeeding.....

The crucial thing they  
have done, is engage  
people at every level,  
giving people a chance  
to be involved in the  
change

One example of a positive turnaround in an organisation, that Meg Wheatley describes, was done by engaging people: inculcating a strong sense of values, giving people latitude to make decisions and design projects. They also made sure that learning was on the top of the list.

If senior leaders in organisations can tap the invisible resource of people who become self-motivated when invited to engage together, then this will work. This approach has well-documented outcomes that has shown increases in productivity, innovation, and motivation. However it requires a shift from a fear-based approach to a belief in the capacity of most people to contribute, to be creative, and to be motivated internally.

Moving from a  
fear based  
approach to one  
where everyone  
can contribute  
and have an  
input

This establishes a  
different environment  
and culture





# The Art of Hosting

A highly effective way of **harnessing the collective wisdom and self-organizing capacity of groups of any size**



Leaders in service organisations are expected to achieve the dual (often opposing) goals of producing good financial results while meeting the organisation's social aspirations. They are frequently bound by government regulations while at the same time being exposed to economic, social and political forces. Many argue that what is needed are "organisations as communities, where everyone shares the experience of serving as a leader, not serially, but concurrently and collectively" (Raelin, 2004:5).

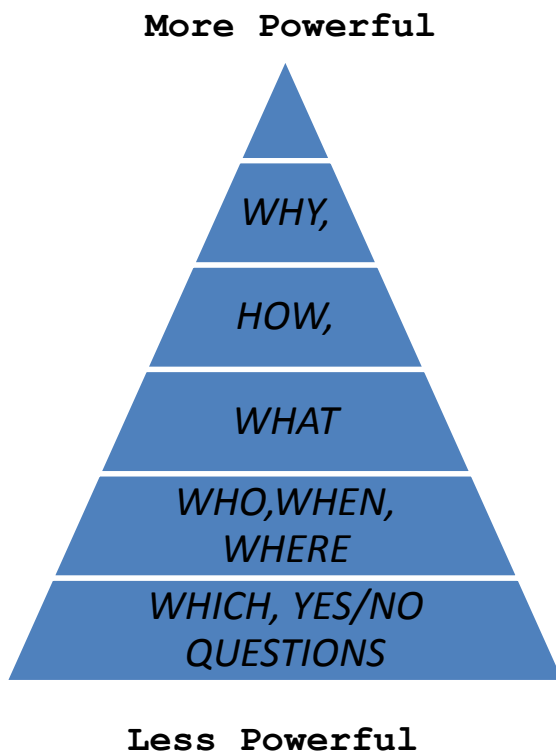
Based on the assumption that people give their energy and lend their resources to what matters most to them – in work as in life – the Art of Hosting blends a suite of powerful **conversational processes** to invite people to step in, be a leader with others and take charge of the challenges facing them.

<http://artofhostingqld.wordpress.com/about/>



**PEOPLE GIVE ENERGY AND LEND THEIR RESOURCES TO  
WHAT MATTERS MOST TO THEM**

# The Art of Powerful Questions



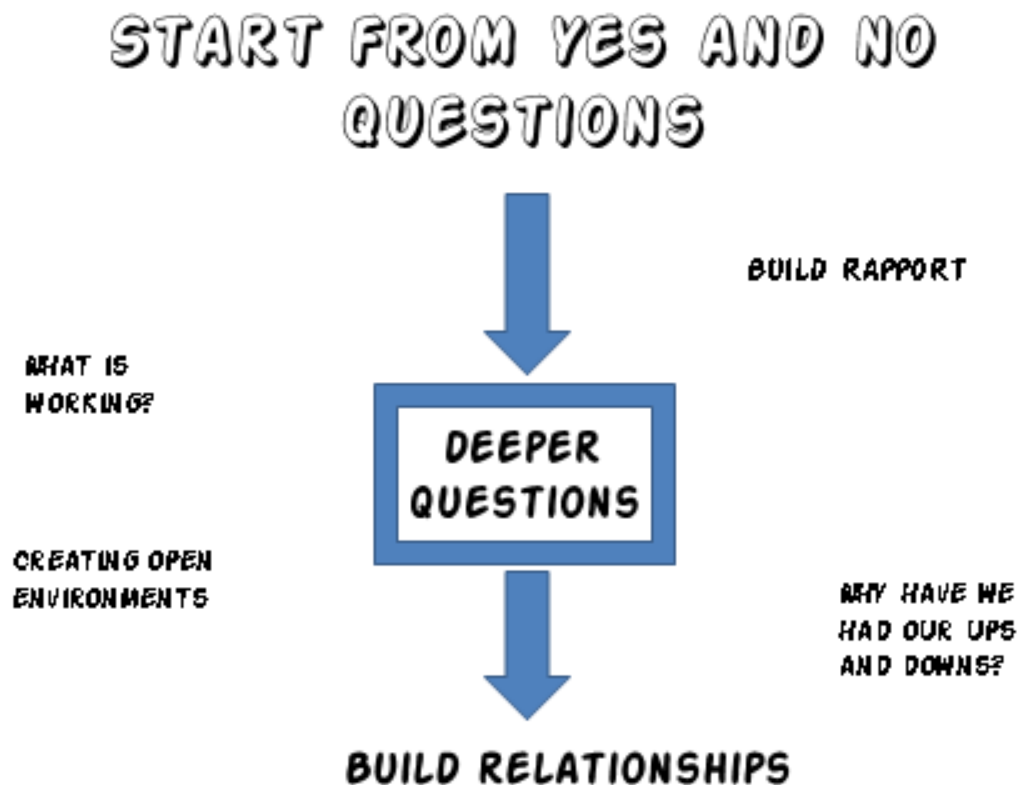
Build rapport and develop an effective relationship with the person you are asking questions of – avoid being the one who is just after the information and has no interest in the person

Powerful questions are at the heart of a good conversation that has meaning and action. A powerful question:

- generates curiosity in the listener
- stimulates reflective conversation
- is thought-provoking
- surfaces underlying assumptions
- invites creativity and new possibilities
- generates energy and forward movement
- channels attention and focuses inquiry
- stays with participants
- touches a deep meaning and evokes more questions

By using the words toward the top of the pyramid, we can make many of our questions more robust. For example, consider the following sequence: Are you satisfied with our working relationship? When have you been most satisfied with our working relationship?

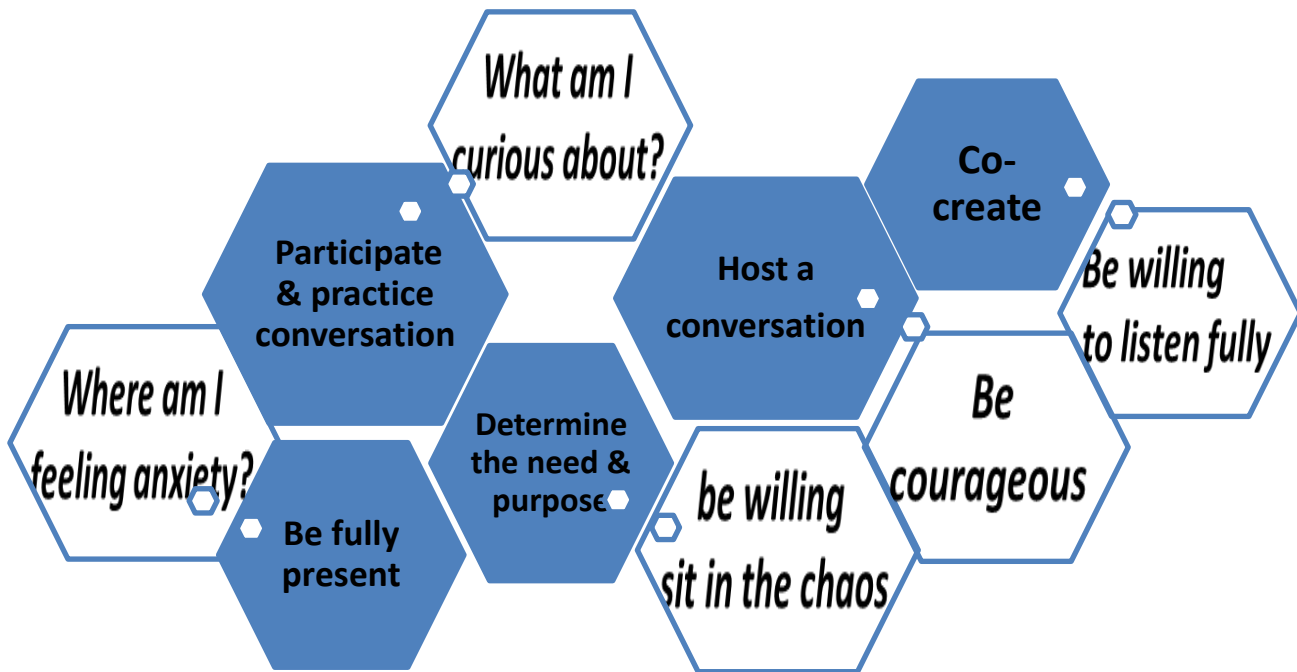
What is it about our working relationship that you find most satisfying? Why might it be that that our working relationship has had its ups and downs? As you move from the simple “yes/no” question at the beginning toward the “why” question at the end, you’ll notice that the queries tend to stimulate more reflective thinking and a deeper level of conversation.



However, unless a “why” question is carefully crafted, it can easily have people coming back with a defensive response, as they try to justify their answer rather than proceed in a spirit of inquiry. For instance, the questions, “Why can’t you ever tell me exactly what you are thinking?” or “Why did you do it *that* way?” can cause someone to defend a given position or rationalise some past decision, rather than open new possibilities. But you would know from your own experience, when a “why” question stems from genuine curiosity, openness and acceptance, such as “I am wondering why that happened. There are most likely a number of things that influenced it. Can you let me know your thoughts on it?” then the inquiry has the potential to create useful insights.

As you work to make your questions powerful, tailor and clarify the scope as precisely as possible to keep them within the realistic boundaries and needs of the situation you are working with. Avoid stretching the scope of your question too far. What questions could you ask that would encourage people to be reflective and think about what is happening in their service? What questions are difficult to ask and have been avoided? Why? Where could you start to ask them?

# Conditions that form the Basis for Good Hosting



## The Four Fold Way of Hosting

We have learned that quality conversations leading to close team work and wise actions arise when there are four conditions present.

1. Be Present
2. Participate and practice conversations
3. Host
4. Co-create

We call these four conditions the Four Fold Way of Hosting, because you can practise these any time. They form the basis for all good hosting.

**Being present** means showing up, undistracted, prepared, clear about the need and what your personal contribution can be. It allows you to check in with yourself and develop the personal practice of curiosity about the outcomes of any gathering.

**Practising conversation** - Listen and help others to listen, use silence, contribute to the harvest, put good questions in the centre, and connect ideas.

**Hosting** - Determine the need and the purpose, create a powerful question, host an appropriate process, encourage contributions, harvest.

**Co-create** - speak truth, speak for what is important, offer what you can, ask for what you need, commit to what you can and let go.

[http://www.berkana.org/pdf/Hosting\\_in\\_a\\_Hurry.pdf](http://www.berkana.org/pdf/Hosting_in_a_Hurry.pdf)

## HARVESTING



Effective tools for designing good conversations:

Have a **good focus** at the start that people are keen to work together on; develop a **good question** from the focus; use a **talking piece** to ensure every voice is heard.

**Harvest** (gather the information) well, and be aware of four things:

- Create an artefact. Harvesting is about making knowledge visible. Make a mind map, draw pictures, take notes, but whatever you do create a record of your conversation.
- Have a feedback loop. Artefacts are useless if they sit on the shelf. Know how you will use your harvest before you begin your meeting. Is it going into the system? Will it create questions for a future meeting? Is it to be shared with people as news and learning? Figure it out and make plans to share the harvest.
- Be aware of both intentional and emergent harvest. Harvest answers to the specific questions you are asking, but also make sure you are paying attention to the cool stuff that is emerging in good conversations. There is real value in what's coming up that none could anticipate. Harvest it.
- The more a harvest is co-created, the more it is co-owned.

**Make a wise decision** - If your meeting needs to come to a decision, make it a wise one. Wise decisions emerge from conversation, not voting. The simplest way to arrive at a wise decision is to use a consensus process.

**Act** - Once you have decided what to do, act. Wise action is action that doesn't over-extend or under-extend the resources of a group.

**Stay together** - Relationships create sustainability. If you stay together you become accountable to one another and you can face challenges better.

## METHODS - ART OF HOSTING



In the Art of Hosting practice we often begin and end meetings in a **circle** – it helps the process if participants can “check in” at the beginning about why they are participating, and “check out” at the end by reflect on what we’ve accomplished. Meeting in circle can be especially helpful when getting to know each other and the issue at hand, or as a means for deep reflection or consensus making.

Developed by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs, the **World Café** is an ideal way to find out what a community or organisation is thinking and feeling about a topic. After the first conversation, someone stays at the table as ‘host’, while the others move to a new table, taking their previous conversations with them. In this way, the threads of the various conversations are woven together and all of us get a sense of what is being discovered and developed between us.

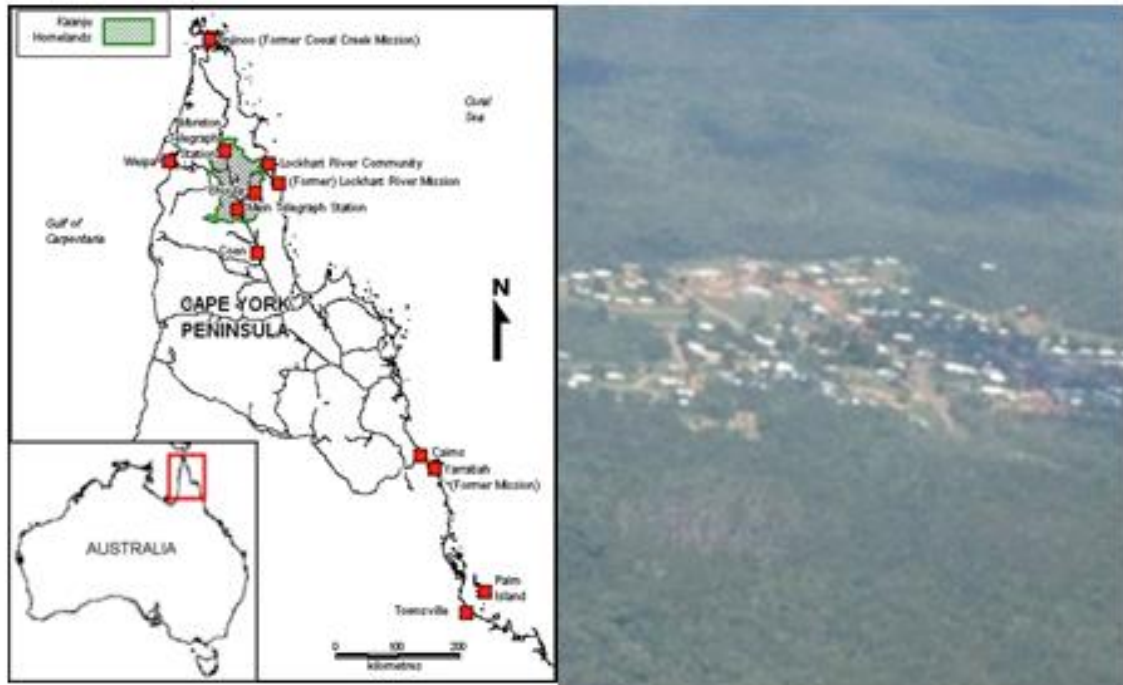
Harrison Owen who has written books on **Open Space Technology** and taught many people its useful group processes, says he stumbled upon this large whole system intervention and that it has always been part of human interactions. Whenever we need the contribution and innovative genius of everyone – because we need to drastically overhaul our operations, or we want to break down the silos within the business, or our community needs to create a strategic plan for its future we use open space. Convened around a core calling question, the group is made aware of any givens – budget, leadership, etc. – and then the space is opened for anyone to pose a session topic. Over the course of the meeting, people are free to choose which session(s) they most want to attend, bringing maximum enthusiasm and commitment for conversation and action.

**Appreciative inquiry** (Ai) emerged in the late 1980s as an iteration of the action research approach to organisational development (Cooperrider & Srivasa, 1987). The designers suggested that the problem-oriented worldview of traditional action-research methodology limited capacity to help social systems evolve, adapt, and creatively alter patterns over time. Appreciate inquiry has evolved into an organisational development approach to change management, understood most commonly as a process-based method that supports organisational transformation (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stravos, 2008). As a method used by Art of Hosting, it has great capacity to bring people together and grow what works for them.



## LOCKHART RIVER

very remote Aboriginal community of 650 people



Lockhart River Aboriginal community is one of the most economically and socially disadvantaged and remote communities in Australia. The Australian Bureau of Statistics ranks Lockhart River people as very disadvantaged. We are considered as remote and disadvantaged as Mornington and Palm Islands. No other Cape York community has a similar socio-educational disadvantage. Lockhart River LGA (Local Government Area) is ranked the 35th most socio-economic disadvantaged in Australia and 19th most disadvantaged in Queensland.

Lockhart River has about 650 residents, mostly comprised of Aboriginal people who originate from five major language groups – Wuthathi (southern), Kuuku Ya'u (northern) and Kanthanumpu (southern Kuuku ya'u) Uutaalnganu, Umpila and Kaanju (northern and southern). The community is largely dependent on government funding for survival. Many people are welfare dependent and live in poverty. Besides the Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council, few unskilled/semi-skilled jobs are available for locals. The unemployment rate is 19.6%, more than 3 times the national average.

<http://www.puuyafoundation.com.au/about-lockhart-river/>





Lockhart River is located more than 780 kilometres north of Cairns on the eastern side of Cape York peninsula – a mostly dirt road drive of more than 12 hours from Cairns and 4 hours from Weipa. The community is isolated by road in the wet season from December to May each year. Return flights from Cairns are provided 5 days a week, at a cost over \$900.00 per person.

Food and all other supplies come by barge, adding an additional freight cost of 30% to all items – a very significant amount for those already living in poverty.

A government research report showed the retail store was one of the most expensive in Queensland, approximately 65% higher than Brisbane (OESR Treasury Report 2006).

Life expectancy is 20 years less than for white Australians. For indigenous men, this is 47 years old. There are very high rates of mental health issues and chronic disease, including diabetes, kidney disease and gastrointestinal problems. More than 50 families are waitlisted for houses and no funding is available for new houses at this time. Overcrowding compounds health issues. The suicide rate is 5 times greater than average, based on national data. This rate is 6 times greater for young males. The high incidence of suicide causes much distress and suffering to individuals and their families.

Children must leave the community for secondary schooling. Many do not complete Year 12. Literacy and numeracy levels have been slowly improving over the past few years, but are still below national benchmarks. The attendance rate at the primary school for Term 2, 2009 was 67.5%.

## GROWING COMMUNITY CAPACITY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHERS



“puuya”, means “life force” in local Kuuku Ya’u language.

## ***PUUYA FOUNDATION***

*“transforming disadvantage into advantage”*

### ***Our Purpose***

- We are a backbone organisation building social and economic capital to create a sustainable, empowered community.

### ***Through programs that***

- Build collaborative leadership and community strengths –*strengthening puuya*
- Work on whole of community, integrated solutions – systems thinking
- Are embedded IN the community – sustainable results
- Work with partners – *you me working together & reconciliation*
- Strengthen culture, capacity, confidence & relationships
- Are initially in Lockhart River and expanding our reach over time

<http://www.puuyafoundation.com.au/>



**Learning Circles** have been held in Lockhart River Community for over 10 years. Community leaders are accustomed to working in this way and have found them to be of great benefit. Holding circles also supports the importance of culture, spirit, land and purpose for creating capacity in the community.

#### **Learning circles feedback from participants**

(Used with permission of the community of Lockhart River and CEO of the Puuya Foundation)

“Learning Circles continue to grow - they are an absolute model for best practice community development and capacity building”

“Having Learning Circles keeps us accountable for our actions and for working together to get results. With the constant encouragement and support, better things happen every time - thanks Puuya Foundation and all who participate”

“There is real collaborative action happening and sharing of information as a result of Learning Circles - thanks Puuya Foundation, Council, School and PaCE”

“It takes a community to raise a child. Learning Circles help us all to work together to achieve this”

“We can see the change happening - kids tell me what is going on and share” “useful”, “inspiring”,

“I feel empowered”, “it’s a good place to yarn and work together”, “actions and progress were really happening - not just a talkfest”, “we’re solving issues”, “getting to know and talk to all the players”.



# HOW DO WE BRING OUR SERVICES, PARENTS & CHILDREN TOGETHER TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN THE EARLY YEARS?

Our Aim:

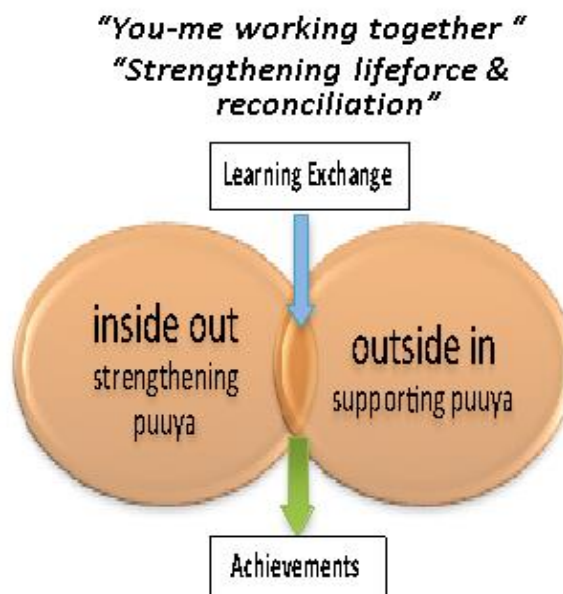
Maximise life chances for children in their early years in Lockhart River by empowering the community to lead integrated:

- early childhood education and care;
- parenting and family support; and
- Child and maternal health services.

Over 50% toddlers are vulnerable on 2 or more domains - nearly 5 times Australian average

No consistent child care or literacy programs for early years or parents as a result:-

Children are set up to fail later in life!





## PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

THE PUUYA APPROACH IS A PROCESS THAT ENGAGES COMMUNITIES ON THEIR OWN TERMS, TAKES ADVANTAGE OF INDIVIDUAL SKILLS AND COLLECTIVE ASSETS, FOCUS ON ISSUES UNIQUE TO THE PEOPLE, AND CREATES EFFECTIVE 2-WAY LINKAGES TO BROADER COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND TO MAINSTREAM KNOWLEDGE AND EFFORTS.

The Puuya Approach lays the groundwork that allows shared dreams for a vibrant, sustainable and cohesive community, to be made into reality. This way of working engages communities on their own terms, and takes advantage of the individual skills and collective assets of all involved.

Using this approach the Puuya Foundation has created significant activities and opportunities (e.g. community development, planning, and businesses) that enable enterprise and support the community over time to become self-sustaining and self-determining. Research indicates that one key difference in Lockhart River using the Puuya Approach is the significant effort made by the Foundation leaders and Elders to co-create sustainable ways for many people to take up leadership as they work in and with the community.

Lockhart River Community leaders have reported that the Puuya Approach has influenced a transformation of relationships, built confidence, and new ways of learning and working have resulted. These new ways honour values and indigenous perspectives, recognising culture and spirituality. The essential principle with this approach is to *learn from* and *with* the community and build from there. We learn together and from each other. This means working with the community from the *Inside out* and having interested and supportive partners who are contributing from the *Outside in*.

With Puuya we are able to meet at a level where we recognise the interconnectedness of all things; where we acknowledge and act on the deep respect we hold for all human beings regardless of race and culture. We express this by attuning to what is needed, what is growing, what is possible and acting in partnership to achieve community outcomes.

## PUUYA APPROACH



Stepping in the shoes of others, walk with them...in their way, at their pace....

*Learning Circles  
continue to grow - they  
are an absolute model  
for best practice  
community  
development and  
capacity building*



*There is real collaborative action  
happening and sharing of information  
as a result of Learning Circles -  
thanks Puuya Foundation, Council,  
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*Having Learning Circles keeps us accountable for  
our actions and for working together to get  
results. With the constant encouragement and  
support, better things happen every time - thanks  
Puuya Foundation and all who participate*

Used with permission of the community of Lochhart River and CEO of the Puuya Foundation

**"People only support what they create themselves  
and only act responsibly for things they care about..."**

**There is no greater power than a community discovering  
what it cares about."** (Margaret Wheatley 2004)



*Ask "What's possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.  
Notice what you care about.  
Assume that many others share your dreams.*

*Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.  
Talk to people you know.  
Talk to people you don't know.  
Talk to people you never talk to.*

*Be intrigued by the differences you hear.  
Expect to be surprised.  
Treasure curiosity more than certainty.*

*Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible.  
Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.  
Know that creative solutions come from new connections.  
Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know.  
Real listening always brings people closer together.*

***Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world***

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# USE THE ACTIVITIES

USING THE WORKBOOK, APPLY THE HISTORY TRIP AND APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY PROCESSES TO ENGAGE YOUR TEAM AND/OR BROADER ORGANISATION AS YOU UNDERGO DIRECTION CHANGES

THESE PROCESSES CAN ALSO BE APPLIED TO ENGAGE SEVERAL SERVICES IN A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

**Powerful change** begins when friends or colleagues really talk/listen about things that matter to them.

- As human beings we want to be together. When we are truly connecting with another it gives us purpose and a sense of joy.
- When we converse in meaningful ways this can take us into a deeper realm, it can restore our hope, and assist us to work toward the common good.
- Can we work with others and insist on an organisational environment and conditions that bring out our best and help us experience the satisfaction of working together? What would it be like to experience the joy of doing work that serves other human beings in every part of our organisation?
- We have a sense of possibility - We can step forward to help. We just need to start.
- As friends and colleagues working together we are able to follow the energy of “Yes!” rather than accepting defeat or getting stuck in the details of a plan and eventually going nowhere.
- “A leader is anyone who sees something that needs to change and takes the first steps to influence that situation . . . The world is abundantly rich in leaders.”

(Wheatley 2011)

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*Member:-  
Institute of Management Consultants  
Academy of Management  
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Associate Member Australia and NZ  
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With over 20 years of experience and significant change leadership expertise across 5 different government departments at middle and senior management levels, I have been responsible for initiating and leading statewide organisational development and culture change processes, strategy planning and futuring processes, leadership and management development and performance improvement.

Over the past 10 years my successful consulting business has assisted a range of public, community and private sector organisations to grow their strategic capacity, build teams, enhance their leadership and align vision and values to achieve results.

Many of the articles and processes used in these sessions come from my own practice developed over years and from partners in Human Ingredient. If you would like more information and assistance in facilitating these activities in your teams, please contact me via email on address provided.

Accredited:  
MBTI Facilitator  
Voices, Lominger 360 feedback  
Situational Leadership  
Leadership Practices  
Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation  
Trainer and assessor