

Inspiring Leadership Transformation: From the Workplace into the Community

Western Downs Regional Council needs its leaders to be visionaries as they work towards their goal of positively shaping the region for generations to come.

To ensure the region's prosperity continues now and well into the future, the council's executive team wanted a high-impact program for its managers, coordinators and future leaders that would inspire them to transform their core skills.

Specifically, the council's goal was to lift their people's capability in several key areas including building teams, having difficult conversations, problem solving, empowering innovation, and understanding and developing a coaching culture.

The council chose QUT to develop a bespoke leadership program that was delivered on site at the Dalby Events Centre, through several engaging workshops and group coaching sessions, across a three-month program.

The Client

Western Downs Regional Council manages the towns of Chinchilla, Dalby, Miles, Wandoan, Tara and the surrounding communities. The region covers 38,000 square kilometres in southeast Queensland and is home to more than 33,000 residents. While the region has historically been known for agriculture, forestry, fishing and construction, mining is now the leading industry for this region and its residents.

As such, the Western Downs is recognised as being the energy capital of Australia. The council is also making advances in renewable energy technology and has approved 11 large scale solar power developments.

The council's role is to remain the most accessible level of government in its local communities, and to make decisions that positively shape the region for the benefit of the generations to come. For this reason, it is part of the council's mission to nurture leaders who operate strategically, responsibly govern the region and deliver services that meet community needs through strategic leadership.

It is the council's vision to be innovative, connected with its residents and their needs, and united. It does this to achieve its strategic priorities including strong economic growth, active vibrant communities, great livability and financial sustainability.

The Challenge

Western Downs Regional Council wanted a locally delivered, high-impact program that would engage participants and improve core skills across its managers, coordinators, and future leaders of the organisation.

In delivering a high-impact program, the aim was for the comprehension and appreciation of these critical areas to be raised to a standardised, high-functioning level across the organisation.

Western Downs Regional Council chief executive officer Ross Musgrove said this program was about taking its leaders to the next level.

The program also needed to address Western Downs Regional Council's values of:

- Communication
- Leadership
- Respect
- Balance
- Teamwork; and
- accountability.



Partnership at a Glance

To ensure the region's prosperity continues now and well into the future, the council's executive team wanted a high-impact program for its managers, coordinators and future leaders that inspired them to transform their core skills.

QUTeX designed and delivered a program to help the team uplift capability in several areas from building teams, to understanding and developing a coaching culture, and having difficult conversations.



Completed June 2019



Dalby, Queensland



Local Government



Core Skills Program

“As leaders, we need to be able to think strategically. I think we are good at managing the day-to-day requirements as council. But we need to be able to think about the future and how our region is going to be prepared over the next few decades.”

Ross Musgrove, CEO

The Solution

QUT’s business and leadership experts developed a bespoke, skills-based leadership program. Our ability to tailor a program for the organisation and its needs was paramount, and we provided access to inspirational speakers who could deliver thought-provoking content for program participants.

The Core Skills Program was a collaborative effort, with the council’s executive team having constant input into the design of the program to ensure it was specific to its needs.

The program featured an on-boarding session, a series of skills-based workshops featuring compelling keynote speakers, and group coaching support for the participants.

The Results

The Core Skills Program was found to be successful in its effectiveness and engagement levels across participants.

Participants shared that the insight from the keynote speakers added to the value of the sessions and helped to keep the workshops alive and interesting, and that the facilitators were knowledgeable on the subjects that were featured in the program.

It was also a journey of self-discovery, as participants learned new things about themselves through challenges to reflect. They developed new ways of managing interactions with different types of people and gained a better understanding of how and why people act differently when challenged.

“I think the benefits that a program like this has is that it builds a sense of team within the organisation. Additional to that, as we go into the community, we are more cohesive with our plan and we can build better buy-in and get better results for our communities”

Justyne Wilson, Coordinator for Arts and Culture

“As far as self-confidence and self-awareness, I’ve noticed that within my division and across the organisation – specific examples are my managers are more aware of their interactions.”

Jodie Taylor, General Manager for Community and Liveability

Other participants shared a newfound appreciation for “bringing people along on a journey” through the process of change management. The program provided an opportunity to collaborate and work together as a leadership team and reminded them that they are “in it together”.

About QUTeX

QUTeX collaborates with large and small public and private sector organisations to design, develop and deliver customised leadership education and coaching programs.

QUT’s Faculty of Business is the first in Australia to earn the Triple Crown — all three international accreditation symbols of excellence from the world’s leading business school accrediting bodies.

With our nimble and client-focused approach to corporate education for the real world, and access to experts on a wide range of topics, QUTeX will work with your organisation to create and execute a program that meets and exceeds your business’ needs.



Learn more about WDRC’s story:
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