

National Disability Workforce Project

Workforce Project



KOOMARRI

Canberra, ACT

Workforce issues targeted:

- Workforce capacity
- Staff performance
- Engagement of staff
- Development of staff capacity
- The up skill of the workforce through training and development
- Staff retention

Our assumptions:

That Koomarri has a dedicated, well trained and flexible staff base. That the method used within Koomarri for retention and staff development will assist other organisations to implement similar strategies that assist to decrease their potential high staff turnover, building on attrition and attraction strategies.

Strategies trialled:

Strategy 2 – Strengthening Relationships with other stakeholders

Koomarri mapped its existing relationships with stakeholders, identifying those who were worth the continued relationship development and those who were more beneficial as being identified as one of our suppliers/customers. Koomarri has developed a background document to assist organisations to also identify and map their key relationships as a means of strengthening those relationships. Guidelines and a checklist have been developed.

Koomarri formed relationships with The Canberra College and the ACT Student to Industry Program. Through the development of these relationships we worked in partnership with both bodies to offer student placements within our organisation. These placements provided students with 'real' work experience that matched the needs of their existing studies.

Students at Canberra College were completing Cert 1 or 2 in Community Services &/or Disability Work &/or Aged Care. This continues during 2009.

Strategy 3 – Job Redesign

The jobs within most organisations are continually evolving, although this often occurs in a haphazard, rather than a planned way. It is not unusual to find that the job actually being completed by an individual varies from what is outlined in the job description.

Koomarri developed a toolkit to assist in the trialling of job redesign techniques to ensure cohesion in staff duties, actual duties performed, duty statements, organisational needs, vision & values.

Strategy 6 – Retention Strategies

Koomarri revised and enhanced its existing staff induction program to ensure that it provided new staff with the skills and tools required to carry out their jobs. The enhanced process also identifies key training and skill development areas that can be implemented over time. Training and skill identification also builds on retention strategies.

Koomarri promoted the adoption of flexible approaches to work to accommodate and help retain staff.

Koomarri developed checklists, policies and procedures to support these strategies.

Strategy 7 – Skill Development

A focus for the period was encouraging staff to nominate to complete training in line with their areas of employment. Training undertaken relevant to position held has led to an increase of 6% in regards to staff who hold a qualification in line with the position they hold. During 08/09 6 staff completed formal qualifications.

How we measured the impact of our strategies:

Strategy 2

Relationships formed with The Canberra College and Student to Industry Program have been successful as they continue to evolve during 2009.

Strategy 3

Job redesign is an organic process and is one which tends to be ongoing at Koomarri. Koomarri is pleased to have had success in numerous approaches to job redesign. Job redesign is paramount in retention strategies and underpins business and program planning.

Strategy 6

The induction program is yet to be fully implemented. Measurement will occur later in 2009. Flexible approaches to work seem to be working in line with accommodating business needs and staff needs.

Strategy 7

We measured success of this strategy through the identification of the percentage of overall staff with a qualification relevant to their position. This figure was later recalculated once identified training had been completed by staff. This figure increased by 6% during 08/09.

Conclusions:

- Heightened awareness of workforce issues within the organisation, especially in relation to recruitment and retention strategies.
- We have developed some tools relevant to the ACT sector.
- Koomarri has a skilled workforce, that continues to grow as more staff take on further training.
- Flexible hours is paying off.
- That wage is often what has people leaving the workforce.
- Effectively built and maintained relationships matter.
- Effective induction and retention demonstrates a value of the workforce.

Implications:

A lot of the strategies trialled do not necessarily provide instant results. The process of effective workplace planning at Koomarri is one which is ongoing and will be incorporated into future and ongoing business planning activities.

