

A Distasteful Inheritance - The Challenge of Transforming an Inherited Team

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***Mary Walker** is Team Leader of Art & Community Programs at the Yallourn Campus of Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE. Mary oversees teaching and administrative staff in the delivery of Art & Design, Childrens Services and Foundation Studies programs. She has recent applied experience in transforming her inherited team through a number of performance and change management strategies along with extensive education leadership experience having worked as Head of Department in various Secondary Schools, both in Victoria and South Australia.*

Given the opportunity, any person advancing to a new leadership role would welcome the chance to choose their own team. Why wouldn't they! They'd get to select staff that have the appropriate skills and knowledge, are passionate, hard working, committed and personable – in short, the right people! But unfortunately our system doesn't work that way, nor could it, without significant upheaval. What we do see are new leaders inheriting an existing team with all their intrinsic strengths and foibles.

There will always be a few, that given the chance, you would have chosen anyway. Yet on closer examination you find that their work goes largely unrewarded and they feel frustrated by the general lack of accountability of others. This can be de-motivating and ultimately lead to frustration, reduced productivity, plummeting morale, and development of a poor culture.

Taking on a new leadership role is exciting and often incredibly challenging. One of the challenges faced is the inheritance of a team of existing staff who the new leader must accept regardless of their past performances and attitudes.

So how does a leader reward and enthuse the competent staff whilst improving the performance of others? The development of a strategic approach is crucial to success.

This interactive session will provide participants with an opportunity to share some of their own experiences with inherited staff, review the impact of incompetence and develop realistic strategies to move forward. Special attention will be given to the integral relationship between academic leaders and the Human Resources team.

Participants will benefit by:

- Better understanding the impact of incompetent staff
- Understanding the importance of addressing the issue and taking a proactive approach
- Developing a realistic strategy to lift the performance of incompetent staff or move them out
- Strengthening the relationship between academic leaders and the Human Resources team