

Information for composite teams

Some councils, for a number of reasons, are not able to form a team of five or six members. This may be a particular problem for smaller councils. An excellent solution is to join with a neighbouring council or councils to form a composite team. The entry fee is still the same but would be shared between the participating councils on any basis they agree to.

GETTING STARTED

Every idea needs a champion. So, typically one local government officer will want to promote the idea amongst the intended participating councils. This would normally happen at a senior level but, initially at least, can happen at any level. A telephone hook-up, or better still a personal meeting between colleagues from each council, which is convened for the purpose or attaches to some other business, can address the following agenda:

- Benefits of entering a team
- The basis of team selection
- The basis for selecting a mentor
- The basis for selecting a team leader
- Team preparation processes

Typically, discussion of these issues will engender a cooperative framework that will not only strongly support the team, but also benefit inter-organisational cooperation.

SELECTING A TEAM

The process already agreed to might involve a team selection committee with representatives from each organisation, or that might have been delegated to a single officer. In any event it will be based upon pre-determined criteria and will be an open and straight-forward process. If there are a large number of interested parties, this can lead to the entry of multiple teams, single teams from each organisation and/or a commitment to enter teams in subsequent years. These are all very positive outcomes which would send strong signals of professional development support to your staff.

PREPARING THE TEAM

Again using the agreed processes for selecting a mentor and team leader, team preparation would proceed on the basis best suited to the participating organisations. Resources have been designed so that they can be used just as effectively from multiple locations, although it will be necessary to have periodic telephone hook-ups or personal meetings. This in itself is an important skill development opportunity and again will build cooperative bridges.



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FEEDBACK/DEBRIEFING/FOLLOW UP

The same processes used for team preparation can be used for debriefing - either telephone hook-ups or personal meetings. A valuable aspect of a composite team is that there can be ongoing meetings between representatives from each council to reinforce the learning outcomes, share implementation experiences and generally ensure the maximum benefit is extracted from participation in the Management Challenge.

WHAT NEXT?

You might still have some questions. If so, please contact Jane Trotter at LG Professionals Australia: email challenge@lgprofessionalsaustralia.org.au. If cost is a problem you may be eligible for the LG Professionals Australia's Smaller Council Subsidy Scheme. Give the office a call for further information.

As mentioned above, every good cause needs a champion, so the real next step is deciding to sell the idea around your organisation and amongst your neighbouring councils. It is well worth the effort. Not only is the Management Challenge an extraordinarily cost-effective professional development and team training program, it is also a wonderful personal and professional experience which will have long term value, both for team members and their organisations.

Although it is a competitive challenge, the program is not about winning, it is about improving your professional techniques and outputs - something your councils are all vitally interested in.