INTRODUCTION TO THE TOOLKIT

The Community Sector faces a unique challenge in attracting people to the industry and retaining them for the long term. This is particularly so in the Northern Territory. The challenges are many and varied, but to name a few:

★ Whose job is it to hire a new employee when there is no official Human Resources person?

★ How can you write a job description when the needs of the organisation change daily?

★ How can you hire someone when you don't have secure funding after twelve months?

★ How do you handle the intense competition for limited resources in the job market?

★ How do you attract the right people for your organisation?

There are many methodologies on how to achieve best practice in hiring and managing employees. For a variety of reasons, it is sometimes difficult to easily adapt these methodologies to non-profit Community Sector organisations. Whilst we can aspire to best practice, what we need is a practice that works for us.

Organisations within the Community Sector typically don't have the luxury of a dedicated Human Resources or personnel function. Business functions and deliverables must be met while the maintenance activities continue behind the scenes – a bit like changing the wings on a Qantas 747 at 35,000 feet.

To undertake any maintenance or support function to a satisfactory performance level requires the correct tools; be they spanners and screwdrivers, scaffolding and ladders, surgical instruments and computers or pencils and paper. One thing in common with all toolkits is that there is a procedure for their correct use.

We have therefore created a toolkit to assist in the process of identifying, recruiting and retaining staff in the Community Sector. Firstly it is important to note that the information contained in our toolkit is more a set of guidelines than specific instructions for the recruitment and retention of staff in the Community Sector.

WHAT'S IN THE TOOLKIT

Topic 1: How do you find the people you need?

This is an introduction to the avenues available when looking for staff and includes information on apprenticeships, traineeships, internal recruiting etc.

Topic 2: Advertising your job

Do's and don'ts of advertising for staff

Topic 3: So, why don't you tell me about yourself?

Employer interview tips and a sample interview rating tool

Topic 4: Use simple and user-friendly recruitment processes

Suggests some methods the Community Sector can use to make their recruitment processes more effective and efficient.

Topic 5: Is it just about money? What we can do about retaining effective staff!

Presents information on turnover risks and retention strategies for the Sector.

Topic 6: Stress…What can we do about it?

This is a non-clinical analysis of stress in the workplace – provides some common-sense approaches for employers enabling them to recognise and react to the symptoms of stress.

Topic 7: What if?...a quick and easy guide to Succession Planning

Provides guidelines for introduction of Succession Planning into the Community Sector workplace – a 5 Step Approach.

These topics and guidelines have been constructed from an analysis of information, methodologies, processes and practices gathered through research that has included:

- ★ the determination of the specific needs of the Community Sector
- ★ a review of similar situations interstate and internationally
- ★ the application of appropriate standard practices in other industries
- ★ the liberal application of common sense

It is our intention that these topics provide a basis for the development of specific processes that suit your organisation's needs. On their own, we hope that they will enable you to streamline your maintenance activities so that we can keep our 747s in the air.

As with all documentation, this toolkit is not a repository for static documents - we need to be responsive and flexible in dealing with changing times, attitudes and personalities. In that respect we look forward to working with all of you to ensure that the toolkit continues to be representative of the Community Sector's needs.

It is the aim of NTCOSS to provide practical information to employers in the NT Community Sector.

To that end, we have also included a simple and flexible Workforce Planning and Development Model, created for the NT Community Sector, as part of this toolkit.

Copies of the toolkit topics, model and documentation have also been provided in electronic format on the CD accompanying this toolkit.