



Participant Testimonial

Sean Kerr, Operations Officer +
Ellisa Bourne, Community Education Co-ordinator
CFA District 8

What did you particularly like about the program?

Sean: For me it was the group work; the program was based around that and it enabled me to bounce ideas off counterparts, within the organisation and these were not people that I was working with all the time, they were people from different areas within CFA, and it brought a different perspective on what we were trying to do. It gave me different ideas and different viewpoints which I was able to incorporate into the way I manage and lead people.

Ellisa: I think for me it was the group work as well and the dynamics of our group, so as Sean touched in it was people from different parts of our organisation, so it wasn't just me in my little 'bubble' that I usually work in, it was with people from all different arms of CFA. That helped give us all really good insight.

And I think also the space between the group work, so we had a good month in between to go away and reflect and even chat to each other on the phone about what's been happening and then come back to meet as a group again, and I think over that 6 month period we really bonded quite a bit in the group and opened up a lot more than we probably would have if it was a one off type of situation.

What insights did you gain from participating in the program?

Ellisa: I think I really got out of it the ability to put myself into the people I lead's shoes. Understanding what motivates them and understanding that people are motivated by different things. I have my own beliefs and values but they might not necessarily be the same set that an employee might have and it is about understanding that person's motivators and values and trying to work around those.

Sean: I totally agree. I understand that I have my own set of beliefs but how do I impart them and enthuse my people to achieve the things that I want them to achieve. It was understanding other people's points of views and what motivates them, and then working with that to achieve a common goal. That was really beneficial.

Ellisa: I've just read in my reflection diary that I had said that my beliefs and the way I perform

as a leader, I have to make sure that I perform that way even with people that are 'hard' and even with people I might necessarily get along with. I still owe that person the time and the trust and the phone calls and the visits, even though it might be 'harder' work.

What are you doing differently as a result of your participation in the program?

Ellisa: I think it made me really understand the small things and the motivators. I actually physically put time in my diary to visit someone in the field that I hadn't seen in a while. We all get busy and get in this busy loop but *is* about those 'little things' that make a really big difference to someone you are managing's work day, and I think they can go by the way-side when you get busy so I have really got back to basics and I make sure I make the phone calls and make the visits and congratulate people for doing a good job. Those little things that can fall off the radar, really putting them back on the radar because they are important to people.

Sean: I think for me it's the fact that I am listening to my people more and understanding the triggers, the things they are saying and how that is relating back to my beliefs and what I am trying to get out of what we are doing.

How did the program differ from previous leadership development you have undertaken?

Ellisa: There was a lot of talking, and I really liked that! But it wasn't slide shows and theory. The theory was built into it but around a facilitated discussion and very casual atmosphere; we'd be having a coffee and sitting around couches and everyone would get their chance to talk and vent and it was all about us, and I think that was really good.

Sean: The way it was facilitated was fantastic, and that is what made it realistically. It wasn't a rushed program, it took the time to reinforce the theory components through the practical work, and the group work was one of the best bits because it gave us an opportunity to bounce our ideas off everyone else and listen to their feedback on what we were thinking and saying, and this built my confidence in the relationships with these people who I don't normally work with.

Leadership development that turns *Knowing* into *Doing*