

## Get the right people to do the job

The Australian Public Service needs a new work culture in which staff at all levels are accountable for productivity. I have been in the Public Service for 8 years now and it is my observation that some 60% of employees who, are dedicated and polite, carry the load of the other 40% who are uninterested and lazy. These lazy people also use the APS Code of Conduct to their advantage – if they are instructed to work they complain of being bullied and accuse management of breaching the Code of Conduct. Conveniently, they forget that they breach the code by failing to perform their duties as stipulated in the Certified Agreement.

I believe that the APS needs to employ people who can do the job in the first place and are willing to work. I am appalled at the number of Public Servants who think it is their right to turn up to work and do nothing. There must be accountability for productivity. There is a large staff turnover in the APS and the reason, in my opinion, is that the people who work hard and perform their duties properly get sick of being saddled with sloths. I know of public servants who are on work performance and still don't perform. Come on - let's loosen up the system and start by sacking the dead wood. After all, it is Australian taxpayers who pay our wages. When I worked in the private sector I got less pay and was required to do more work I therefore find it extremely difficult to work with people who don't pull their weight and who, in some cases, do no work at all.

Accountability should also be demonstrated when staff are attending functions, conference and courses. I have experienced a situation in which a staff member joined me for an interstate conference but instead of attending the conference she made a holiday of the trip and went sight-seeing. I believe that such behaviour amounts to theft of taxpayers' money and I don't think the incident I've described is an isolated one. This kind of person should be sacked. I cannot emphasise strongly enough that people need to be accountable for their actions. If they are not accountable and are dismissed as a consequence, then so be it.

I also recognize nepotism in the Public Service and it disgusts me. Managers employ family members and appoint them to APS-6 positions. I started as a Cadet and am working my way up, being judged on my own merit as everyone should be. There should be a rule that family members cannot work together in the same department.

As for levelling wages throughout the Public Service – I totally disagree! I know of people who would never seek positions with Centrelink or DIAC because they know that these Departments would expect them to do an honest day's work. Departments with higher accountability should have higher pay and the salaries of individuals should be based on merit and productivity.

Overall the 60% of productive Public Servants do their work extremely well. There are areas which could be improved but if we begin by getting the right people, those who are willing to do the work required of them, they will find ways to improve the system.