

## **What are the most important challenges facing the public sector over the next ten years?**

1. The APS is becoming too politically correct.

Fair and equitable is becoming UNjust and UNreasonable creating a service of employees too scared to be themselves for fear of reprisal by colleagues who are too busy trying to appear to fit within a system that no longer fully values diversity in attitudes and personalities. This decreases productivity and creates an atmosphere of fear that increases emotional, physiological and psychological strain among the majority. The incessant attention on maintaining a politically correct approach leads to increased claims for mediation, moderation consultative processes in circumstances when it is not warranted. Common sense seems to have become sorely missing.

2. Water Urn chats and Facebook.

I observe decreased productivity every day by people socialising at work to the point that it is their main social circle. Additional access to internet chat rooms - Facebook etc - adds to this with numerous people utilising these services for hours every day. Whilst I am not advocating for the removal or cessation of all (as this will also have a negative effect to productivity) - there must be a balance. Or has this blown out due to the above, where supervisors and co-workers feel as though they can not stop excessive use of chat rooms or social interaction at work for fear of breaching someone's rights or sensibilities?

3. Merit selection

I have been told that the APS has a merit selection process. However, my experience would indicate that the reality is very different with many people raised to positions of responsibility that are beyond their capabilities. In addition, in selection documentation, position titles, duties and responsibilities advertised rarely reflect the true nature of the position.

4. Movement between departments.

In this Day and Age, movement between departments is recognised as the norm. However systems are increasingly different between departments with an expectation that people changing jobs/departments will be able to just 'get on with it' in their new positions. This is far from the truth and this is compounded by the lack of induction training to enable new employees to use unique-Departmental systems with any form of competency. Again decreasing productivity.

## **What challenges will that workforce face?**

1. A work place out of touch with reality.
2. Increase in stressed, distressed, and depressed staff.
3. Catering for the sector of the APS and society that is already the most disadvantaged and discriminated against: the 18-35YO heterosexual Anglo-Saxon male, who is non-political, non-religious, tax paying, omnivore of average to above average fitness and height.
4. The ability to say NO. This is on many different levels:
  - Too many Yes - men near ministers - advice, expectations of timelines, abilities, procedures, policy can be unrealistic. Application of programs/initiatives that have not had sufficient planning to be initiated.
  - When is enough, enough for second chances?

- When will common sense replace politically correct admonishment of genuine people just trying to 'be themselves' in an increasingly 'grey' office environment
- All peoples should have the same rights, awards, pay etc. The tide has turned and so-called 'minority groups' now receive too much leniency

### **How should we respond to this challenge?**

Create a work place where the perception of what is 'normal' is closer to reality.