

Value Adding #13



Enjoyable business partnerships

April - June 1997

Kate Ramsay and Des Ryan welcome you to AnD Consulting's easy-to-read newsletter.

In this edition **Learnable Moments** explores the process of learning. **Did You Know?** names a good read, reinforces the value of a retreat and shares the 'aha' of two readers about value adding in their businesses. In **Value Adding in Business** you can read how the director-general of a government department adds value for her customers.

LEARNABLE MOMENTS

To Des and Kate, learning is the process of naming a concept, exploring what that concept means in the context of our vision, expressing the concept in an agreed language and then experimenting in the world to produce results that work.

For example, for the concept of valuing each other, we explore what this means to us as individuals (*personal vision*). Next we create a meaning which is agreed to by both of us (*shared vision*). Our experimentation then involves asking what the other would like, listening to their reply and responding appropriately (*vision in action*).

DID YOU KNOW?

A good read

As 1997 moves into fast forward, we recommend The Paradox of Success - when winning at work means losing at life: A book of renewal for managers and leaders. (by John R. O'Neil and published by McGraw-Hill) This book explores the personal cost of succeeding in today's competitive business environment and recommends, among other things, regular retreats for refreshment and renewal. A retreat can be anything from a half a

day in the garden to a month in a monastery.

We are excited about this book because, in offering our clients a Learning Sabbatical/Retreat, we have reached similar conclusions to O'Neil about the value this provides.

The value of a retreat

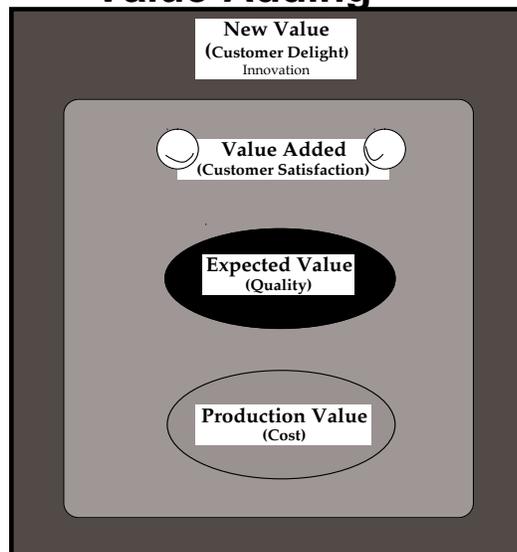
Margaret Kelly, MD of Corporate Relocations, wrote of her recent retreat: "I had a Leadership Coaching session at Kate and Des' beautiful place before going on a retreat out of Byron Bay. I am still enjoying the benefits of having that quiet time after the coaching session to reflect on the insights I gained and the plan of action I devised. In my sessions in Sydney I race straight back to my office, enlightened and inspired, but with no time to reflect."

Two value adding 'ahas'

(i) Eevi Stein runs a backpackers' hostel on Gili Air, a tiny island north west of Lombok in Indonesia. Having read Value Adding #11, she told us she realised that what our guest in Value Adding in Business was saying about his trucking company applied just as well to her business. As a consequence of this 'aha' she interviewed some guests and added greater variety to her breakfast menu, thus adding value to her hostel.

(ii) John Wood, MD of Transforma, a fine timber bedroom furniture store in Adelaide, rang us recently to say, "You've been talking about value adding for years and I've finally 'got it'. Since then, I have been applying the value adding philosophy to my customers and, financially, I've had my best year yet!"

Value-Adding



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Value Adding in Business

"Many issues which have traditionally been called 'women's issues' are, when you really look at them, issues for the whole community," Carolyn Bloch told Value Adding in Business.

As Director-General of the NSW Department for Women, Carolyn said that the value adding strategy of the department is to make 'women's issues' part of the core business of all NSW government agencies. "Our primary customers are the same customers that the Departments of Health, Police and Community Services have," Carolyn said. "Yet departments such as these have the resources, budgets and interface with the women of NSW to effect change."

When Carolyn was appointed she inherited an organisation with a mandate to focus on special equity programs for women and a 'watchdog' role with all other government agencies. The first step in achieving the whole of government approach to 'women's issues' was that the organisation was made a department like all the other government agencies. "This enables the Director-General of the Department for Women to meet and negotiate with other CEOs on an equal footing," Carolyn said. "I assume and take that right and on most levels the CEOs respond and relate to me in that way," she added with a smile.

Carolyn's department adds value to three customer groups. Being a government department, the government of the day is an important customer. In terms of service delivery the women of NSW are the primary customer. The third customer group is the other NSW government agencies.

The foundation for the department's value adding strategy is the Action Plan for Women. The plan has six objectives which encapsulate the major issues facing women in the 1990's.

For these objectives to impact on the department's primary customer group, the

women of NSW, Carolyn and her team had first to sell the plan to the government agencies. "I think departments appreciated not being told how to suck eggs," Carolyn said in explanation of how they approached this. "They were doing some good things and we went to them and explained our expertise in this area, and asked how we could help." Having the full support of the NSW Government is adding value to this approach. "With strategic input from the Premier's Council for Women, the 'muscle' of the Minister and the full resources of the departments, we are now all working on the same objectives," Carolyn said.

An example of the success of this strategy in action is in the area of women's health. In the Action Plan the objective is to improve the health and quality of life for women. While the Health Department carries the overall responsibility for this objective, the Department of Corrective Services and the Department of Community Services are currently working together with the community to establish long day child care centres for use by young mothers in custody so they can maintain relationships with their children.

Another way Carolyn is adding value to the government agencies is to meet with the key CEOs twice a year. Prior to these meetings she is briefed by her team on their activities in the agencies and the CEOs are similarly briefed by their teams. This direct communication between Carolyn and other CEOs has enabled misconceptions to be clarified and omissions to be identified. It is also a tactic for ensuring that 'women's issues' remain in the core business of government by keeping CEOs aware of their commitment to the Action Plan for Women.

In closing, Carolyn talked about the future. "We won't stand still on this," she said. "We have made a genuine attempt to put all the available resources into specific directions. The Action Plan and our good relationship with the departments provide a sound base for future adaptive and creative responses towards achieving women's full participation in the community of NSW."

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