

Programme Leaders for the Non-strategic Programmes

This piece is from Doug Kuhn, Transition Manager.

All TRL staff were recently invited to submit Expressions of Interest for the role of Programme Leader for the non-strategic programmes.

It is pleasing to report that there has been a strong interest in this important role with several programmes having more than four applicants.

It was also pleasing to note that interest was shown by people not presently working in the programme and that the classification of those applying ranged from P2 to P4 level.

Selection teams were formed with a mix of section leaders, branch GMs and Strategic Programme Managers to interview potential programme leaders.

The Transition Manager was also involved in a number of interviews to ensure a consistency of approach.

Candidates were assessed against four selection criteria:

- 1 a vision for the future of the programme
- 2 a customer / business focus
- 3 team leadership skills, and
- 4 communication skills.

At the time of writing there were a few interviews still not completed.

Programme Leaders will be announced shortly, once all the applicants have been informed as to outcome of the selection interviews.

Short training courses for Programme Leaders are also being investigated to help them assimilate into their new role in TRL.

For further information, please contact Doug Kuhn on (03) 9253 6655.

Director to make a presentation to all staff

We are all aware of the business imperatives that are facing Telstra today as it has been a topical issue permeating throughout the organisation.

I would like to share with you a vision for TRL and its staff and what we need to do to meet these challenges. I will also take the opportunity to convey highlights from the Employee Opinion Survey results.

I therefore request the attendance of all TRL staff for the following meeting:

Monday 14th August, 1995
10.30 - 11.30am
M8 Auditorium.

(Format will be a half hour briefing followed by questions and answers.)

Graham Shepherd
Director Telstra Research Laboratories

The FIFO Newsletter

FIFO is a fortnightly newsletter for all TRL staff. It is produced by the Promotion & Communication Section. We welcome your feedback and contributions.

The editor of the newsletter is Tanya Waterson-Clark, Science Writer (03) 9253 6704. My office is on 1/M8.

Contributions and comments can be e-mailed or faxed on (03) 9253 6321.

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Record keeping: It's not my job

Tim O'Grady, Co-ordinator Records Management and Archives in the NIRC, has sent us in this piece on keeping those important bits of paper.

Record keeping: its not my job. I'd like a dollar for very time I've heard that remark (or worse!).

People view records keeping generally as a process that stops them doing what they are paid for, an unproductive waste of time and a burden we could all do without. In some work places there is even a stigma attached to record keeping activities, which are somehow viewed as beneath certain classes of employee.

Why does record keeping suffer from such bad press? As a records management practitioner of 10 years standing I must admit some degree of amazement. I have seen time and again individuals and organisations fall back on records to get out of serious situations. But still the negative perceptions continue. Let's examine some of the benefits of quality record keeping.

Organisations create and maintain records primarily as evidence of business activities and transactions. This evidence, which forms the corporate memory:

- ✓ supports policy formation and managerial decision making
- ✓ enables the organisation to meet legislative and regulatory requirements
- ✓ protects the interests of the organisation and the rights of employees, clients and citizens

- ✓ provides protection and support in litigation
- ✓ documents organisation activities, development and achievement and
- ✓ supports consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration.

This may sound very bland and dry, but in layman's terms we create records as evidence of meeting any external requirements such as laws or regulations, to satisfy any internal requirements such management reporting or company policies, and finally as a record of what we have done (the decisions we have made and the work we have produced).

It is important also to emphasise that **quality** record keeping is important. The ability of records to communicate information over time is dependent on the quality of the information and the quality of the recording medium.

The true value of records is often more evident in the longer term when the facts become blurred and staff have moved on.

One of the more infamous recent examples of the importance of quality record keeping was demonstrated during the "sports rorts" affair. Ros Kelly, the then Federal Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories, was found by a parliamentary committee to have failed to approach minimum standards of documentation and that her record keeping was inadequate.

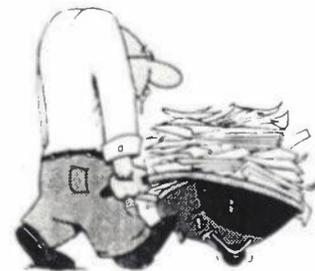
Claims of bias in the distribution of government grants could not be disproved by the Minister because there were no records kept of the decision making process. Leaving aside the humorous aspects of this case (white boards will never be the same), the Minister was forced to resign over what was fundamentally a failure in record keeping.

I doubt whether many of us will face consequences as dire as Ros Kelly, however it does highlight the importance of record keeping for us as individuals and also for the organisation as a whole. All TRL staff have a responsibility to create records of a type and quality to document our activities.

The Research Labs Council has recently approved an investigation into two aspects of current TRL information management problems. This investigation is being co-ordinated by the NIRC and will focus on the management of TRL's published information and the improvement of record keeping practices and records management services at TRL. Please contact David Richards for further information.

How long should you keep files?

Files don't need to last forever. They can be destroyed (if you've got permission) or they can be stored. For further information on what to do with the files cluttering up your office, please contact Tim O'Grady on (03) 9253 6148.



Please note: Tim O'Grady is now the person responsible for file creation at TRL. (He's the one who generates the official labels.)

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New Horizons magazine hits the spot

This piece is from the Promotion & Communication Section.

We don't often take the time to pat ourselves on the back, however, the feedback we have been receiving on the latest issue of TRL's own New Horizons has been so fantastic, we thought we'd share it with all of you. We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their assistance and co-operation in the creation of this publication.

Here are some of the things that people have had to say:

Mr Graham Shepherd. Thanks - A very fine document. Congratulations to you and your team.
Frank Blount, CEO Telstra

Graham, Thank you for your letter . . . and the magazine which I think is a first class effort. In a conversation with our Chairman [of the Telstra Board] . . . he agrees that your magazine "New Horizons" is good material from a public relations point of view and wondered whether we should not make copies available more broadly, eg, to all our staff [all Telstra staff!] and key external stakeholders. Could I ask you to consider this and the logistics . . .

Paul Rizzo,
GMD Finance and Administration

For 12 years off and on I have written for about 40 Telecom departments, some no longer with us. I have done speeches, videos, articles, new product and service booklets - even some work for TRL. I have never seen any Telecom publication of the quality of the "New Horizons" magazine I've just received. Very well conceived and written, and Brian Pascoe [designer] has excelled himself. Congratulations to all.

Could you possibly spare another couple of copies? I'd like to show the magazine to others as representing the standard to aim at.

Harvey Mitchell,
The Harvey Mitchell Partnership

I've just seen New Horizons and it's brilliant. It's by far the best thing I've seen around Telstra for a long time. "Welcome to the 21st century!" it says. CONGRATULATIONS! . . . RAD! COOL! REALLY EXCELLENT!

Richard Castle, HR Manager

A brief note to say how much I enjoyed the issue of "New Horizons" which you distributed to Lab Council members yesterday.

It looks good, it reads well, and it contains a lot of interesting information. It seems to me that it's an excellent marketing tool for TRL.

Congratulations on an excellent publication.
Helen Rodd, GM NIRC

Congratulations on New Horizons; an excellent initiative.

Ian Macphee,
Director Industrial Relations Directorate

I just received some very positive feedback about New Horizons from Andrew Gunter, from C&G sales for the health sector. He said it's the sort of magazine he wants to pick up to show to customers. Well done!

Paul Kirton,
GM Products Services and Systems

Senior Sales Professional, Andrew Gunter likes the New Horizons and thinks "it's racy" and would like his visitors to have a copy.

Communications Consultant, Bob Shaw who looks after the Commonwealth Bank said, "It's great" and "Can I give them to my customers?"

I was just reading the latest issue of New Horizons, first let me congratulate you on a great publication. It never ceases to amaze me the different directions that technology is taking us and it is good to know we are the leaders in a lot of the directions we are heading . . .

Carl O'Brien,
Technical Co-ordinator, Payphone Services

Could you please forward 20 copies of the latest New Horizons booklet to me . . . If you could have these forwarded as soon as possible as we need them in support of a major bid for electronic services we have under negotiation with the SA government.

Graham Scriven,
Regional Account Manager

Love the new magazine! Very nice production. Reminds me a bit of 21C . . .

Anita Coia, Editor Our Future

Have Your Say



If you have a question or an issue you'd like to raise, send it in to FIFO.

In this issue, Allan Mitchell, Manager of the Promotion & Communication Section, answers some more questions that have come in to FIFO.

Long service awards are inadequate.

We are currently looking at the Long Service Award system, and hope to have some suggested changes in the near future.

There should be more work to promote a higher community profile for TRL. For example, getting TRL on Beyond 2000.

We are constantly involved in looking for opportunities to promote TRL to the wider community. Any help you can give us by way of world firsts and good news stories would be appreciated!

We do issue media releases. However, getting TRL on Beyond 2000 has proven to be a special challenge - up until recently it has been sponsored by Optus.

Team brief is a strategy which may improve the communication process within TRL. I have been referred to you as the person who was to facilitate the implementation of team brief into TRL. Is that correct? What is happening to team brief in TRL?

Moves were made to introduce team briefing into TRL, but it was suspended when we started looking at the restructure.

The Director, Graham Shepherd has emphasised to the Research Labs Council that effective two way communication is vital to TRL. Our current processes of all staff meetings in the Auditorium, and fortnightly section meetings with a GM present should provide even greater opportunities than the traditional team brief process for information to come down the line and feedback to go back-up the line.

The Management Team (MT) and Section meetings are supported by written weekly issues reports which (should) go to MT members (all reports) and Section staff (relevant reports). This is very close to the Team Brief concept.

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Applications invited for Telstra MBA scholarship

Applications are now open for the Luke Bozza Memorial Scholarship 1995.

The scholarship which is hosted by Corporate and Government (C&G), is open to all Telstra employees.

The winner will commence a year's executive style MBA program in 1996. After the successful completion of the program, the scholarship holder undertakes a year long development program with Corporate, International and Enterprises (CI&E).

The objective of the scholarship is to contribute to Telstra's pool of leaders by identifying and developing Telstra's high potential people who will take the company into the future.

The scholarship is valued at \$75,000, and will be awarded in 1995. This sum will cover the cost of the MBA program, books, other university fees, and a yearly allowance in lieu of salary maintenance.

For details on the selection criteria and how to apply, please contact Carmen Williams on (03) 9601 9295.

Can you do your multi-media homework while watching Cable TV ?

Come along to the Telstra Product Unit Cost and Service Improvement Strategic Workshop, titled "Can you do your multi-media homework while watching cable TV?"

Author(s) : Con Sirak and Lisa Sugandhi

Date : 10th August, 1995

Location : M8 Auditorium

Time : 9.45 - 11 am

Including morning tea to meet Con, Lisa and Professor R. Harris (formerly TRL).

ABSTRACT:

Con and Lisa are students from RMIT participating in a CEED project with Telstra. This workshop will be an informal discussion session chaired by Bob Warfield, directed to identify Telstra's needs with respect to Quality of Service and requirements studies of some services which might be offered in the broadband telecommunications arena of the near future.

Please contact Andrew Davison on (03) 9253 6387 if you want to come to this workshop.