



# Talking Teams

by Sandi Givens

Don't keep me a secret!    



## Since last time ...

Almost the end of May ... is someone speeding up the clocks or what?!

I sincerely apologise for delay in getting this newsletter to you - and a **huge welcome** to our newest subscribers from CSIRO, City of Geelong and Zurich who I've had the delight to work with recently.

I trust you'll find this monthly contact from me gives you that all-too-rare opportunity to pause, reflect and renew your energies in your role as a team member/leader.

I'm thrilled to have achieved a good 'balance' between my work and personal commitments lately. It has proved to me yet again, if I look after myself (exercise & eating well) and prioritise things that are important to me (family and friends), I will always be in the best physical, emotional, mental and spiritual state to help my clients.



We're finding more and more clients are taking up the idea of maximising the technology at our disposal. Not only does this save time, energy and valuable \$ in the business, but it is proving to provide even more effective and sustainable learning outcomes for everyone.

See our synopsis of this new training/learning methodology later in this newsletter.

Yes, I'm still working on monthly "stretch" goals for myself personally - check out the latest news on that [here](#).

Finally, I'm really excited to be a part of a new business group that is focussed on creating/shaping businesses that are profitable **without hurting the environment or people** in the process. I met the delightful Carolyn Tate many years ago and have been privileged to witness her courage and tenacity in the face of some pretty big life challenges - as well as how she has turned her marketing expertise towards this new venture. And hurrah! Carolyn has agreed to join me on a webinar on July 8th (details to come soon). In the meantime, if you want to know more about her work and how it might help shape your thinking for the better, visit her [here](#).

(Or copy and paste this URL in your browser: <http://carolyntate.co/> )

## Featured Article:

**Are we getting 'soft'? Or not hard enough?**



Are you sure you understand how the Fair Work Act affects you and your responsibilities at work, Sandi?

### **The Fair Work Commission gets to work**

The Fair Work Commission handed down one of its first findings recently, which surprised many HR professionals and simultaneously relieved some employer organisations.

The Commission received an application for a 'stop bullying order' (similar to an intervention order) from a team manager who alleged unreasonable behaviour by her team and one team member in particular.

The manager claimed the team member deliberately made false allegations against her, spread malicious rumours about her, and harassed and badgered her on a daily basis.

Further, the manager claimed she received a lack of support from management and there was an ongoing risk to her health and safety because her employer failed to take adequate action to prevent the bullying.

The employer opposed the application on the basis there was **an absence of repeated unreasonable conduct by any of the team members**.

The Commission dismissed the claim, finding that while some of the behaviour alleged was "bordering upon unreasonable", it was outside the scope of bullying behaviour **as defined by the Fair Work Act**.

Commissioner Hampton had this to say: "I am not satisfied that the alleged behaviour occurred and/or was unreasonable in the context that it occurred."

"Some of the behaviour ... was bordering upon unreasonable but not such as to fall within the scope of bullying behaviour as defined by the Act. In particular, I cannot be satisfied, based upon the evidence ... that *the limited degree of unreasonable behaviour by the individuals concerned was such that it created a risk to health and safety.*"

### **Do you know what's really going on in your team?**

The distinction made by Commissioner Hampton is a critical one.

Some of my clients have told me they have experienced increased allegations of unfair treatment from employees at various levels within their organisations. And some of these leaders attribute the increase to a perception in the workplace that the changes to the Fair Work Act that were highly publicised at the start of this year meant that there were to be much tougher crackdowns on what many might view as merely unpleasant behaviour between work colleagues.

Commissioner Hampton's decision makes it clear that one of the keys to determining if a behaviour or treatment is classified as bullying within the Act is that *the behaviour is repeated over a significant period of time*.

Peter Vitale, an employment law expert, suggested Commissioner Hampton's was a "careful and considered decision". He added that claims of bullying and harassment, more often than not, contain elements of cultural and personality issues, and may not be strictly 'bullying' as defined by the Act.

Vitale added "The lesson for employers is really to keep your ear to the ground and try and work out whether there are any issues bubbling among staff that are causing any distress or personality conflict and step on it as quickly as possible."

Hear, hear, I say. A leader cannot afford to adopt the ostrich head-in-the-sand approach, or merely attempt to sweep things under the carpet. As I like to remind my clients - sweeping things under the carpet only makes it lumpier and bumpier and bound to cause someone (or several people) to eventually trip over it.

### **So how does a busy Leader keep their ear to the ground?**

Here are 3 things you can implement *immediately* to avert trouble and avoid bullying claims:

1. Have **regular casual catch-ups** with *all* members of your team.

Discover their thoughts on what's going well around the place and what needs some attention and energy to improve it.

2. **Walk the Talk**

Model the kind of behaviour, trust and respect you expect team members to give each other. Avoid 2-Faced communication - talk directly to the person concerned if you have an issue or concern with them ... and **no one else**.

3. **Move from a Punitive Culture to a Purposeful Culture**

Communicate the goal for everyone is to learn and grow, rather than be criticised for wrong-doings. Look for all opportunities to congratulate and praise. Help people understand what their specific part is to the overall efforts of the entire team.

Enable people to feel their is true and valuable purpose to the roles they fulfil.

Need a sounding Board or some advice about your concerns? I'd love to shout you a coffee while we discuss what's going on at your workplace.

**Here's an Easy Way to Discover what's going on in Your Team**

Have you received your

## Complimentary

## Team Esteem Audit?



This brief but effective tool will provide you with insights about how your team ...

- Deals with conflict
- Manages their communication - especially during tough times
- Lets go of past tensions
- Is able to focus on the future and your vision
- Regards upper management
- And more!

And it's only one click away ... [click here](#) to request an Audit so you can get started in **Taking Your Team to the Top!**

## Ignite Your Leadership!

Each month, I'll share a tip to help you fire up your leadership - and your team.

I *guarantee* if you focus on this for one month, and consistently apply it during that time, you **will** see a change in the workplace around you.

This Month:



**"You don't lead by pointing and telling people some place to go. You lead by going to that place and making a case." (Ken Kesey)**

In line with this month's Featured Article, this is all about **setting the example** and developing your skills of influence.

Don't tell. Show.

Don't preach. Guide.

Don't punish. Coach.

And never, ever give up.

Are you up for the challenge of doing this consistently?

## Upcoming Complimentary Online Sessions (Webinars)

**ADVANCE NOTICE: Tuesday 8 July**

### How to Live ON PURPOSE!



Lots of people talk about 'finding your purpose' or 'living your purpose' ...

In my experience, very few people really (a) know what this really means, and (b) know how to help you do this.

[Carolyn Tate](#) is someone who does.

More details will come soon - but in the meantime, **block out 12:30 to 1:30PM on this day** - and have lunch virtually with Carolyn and me while we help you find some answers to these questions for you

## Effective NEW Training & Learning Methodology

It's so delightful to me when I see people embrace new challenges and acquire new skills.

Yet ever since that wonderful thing we call 'The GFC', staff Learning and Development budgets have been tighter. Organisations are trying really, really hard to do the same amount of work (or more) with fewer people. Everyone seems *time-poor* and stretched to their limits. Tension runs high and people are struggling to be resilient and remain professional.

Sound like something you've experienced?



The really sad thing, I think, is that people's need for development hasn't lessened. Staff still want to be their best, to learn more, do more, be more.

Yet that all-too-precious resource - **time** - seems to be in the way. (Not to mention energy and money.)

Over the past few years, I've been determined to find an answer to this challenge. And I've done it!

### **Make effective use of technology an integral part of learning activities.**

No, I'm not talking about long-winded online courses that require enormous levels of self-motivation and fail to deliver meaningful application strategies for the learner.

I'm talking about a **unique** and **considered** incorporation of ...

- **webinar technology** to deliver **online presentations/workshops**,
- **Skype and Google Hangouts** to deliver **real-time coaching**,
- **Online Surveys** to determine exact learning needs
- ... all combined with the so-called traditional **face-to-face workshops**.

Recent programs I've delivered for some very happy clients have provided the following benefits:

1. **Cost savings**, thanks to reduced travel costs in petrol, airfares, accommodation and travel time
2. **Time savings** - participants don't need to travel anywhere but their normal desk at work or home
3. **Energy savings** - it's as easy as turning on your computer and connecting to a web site online
4. **No one gets left out** - part-timers, parents, people working from home ... no one needs to miss out on the learning just because the 'training session' is scheduled for a day they're not normally in the office
5. **Everyone's on the same page** - thanks to Point 4 above
6. **New skills and messages are given time to be assimilated**

No more One-Day-Shots-In-The-Arm of motivation and hype. Learning is staggered over weeks and months so people have time to consider, reflect and make sense of the material for them.

7. **Discussion naturally occurs** - because the learning and the scheduled interaction keeps happening over a longer period of time, new information remains 'top of mind' and people continue to discuss, debate and discover.

### **So how does it work?**

A 'typical' program may be scheduled roughly like this:

- **Learning Support Session** - for Managers of the participants  
Delivered by Webinar
- **Participants Prepare to Learn** -  
Introductory Video from Sandi

Online Survey to obtain their needs/wants in the training

- **1st Content Delivery** - via Webinar
- **1st Face to Face Workshop** - to practice and discuss information from the 1st Webinar
- **2nd Content Delivery** - via Webinar
- **2nd Face to Face Workshop** - to practice and discuss information from the 2nd Webinar
- **Q & A / Coaching** - via Webinar/Google Hangout/Skype
- **Post-Program Survey**
- **Follow-Up Learning Support** - for Managers of participants  
Delivered by Webinar

Typically, all sessions/events are run roughly 2 to 3 weeks apart.

And, naturally, content is tailored to each client's specific needs and desired outcomes.

Curious? Want to know more?

Call me on (03) 9844 4612 .... or email [request@sandigivens.com.au](mailto:request@sandigivens.com.au) so we can get together and chat how this might work for you and your team.

And do let me know if you want to speak with any of our clients that have used this methodology - they're only too keen to let you know how it's helped them!

**Until next time - keep living your leadership!**

**Sandi Givens**

***Team Strategist & People Catalyst - Coach - Facilitator***

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