

LESSONS FROM AN EVALUATION OF 'TRAININGPLUS': AN ATTEMPT TO BRIDGE A CULTURAL DIVIDE THROUGH A TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

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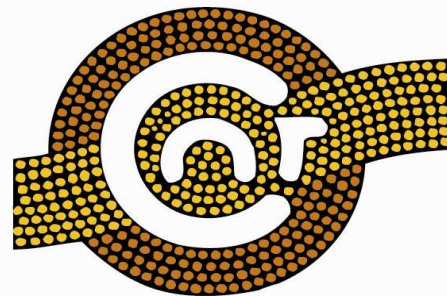




Two Organisations



BATCHELOR INSTITUTE
OF INDIGENOUS TERTIARY EDUCATION



**Centre for
Appropriate
Technology**



The Context

“By any measure - educational, social or economic – education and training in Australia is failing large numbers of Indigenous people, but particularly Aboriginal desert peoples.”

Desert Peoples Centre 'Our Case' 2003



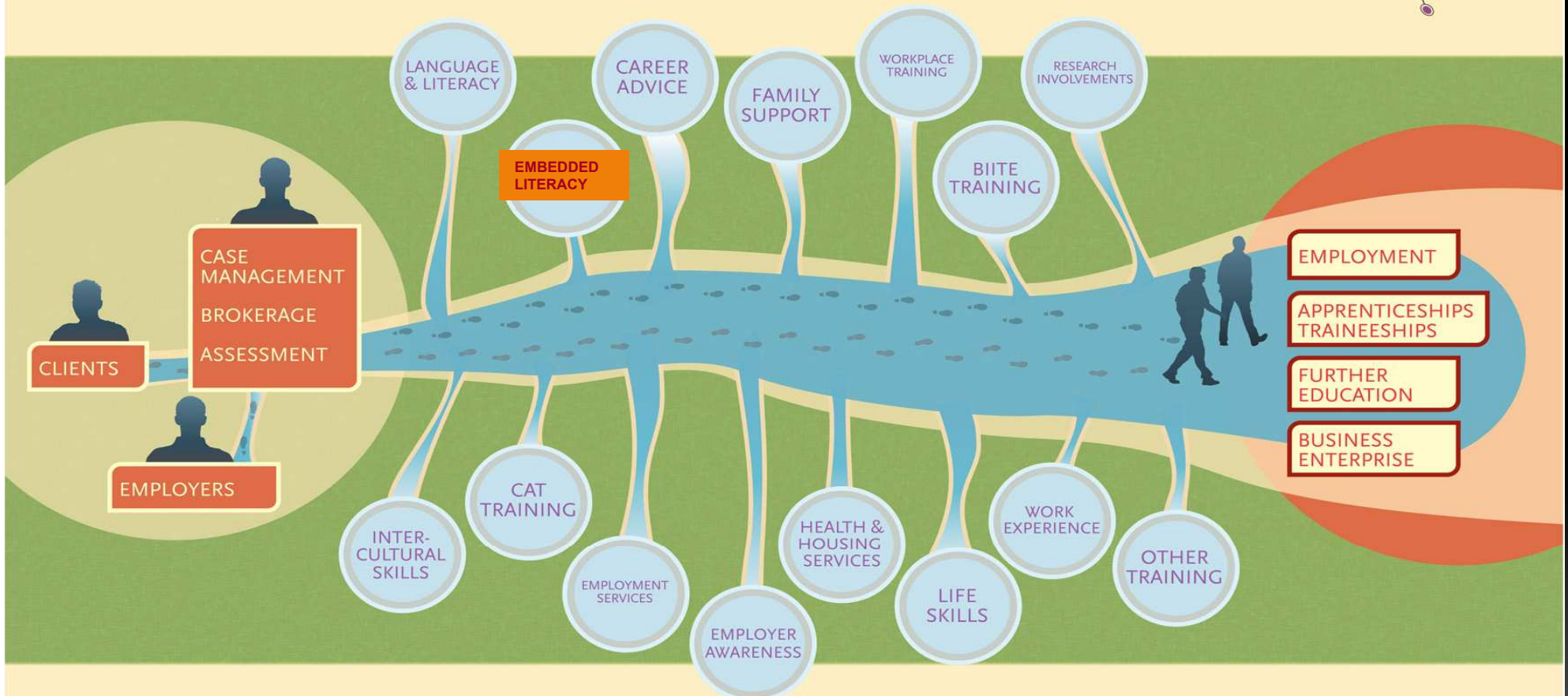
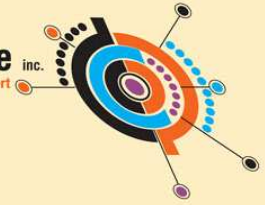
The idea

A systematic and coordinated approach to Indigenous education and training is necessary to foster a framework for the future cultural, social and economic development of Indigenous peoples and communities.

It is a catalyst for change; an opportunity to create new, dynamic and productive learning environments for desert peoples, not only on campus but in communities.”

THE DESERT PEOPLES CENTRE LIVELIHOOD PATHWAYS

desert peoples centre inc.
a catalyst for change in the desert






Questions we'd like to address

- What role does training play in producing employment outcomes in Indigenous contexts?
 - Where are the gaps in service provision for Indigenous people wanting to engage in the workforce?
 - What skills and knowledge do trainers need in order to be effective in cross-cultural contexts?
 - Are there models that work to benefit Indigenous job seekers, better than others?



Some cautions

- This paper is based on the evaluation of one program in one context
 - We do not pretend to represent the views of Indigenous people
 - We do not pretend to have all the answers
 - We leave ourselves open to critique and indeed we invite dialogue on this issue
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What is *TrainingPlus*?

- An initiative of the Desert Peoples Centre (joint venture of Centre for Appropriate Technology and Batchelor Institute)
- Aims to provide unemployed Indigenous people with support, training, work experience and employment in the building, construction and renewable energy industries
- Commenced March 2009, funded initially for 18 months
- Each participant has a tailored training and employment pathway plan
- Now focused on work with the Central Desert Shire

The context of *TrainingPlus*

Indicator	Persons ^a Years ^b	Per cent of total	Selected Australian characteristics
Total population ^a	23892		
Total Indigenous persons ^a	4494	18.8%	2.3%
Median age ^b Indigenous	23		20
Median age ^b non-Indigenous	35		37
Persons (aged 15+) with bachelor degree qualifications ^a Indigenous	56	1.9%	2.9%
Persons (aged 15+) with bachelor degree qualifications ^a non-Indigenous	1923	13.9%	12.4%
Persons (aged 15+) with certificate level qualifications ^a Indigenous	334	11.2%	13.2%
Persons (aged 15+) with certificate level qualifications ^a non-Indigenous	3072	22.1%	17.7%
Persons attaining year 12 or equivalent ^a Indigenous	357	7.9%	19.4%
Persons attaining year 12 or equivalent ^a non- Indigenous	6527	33.6%	44.9%
Labour force participation Indigenous	1232	41.2%	51.2%
Labour force participation non-Indigenous	11410	82.2%	63.7%
Source: ABS 2007			

Evaluation methods

- Evaluation conducted between August 2010 and April 2011
- Aim: to demonstrate outcomes and to enhance those outcomes
- Mixed methods approach
- Theory of change model (see Funnell and Rogers 2011)
- Data sources: 57 training records, 25 semi-structured interviews, relevant literature, background data
- Qualitative analysis carried out in Nvivo and 'quantitized' (see Franzosi 2010)
- Quantitative data analysed using Excel


Summary of findings

- 60% achieved a positive training or employment outcome
- 205 accredited units were marked as competent

Employment and other outcomes	Status (at Feb 2010)	Per cent of total
Ongoing employment	9	15.79%
Employed greater than 13 weeks	3	5.26%
Employed less than 13 weeks	7	12.28%
Work experience	2	3.51%
Continuing with training	14	24.56%
Left program (unsure of destination)	22	38.60%
Total	57	100.0%



What works?

- the case management approach;
 - the relationships formed with clients and other stakeholders;
 - the ability of staff to advocate for and support clients;
 - the learning environment;
 - extent to which a client is ready to adopt the values of workplace culture;
 - constructive working relationships with other organisations
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Some implications

- VET as a tool that leads to effective in this context.

What about the importance of skills for employment?

Why is it then, that an organisation such as the Desert Peoples Centre encourages the use of vocational training?

- Do we really understand the unique features of our own culture?

stream and indigenous culture.

awareness of our own cultural biases will help

Isn't this too much of an ask?

Training providers in this kind of context must be able to demonstrate that learners are progressing in their identity to the extent that their horizons are widened, their understanding of workplace expectations and values is aligned for the intended purpose and they are more capable of making informed choices about their future.

- We would see Indigenous content





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