

Case Study - using the jam approach to get the most out of strategic workshops

A Queensland Government Department commissioned Vulture Street to run a jam event in December 2009, to support a strategic review of an important regional delivery program.

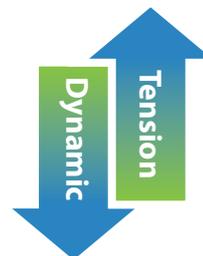
The review was originally going to be initiated via a one day workshop involving all senior managers from around the State involved in regional development activities. The Department decided to extend the scope of the discussion by holding a two week jam event prior to the one day workshop, to allow a deeper and more structured collaborative conversation to take place. Each regional centre was provided with access to Vulture Street's purpose-built jam platform, and staff were invited to post ideas, and comment and vote on idea posted by other regions, in response to six key questions on the issues and opportunities faced by the current program.

Through the jam process, Departmental representatives were able to share ideas, concerns and insights on potential ways to improve the Government's approach to fostering economic development in Queensland's regions. Many regional centres took the initiative to hold several team sessions internally to gather ideas and opinions from across the office, with the results posted to the jam for subsequent discussion and voting.



At the conclusion of the two week collaboration, the ideas, comments and votes generated were collated and grouped into meaningful categories. On the day of the workshop, this information was presented in summary and the full content made available to participants, who were organised into working groups to tackle each category.

**Structured, governed collaboration
and team processes**



**Ad hoc collaboration 'on the edges'
Collaboration occurring informally 'at the water cooler'
Self-organising communities**

This approach brought three benefits for the Department in the execution of the early stages of its strategic review: first, a substantially wider group of employees was able to participate in the collaboration and contribute their ideas and opinions on the key issues, than would have been possible if the workshop alone was held. Second, the workshop itself was significantly more constructive because participants had already been involved in the two-week discussion, so were thus fully engaged with the challenge at hand. Finally, progress was accelerated due to the fact that the workshop could be used to identify and prioritise actions based on the content generated by the jam, rather than this process starting on the day itself.

For further
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