

**Concurrent Session J**  
**Wednesday 2 September**  
**11.10am – 12.00noon**

**TEMG**  
Leading  
Locally  
Competing  
Globally



30 Aug – 2 Sep 2015  
Novotel North Beach Wollongong



**Session 2**

**Why Did I Say Yes? My Year as the Enrolments Manager, Leader and Follower**

**Robyn Causley**

*University of Western Sydney*

*Robyn Causley has been working in Student Administration since late 1989 and in that time has worked at 3 higher education providers. Currently, Robyn is the Enrolments Manager at the University of Western Sydney. Her portfolio covers enrolment, advanced standing, HESA and ESOS compliance for all domestic and international students at the University.*

*During her time at UWS, Robyn has implemented system and process improvements across diverse areas of the Student Administration portfolio. Some of her major accomplishments include the implementation of an online application system, an electronic form and workflow tool to manage advanced standing applications assessment and approvals and a bespoke application process for applicants impacted by natural disasters during examinations.*

We have all been there at some stage, sitting in a job we know well and that might have become just the tinniest bit rut-like. You decide you need a challenge, apply for a secondment and before you can say “was this a good idea?” you have been offered the job and have already said yes!

At least, that is what happened to me. I was in a job I loved, but it was feeling like I was in a rut. Then my house burned to the ground and I suddenly had a whole new perspective. If I was undergoing some change at home, why not at work as well? Oh, and while I am at it, why not take on some postgraduate study?

So here I am, nearly at the end of my secondment and looking back at what I loved and hated about my time in this job. The answer to both questions is my leadership journey. Everyone in tertiary education knows that our business is changing. The partial deregulation of universities has made us more competitive and the deregulation mooted for this year will only increase this. Our local market is finite, so we are looking internationally for opportunities to expand and compete in the seemingly lucrative international student market. At the same time, the service expectations are changing; students have more choice and shopping around has become common.

Making things even more challenging for UWS, was the arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor with an aggressive growth strategy and a clearly articulated efficiency strategy running in parallel. So, as a temporary manager, what could I do to motivate 2 teams that did not really know me, effect lasting change in both approach and process and keep us all from falling off the perch? These are the same challenges facing all leaders in tertiary education, but not all of us are in the role for a short time.

So, that is my starting point. My presentation will be a reflection of my secondment tenure and the highs and lows of my leadership journey. I will talk about the changes I introduced, or facilitated, what I think will last and what I suspect will fall by the wayside. I will talk about the challenges of motivating people and keeping up the energy levels required to be effective.

As I am feeling brave, I plan to survey the teams I have worked with over the last year, asking

them for some feedback on my effectiveness in the role, which I will share in the presentation, warts and all.