

## Session 8

### "HERE'S YOUR DESK - OFF YOU GO": A CASE STUDY IN INDUCTION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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The scene: suburban Melbourne, 2007, a large decentralised tertiary institution. A staff member has come to the end of her first week in her new administrative job. She has been adequately informed of who to approach for IT support, which public holidays she won't get, where the recycling bins are, how to access counselling services if her cat dies, the names of the deputy vice-chancellors, how much to pay for a spin class at lunchtime, who can park in which car spaces, where to get the best coffee on campus, what the total research income of the university is, where to gather if there's a fire, and why she shouldn't abuse her workmate for being a Collingwood supporter ... but something is missing. She wants to feel fulfilled in her work, and the answers to these questions will help:

1. Why do I have to do the job that I do?
2. How does my job impact on other areas of the organisation?
3. Where does my job fit into the big scheme of things?
4. What happens if I get it wrong?

This presentation tracks the development of an induction program for staff working in student administration, from the point of identification of the knowledge gap in 2007, through to the continued maintenance and delivery of what has become a highly popular and successful internal training workshop that runs three times a year.

These workshops lead participants through the annual cycle of student administration activities, emphasising the interconnectedness of processes, introducing the government legislation and institutional policies overseeing and underpinning our daily tasks, and endeavouring to provide staff with a sense of where they, and their colleagues, fit into the university-wide big picture. The program also aims to facilitate greater levels of consistency in student administration approaches across the institution's eight campuses and ten faculties.

The workshop is now being tailored for delivery sector-wide through A TEM, and the challenges involved with this expansion will be explored.

#### **Biography:**

**Cathryn Bunney** has worked in higher education for 18 years at both faculty and central levels in both highly centralised and decentralised organisational models. Her roles have included faculty management, policy, curriculum development, admissions, academic progress, course advice, student fees, load planning, and Government reporting functions. In her current position at Monash University, Cathryn has responsibility for enrolments, ESOS, and curriculum data maintenance and publications.

**Mark Hatwell** abandoned careers as a linguist and music teacher to work in project roles in Victorian state government departments from 1995. He has since worked in two universities at central and faculty levels, in roles relating to policy, compliance, curriculum data management, publications, and management of student administration functions such as admissions and enrolments. Mark is also a facilitator of the A TEM Institutional Policy Network and co-author of the A TEM best practice policy guide launched at TEMC 2010.