



JEFF WHALAN
LEARNING GROUP
GROWING EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS



Michelle Cornish

Following a career in the private and public sector over 35 years, Michelle now provides executive coaching services. She also facilitates Executive Learning Groups as part of the Jeff Whalan Learning Group.

Michelle's public sector career of nearly 30 years comprised service delivery, program management, policy and corporate roles in the Commonwealth government. Fifteen of those years in the Australian Public Service were spent in the Senior Executive Service (SES) with the last six years as an SES Band 2 officer.

Her early working life forged a commitment to working with Indigenous Australians. In her role as Secretary to the Company Secretary of Applied Ecology Pty Ltd, she understood the importance of building successful enterprises such as the Wiluna WA Emu Farm and the Edwards River QLD Crocodile Farm. She then worked as an Office Manager for a Government Relations consultancy and honed her accounting, administrative and stakeholder relationship skills.

Michelle has managed large teams of up to 4,500 people with 25 direct reports working across Australia; she has co-chaired a Taskforce to implement extensive Machinery of Government changes; and written policy and position papers on welfare reform and service delivery reform.

While working as a Group Manager (SES Band 2), Michelle was a member of an Executive Learning Group. As a result, she appreciates the need for senior leaders to 'get off the dance floor and onto the balcony', finding balance and equilibrium to perform effectively and with humanity in demanding roles.

Michelle has established and supported a range of employee networks, focussing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disability, women and the LGBTIQ community. She is passionate about managing people well to create and nurture high performing teams, with significant experience in developing and implementing creative people solutions to enhance employee engagement.

Her coaching is driven by compassion, humanity, empathy, equity and respect. She has extensive experience in managing large virtual teams in service delivery networks and is a former Disability Champion and Diversity Champion. She has a deep understanding of people issues, including employee engagement, talent management, reward and recognition, diversity, recruitment and leadership development.

Michelle holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Graduate Diploma in Administration. She is an accredited coach with qualifications from the Institute of Executive Coaching and Leadership and has coached numerous people at many levels in her various SES roles. Her current coaching engagements include the CEO of a large not-for-profit NGO, and SES and senior officers at the federal and state level.

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