

Connect four **Connect** more



Connect Four – Connect More

Breaking down Silos at CSU



Insightful

Inclusive

Impactful

Inspiring

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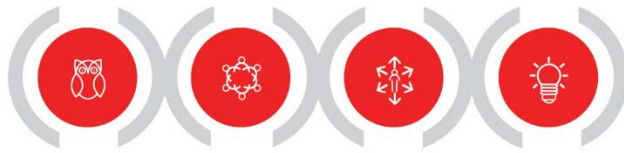


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***“Failing to break down silos and disrupt the status quo is riskier...
leaders can improve collaboration, communication, and trust
between their teams and create a more effective path to growth
and profitability during times of significant change.”***

(Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham, 2016)

Executive Summary

The **Connect Four, Connect More** team chose to focus on siloing as we had all experienced feeling disconnected and functionally lost at Charles Sturt University (CSU) at different times. There were also experiences within the group of significant siloing of work units, leading to poor cooperation during cross-unit projects and compromised business outputs.

The results of both the 2015 and 2017 Your Voice surveys indicate this experience is not limited to our group, and that improving cross-unit cooperation is indeed one of the greatest challenges that CSU is currently facing as an organisation.

Importantly, all members of the group felt passionate about CSU as an organisation and that we each had something to contribute to the organisation to help overcome the obstacles and issues that result from siloing, and all members of the group believe a commitment to improving cross-unit cooperation will also significantly contribute to a positive workplace culture within the University, and in turn have a positive impact on business outputs.

Group sentiment is echoed in the Your Voice survey results with staff alignment to and passion for the core values high and a belief that our colleagues are one of our organisational strengths.

By connecting tools that work toward promoting cross-unit connectivity and communication to the four CSU values – ***Insightful, Inclusive, Impactful, and Inspiring*** – we believe the organisation will connect more, overcoming the internal obstacles of silos to drive external progress.

Informed by the Your Voice survey results, a comprehensive literature review and investigation of current internal practices and initiatives through case studies of The Research Roadshow, Division of Facilities Management newsletters and an individual strategy gaming session for staff and students, the **Connect Four, Connect More** team developed prototypes of key tools such as an induction training module and a 3D connectivity tool (The Onion).

Key Recommendations

The evidence presented within this *Connect Four, Connect More* project confirms that addressing the problem of siloing at Charles Sturt University is necessary. Any change to the company culture at CSU will take both time and adoption of a multi-layered approach. The *Connect Four, Connect More* team recommends that Charles Sturt University:

- Continues to use the bi-annual Your Voice survey as an important feedback tool that tracks staff sentiment and company culture. It is recommended that any priorities identified through the survey are addressed in a manner that aligns with the CSU values.
- Promotes and encourages existing examples of cross-unit connections being undertaken at the various levels of CSU. The case studies included in this report can be used for promotion of initiatives that aim to break down silos.
 - **Research Roadshow Case Study:** Cross-unit cooperation across faculties and schools and within the research office.
 - **Division of Facilities Management Case Study:** evidence of commitment to connection within a division leading to breaking down of silos, enhanced communication and positive business results.
 - **Staff Volunteering Case Study:** an individual initiative to enhance cross-unit communication through lunch time strategic gaming sessions.
- Develops tools to assist staff to understand the common goals and vision of the organisation at an early stage of their CSU career and assess their cross-unit communication and connection points as their career develops with the organisation.
 - **CSU ELMO Induction Module:** development of comprehensive CSU induction ELMO training module: it is important to provide new and existing staff with a comprehensive overview of the complexity of CSU so that a deep understanding of the organisational structure is embedded in all staff.
 - **CSU Onion Tool:** development of a self-assessment connectivity and cross-unit communication tool that will allow people to recognise how the business units of CSU work together and identify where further connections need to be made.

Siloing

The silo mentality within organisational culture is defined as a “mindset present when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same company” (*Businessdictionary.com*). This mentality develops into an organisational culture characterised by communication breakdowns and territorial behaviour. In siloed organisations these cultural tells will also be accompanied by business inefficiencies such as process inconsistency, duplication and gaps. Cooperation and collaboration are reduced in an atmosphere of hostility and competition (*Baden, 2012, Dupuy 2011*). The challenge of overcoming the difficulties of silos and communication breakdowns is increased for organisations like CSU that are large, geographically dispersed and have diverse functions (*Bradt, 2015*).

In response to the Leadership Development for Women (LDW) key text (*Leading Mindfully*, Amanda Sinclair) the **Connect Four, Connect More** group utilised in particular Chapter 7, *Dialogue for Insight*, and Chapter 8, *Connecting*, to develop a plan around our initial “feelings” about functional siloing at CSU. The insights gained from the LDW program and the key text informed the group plan to: explore the Your Voice survey results more deeply; research siloing in large organisations; and investigate existing innovations within CSU aimed at overcoming disconnection.

These three key research areas identified by the **Connect Four, Connect More** team resulted in a discovery that the highly accepted CSU values were the ultimate foundational cornerstones for the following leadership recommendations and executables plan for stepping out of functional silos and improving cross-unit communication at CSU.

The peer-reviewed literature and professional business articles provide a plethora of information about how to overcome siloing. These range from the following recommendations:

- how to choose the right teams for working in a virtual environment (*Ferrazzi, 2014*)
- using social media in ways that can enhance knowledge flow (*Leistner, 2012*)
- ensuring that you have the right ratio of face-to-face to virtual meetings (*Bradt, 2014*)
- changing organisational culture requires an effort on a range of fronts to be effective (*Dupuy, 2011*)
- creating clarity and alignment through developing a shared understanding of the organisation’s purpose, behaviour, actions and direction without slipping into jargon (*Lencioni, 2012*)
- developing trust and confidence in colleagues based on having an understanding of their identity (face-to-face meetings are important) (*Kimble, 2011*)
- changes in organisational structure, so that knowledge is not embedded in just one part of the organisation, but flows throughout (*Moe et al, 2016*).

Individuals can be responsible for actions that can break down siloing, and active leadership from a team that is not conflicted and that promotes effective solutions is essential (*Gleeson and Roza, 2013*). Two key areas are developing an awareness of the identity of people in all parts of the organisation, and bringing people into different areas of an organisation, rather than within one section or geographic location, so that knowledge can flow through multiple areas.

The importance of knowing who you are working with

In a large organisation, it is impossible to meet everyone and know what they do, yet for teams to work effectively having a sense of the identity of your team workers is important (*Moe, 2016*).

A large proportion of work at CSU is undertaken as virtual teams, linked using technology and through online transactions that are sophisticated and often work well. Yet “relying solely on online

communication tends to inhibit participation and the creation of trust and the sense of mutual responsibility that characterizes teamwork” (Moe, 2016).

Holding face-to-face meetings sustains the effectiveness of teams and should be incorporated into project plans for any significant projects (at the very least for a kick-off meeting to establish roles and responsibilities). Having a sense of the identity of those working in other places and other parts of the organisation allows and enables trust to grow and a sense of shared understanding to develop. The business benefits to the organisation are an increase in role ownership and end-to-end project motivation.

Setting cross-unit teams up for success in the face of organisational boundaries was largely championed by a General Electric CEO more than 27 years ago. Jack Welch “advocated for a “boundaryless organization,” and to build it, he initiated what became known as the GE Work-Out process – a series of structured and facilitated forums, bringing people together across levels, functions, and geographies to solve problems and make decisions in real time.” (Ashkenas, 2015).

The importance of knowledge flowing through the organisation

Without having a clear and shared understanding of the organisation’s direction, a workforce will become culturally dispersed, misaligned to key business goals and functional silos will grow. A shared understanding relies on competent and consistent knowledge flow. Successful knowledge flow initiatives rely “on many aspects that go beyond a social media platform, most of all a supporting and driving team that provides strategy and guidance on an ongoing basis, as well as engaged and motivated users” (Leistner 2012).

In order to do this well its useful to tap into and disseminate the “pool of perceptions, insights, experiences and skills of the people who are already there — in other words, to avoid the need to reinvent the wheel by determining just what knowledge about wheels already exists” (Leistner, 2012).

Developing this kind of organised leader-led *and* peer-led sharing culture within an organisation will strengthen organisation-wide communication, deepen cultural trust and provide clear understanding of business goals across units. The benefits of a highly connected workforce will be realised through improved cooperation and collaboration. Breaking down functional silos has also been identified as a key driver in an organisations ability to respond agilely to market demands. “During times of significant change, when organizations must be agile, silos can be stubborn obstacles to creating a more effective path to growth and profitability.” (Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham, 2016).



Siloing at Charles Sturt University: Identifying the Project Requirement

To examine the group claim that CSU is a siloed organisation the *Connect Four, Connect More* team reviewed organisational data provided by the CSU Your Voice Survey results from 2015 and 2017.

A review of CSU Your Voice 2015 and 2017 data revealed that effective cross-unit cooperation and communication was viewed by staff as the most lacking attribute of the university.

Scale scores determined that cross-unit cooperation was ranked the lowest attribute across the organisation by staff at 33 per cent of staff believing CSU is good at cross-unit cooperation in 2015 and falling to 32 per cent in 2017.

Item scores reveal the sentiments of CSU staff:

- Q55. There is good communication across all units of CSU = 28% (2015 comparison 27%)
- Q56. Knowledge and information are shared throughout CSU = 31% (2015 comparison 31%)
- Q57. There is cooperation between different units in CSU = 36% (2015 comparison 39%)
- Q58. Our willingness to work collaboratively with others makes CSU different = 35% (2015 comparison 37%)

Cross-unit cooperation has been identified as a priority area, with the aim that our willingness to work collaboratively with others makes CSU different.

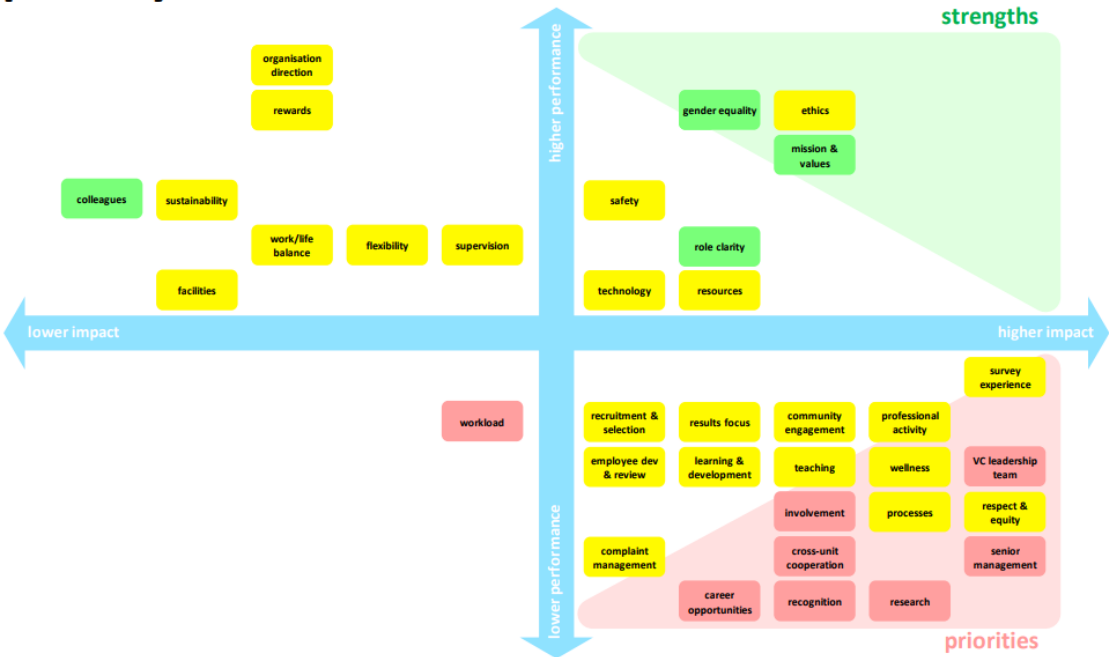
Text responses from the 2017 Your Voice Survey further highlighted the need for breaking down silos at CSU with cross-unit collaboration being the most commented on theme in response to the open-ended question (22%): Q151. List three ways CSU could be improved as a workplace.

Answers included:

- Communication and collaboration between staff and management, and between different organisational units must be improved
- More cross-unit collaboration, less silos
- More communication between different areas – better understanding of what other areas do/challenges
- Better communication across faculties – sharing best practices, opportunities for growth
- Better communication channels
- CSU is a large organisation that is organised in silos. Break down the silos. Improve the organisational structure and where departments belong to. There needs to be more synergy and information sharing among departments
- Communication between units and within the unit
- Break down the barriers between divisions
- More open and improved communication across all sectors of the university

priority matrix

Practices are positioned on the matrix below in terms of **performance** (combining % favourable and industry comparison) and **impact** (the degree that each practice is likely to drive Passion and Progress). Potential priorities for improvement are in the bottom right (ie. relatively low performance and high impact).





Siloing at Charles Sturt University: Identifying the Project Approach

Further review of CSU Your Voice 2015 and 2017 data revealed that organisational passion is high, there is a strong commitment to CSU values, and there is high confidence in the abilities of and support from colleagues.

These positive results should be utilised to motivate staff to produce outcomes that are committed to lifting the cross-unit communication and cooperation at CSU, which in turn can contribute to a more effective workplace moving toward achieving common organisational goals.

Key influential item data:

- Q7. I believe in the overall purpose of CSU = 86%
- Q8. I believe in the Values of CSU = 81%
- Q89. My colleagues give me help and support = 84%

Connect Four, Connect More Direction

The research into the underlying problems leading to siloing in organisations provided an insight into the barriers that are essential to address in an age of market disruption. The team approach was to use the five steps to breaking down barriers as identified by Gleeson (2013) and the key findings from seven strategies from Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham (2016) to provide guidance in the approach to take to break down barriers at CSU.

1. **Create a unified vision** – the vision for cross-unit communication should be clearly communicated by the leadership team and be tied to the university strategy (people need to understand why they should commit to something and know that their commitment is supported by the organisation). Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham (2016) recommend that “senior leaders clarify the path forward and develop the governance to provide guidance along the way.”
2. **Work toward achieving a common goal** – in aligning cross-unit communication to the university strategy clear business goals should be identified that will encourage collaboration and commitment. “Rather than creating separate groups of functional and business unit representatives, create cross-functional work streams and teams.” (Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham, 2016).
3. **Motivate and incentivise** – staff need to feel that they are valued for their contributions to improving organisational communication, and that there is reason to maintain commitment to the goal. Staff incentive programs will help harness the high levels of passion displayed by CSU staff, as demonstrated in the results of the 2015 and 2017 CSU Your Voice Survey. “Create joint incentives. Particularly in a heavily siloed company, it’s important to create not only joint deliverables and metrics, but also joint incentives to get people working together more cohesively.” (Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham, 2016).
4. **Execute and measure** – like any business goal cross-unit communication requires a timeframe, key milestones, specific tasks that engage all levels, and feedback that provides progress reports on initiatives.
5. **Collaborate and create** – for an organisation to break free of silos there must be frameworks that set cross-unit teams up for success, such as face-to-face meeting allocations and cross-unit training and education. Designate co-leaders. With multiple stakeholders representing

multiple functions, having a single accountable leader for people to rally around is often unrealistic. Appointing two leaders of significant stature in the company — what we sometimes call “two in a box” leadership — can enforce accountability and encourage collaboration on all fronts. (Giacoman, Ribeiro, Trantham, 2016).

The team decided to develop a toolkit containing tools and case studies that could help overcome the obstacles and issues that result in siloing. Each tool and case study would reflect some of the five measures outlined above. Our approach would be to use a combination of tools to break down the barriers which lead to siloing.

Alignment to the Four CSU Values

The *Connect Four, Connect More* team identified the four CSU values as project cornerstones to provide recommendations for overcoming functional silos. Cross-unit cooperation and communication can benefit greatly by tapping into organisational trust for CSU’s core values and the positive culture of support between colleagues.

Along with the text responses below, these results suggest that there is likelihood of initiative take-up and support for programs that are aligned to the CSU values. The results and responses suggest that CSU staff enjoy working in teams and across teams to achieve common purpose and value the collective organisational attitude of support.

The open-ended survey question Q150. List three things you really enjoy about working at CSU, returned 52% of comments around the theme of colleagues, eliciting the following responses:

- Encountering passionate, kind people who work here as academics and support staff
- The people I work with
- My immediate colleagues are supportive and positive
- Working with colleagues who all help one another
- Collegiality
- Interesting colleagues
- Interaction and working together with colleagues from my and other areas
- I really like the people that I work with and what we are all trying to achieve together as a team
- Get to work with some amazing people who are so dedicated to making a difference in people’s lives
- Support from work colleagues
- My colleagues make it a better place to work

The team aligned each case study and tool to the highly accepted CSU values. By connecting the four CSU values — *Insightful, Inclusive, Impactful, and Inspiring* — we believe the organisation will connect more, overcoming the internal obstacles of silos to drive external progress.



Insightful – Understanding for enhanced cross-unit communication

Invite staff to share their knowledge and insights into the university operations, culture and focus on the future.

CASE STUDY 1: The Research Roadshow – Cross-unit cooperation across faculties and schools and within the research office

Introduction:

Issue 1: The Research Office (RO) at CSU assists and supports researchers at CSU. Until 2016, all but one RO staff member was located in a single building on the Wagga Wagga campus. In 2016, five new RO staff were employed on other CSU campuses, with four of these staff also being embedded with researchers on the Albury, Bathurst and Orange campuses. Two RO staff in Wagga Wagga were also embedded with researchers in buildings other than the central RO building. The RO staff were divided into four internal teams, with the aim being to specialise on particular areas.

As of early 2017, collaboration within the broader RO team remained limited. There were missed opportunities in terms of sharing information across the four internal teams and this was leading to some discontent.

Issue 2: The broader Australian research environment has changed significantly since 2010. The focus of the Commonwealth Governments large granting programs have moved to funding interdisciplinary and collaborative projects. This new focus demands that teams of researchers from several different fields work together toward a common research outcome.

Researchers at CSU have traditionally worked with others within their own field. This tendency to work within their own field of research is assisted by the organisational structure at CSU of schools and faculties. Researchers at CSU have tended to research with colleagues in their own school and tend not to branch beyond their own school.

Needs: Two cross-unit collaboration issues were identified:

- There was a need to improve information sharing within the RO.
- There was a need to encourage researchers to engage across schools and faculties, and work with the RO to develop research projects.

Potential Solution:

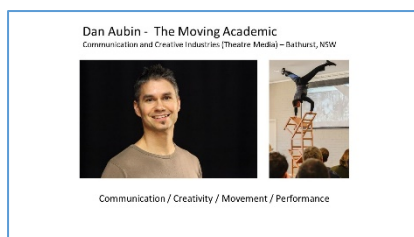
It was suggested by the Faculty Research Liaison team that a Research Roadshow involving visits to multiple campuses to bring information to researchers could be a means of improving collaboration both within the RO, and between researchers and the RO. A roadshow could also provide an opportunity for researchers from various departments to talk and engage with each other. The Director of Research agreed to undertake this in August 2017.

The Roadshow

In August 2017 the CSU Research Office visited the campuses of Orange, Bathurst, Albury, Canberra and Wagga Wagga. A mixed team of staff from the RO visited each campus to provide information sessions on project budgeting, Higher Degree by Research (HDR) policies and tips for supervisors, contracts and intellectual property and recording publication records.

Prior to the roadshow the Faculty Research Liaison Officers had called for researchers from all three faculties to submit a PowerPoint slide which introduced themselves and their research interests. Over 150 slides were submitted for the combined research slide show (*see below a selection of slides*).

The researcher slides were shown on a continuous loop at the lunch session on both small and large screens. Participants at the roadshow were encouraged to vote for their favourite slide to ensure they watched the full show.



A lunchtime session also provided an opportunity for researchers to mix in a casual environment and talk to RO staff about research related topics. A short Research Roadshow Quiz was developed to test people's knowledge about the research process and additionally encourage conversations with an RO staff member.

Representatives from the Computer Shop, Travel, Human Resources, Library, Operational Teams and other sections who also support researchers across the university attended this session.



Results:

- Some RO staff met in person for the first time at one of the sessions. RO staff were able to hear about work being done by their colleagues and suggest ways in which they could enhance that work.
- It was the first time some RO members had been to certain campuses. Most Wagga Wagga based RO staff had not visited the Orange or Canberra campuses.
- Research Office staff are now including each other in more communication (eg. emails) after meeting.
- Over 150 research related staff registered for the sessions, the feedback from those who attended was very positive. Next time we would like to see more attendance.
- Particularly enthusiastic responses were received from those who attended on the smaller campuses of Canberra and Orange (where it was commented that they often get overlooked for information sessions).
- Afterwards there has been an increase in the number of phone calls and emails to the Faculty Research Liaison Officers about research related questions.
- Research Office staff have been invited to address two school seminars (as of end of October).
- Two possible research collaborations were initiated by the slide show.



- A research induction kit is being developed for new research active academics as a response to conversations with new academic staff during the roadshow.

Suggestions:

- Additional face-to-face opportunities to help people reach across the barriers.
- Investigate further opportunities for researchers to learn about the research taking place in other schools and faculties





Inclusive – Commitment to connection for a stronger organisation

Cultivate a welcoming, diverse and inclusive culture, where staff support and lift up one another.

CASE STUDY 2: Bridging the Communication Gap through Gaming – an individual initiative to enhance communication and support new colleagues

Introduction

Justin Williams is a staff member at CSU in the Advancement office. Justin's day job brings him in contact with a range of other staff members at CSU and he says he enjoys working with others in the organisation and believes that CSU has an opportunity to increase cross-unit engagement with the potential for advantageous business outcomes. Justin has personally developed an initiative that is fostering cross-unit communication through informal lunch-time gaming sessions.

Background

"In the last couple of years I have taken up board gaming as a hobby. I have four kids at home and it is a great tool to enhance family time and strategic thinking away from PC's and iPads. Initially my brother introduced me to the hobby as he developed a card game for the first batch of Australian Kickstarter projects in his research in developing the game he fell into the abyss that is hobby board gaming.

"He introduced me via a number of 'gateway' board games as gifts to the kids. It took a little bit of time to fully understand that these games are nothing like the Monopoly, Yahtzee and Cluedo that most of us have experienced. In the last twenty years or so a whole new generation of tabletop games have emerged that use very different 'mechanics' than traditional 'roll and move' board games. There is such an abundance of games out there which all bring different strengths to the table and allow players to interact in many ways."

Potential Solutions

Justin brought his passion for board games to the organisation in January 2017 as a platform for engaging with staff and students. After seeing the interaction benefits in his personal life he thought it could be a non-threatening way of connecting with people from the university that he might not normally get the opportunity to connect with. Justin found interest from the first session, particularly amongst students who were employed at CSU through SSAF funded programs.

The program is held weekly during lunch on the Bathurst campus in the cafeteria and Justin has also hosted evening sessions during residential schools.

Around 7-12 people usually attend the sessions and as the games are strategy based they often carry over from session to session, increasing the desire for participants to return. Sessions have been well attended and there are now regular attendees.

The informal environment (participants eat lunch and have a coffee during the sessions) encourages participants to explore more personal conversations and share their experiences. The strategic nature of the games allows participants to explore interactions from a different point of view and means that each participant must examine and work with individual approaches to find outcomes.

The program has no set agenda and is not assessed for outcomes, but by the interactive nature of the sessions it is providing an informal platform for communication and cooperation and is contributing to organisational culture enhancements.

By examining this program as a case study it can be seen that individual efforts to increase communication at CSU can contribute to the breakdown of siloing within the organisation.

Evidence



cross-unit collaboration justin - Medium.mov

An interview with Justin Williams and some of the participants of these sessions has revealed anecdotal benefits to CSU.

“The sessions provide recreation but more than I have seen people open up over time and share ideas and knowledge. By taking the time to develop relationships you gain a deeper understanding of how people work and what motivates them.

“There is also the common ground for people to talk openly about any areas of their work that might benefit from other’s knowledge and advice. There is often the revelation that people are experiencing the same challenges and it can be helpful to hear how other’s negotiate their way through challenges.

“The understanding of what other people do in the organisation is a benefit that has come out of the sessions.

“There are many benefits of cross-unit communication in an organisation that is so disparate. If there were more communication there would be a lot more collaboration and less waste of opportunity. It would also build corporate knowledge across the organisation as people would have more understanding of other work areas responsibility and operation.”

Recommendations

It is recommended that personal initiatives be recognised and rewarded for their contribution to cross-unit communication. It is important that the integrity of such initiatives be maintained by not implementing them as formal programs but rather that they are encouraged from a cultural perspective within the organisation.

Justin’s program was recognised through a divisional award that highlighted his contribution to improving cross-unit communication. This support at a divisional level fosters a cultural assumption that connecting with other people across the university is positive and encouraged at CSU.

These programs and initiatives could be further enhanced through HR recognition and assessment for inclusion in induction material so that new staff at CSU are aware of the cultural opportunities that exist in the organisation.

It is important that if such initiatives are promoted across the university they are monitored for appropriateness and cultural contribution. The onus of monitoring should not be on the participants or session leaders as this will compromise program integrity but rather should be owned by HR and independent periodic evaluations can be conducted to assess initiatives. The initiatives can be formally recognised through EDRS plans.

CASE STUDY 3: Cross-unit cooperation within the Division of Facilities Management

Introduction

In response to the 2015 Voice Survey results, the Division of Facilities Management identified the lowest scores for the Division to ensure that the concerns were assessed and addressed. This case study will focus on specifically the item of 'Cross-unit Cooperation' that was received low ratings, the background, potential solutions, recommendations and evidence that the Division is actively working towards improving this for our staff.

Background

Within the results of the 2015 Voice Survey, *Cross-unit Cooperation* received the lowest scores for the Division of Facilities Management, it is however acknowledged within the comments that:

- There is good communication across all units of CSU
- Our willingness to work collaboratively with others makes CSU different
- There is cooperation between different units in CSU
- Knowledge and information are shared throughout CSU

Potential Solutions

Discussions were held with staff following on from the survey results, as to their preferred method of internal communication (within the Division of Facilities Management) and it was agreed for Senior Management to meet with all campus staff three times a year, face to face.

Workshops were held with staff to confirm what they see as barriers to cross-unit cooperation and what solutions they may have.

It was also identified that when addressing the cooperation between different areas within CSU that the Division of Facilities Management would continue to meet with key representatives from the Division of Information Technology, Human Resources and the Division of Finance.



Recommendations

Upon review of the concerns raised within the 2015 Voice Survey Report for the Division of Facilities Management and proposed solutions, it is recommended that the following actions be implemented and/or continued within the Division to promote the four values of being *Inclusive, Inspiring, Insightful and Impactful*:

- Staff Meetings are held three times a year at each campus.
- Meetings are to continue between the Division of Facilities Management and Division of Information Technology, Human Resources and the Division of Finance
- Meetings be scheduled with each Faculty, following on from the implementation of the Three Faculty Common Support Model.
- The 'Staff Resources' page on the Division of Facilities Management website is kept current with staff related information and used as a source of truth for staff.
- Monthly 'Seminar Series' meetings are held via Videoconference for all staff and provide presentations that are relevant to the University, the Division of Facilities Management and staff professional development.
- Bi-Monthly Newsletters be distributed to staff to promote internal communications.
- Email Bulletins be used to circulate important information for staff.
- Upcoming training sessions be circulated to all staff to provide the opportunity for professional development.



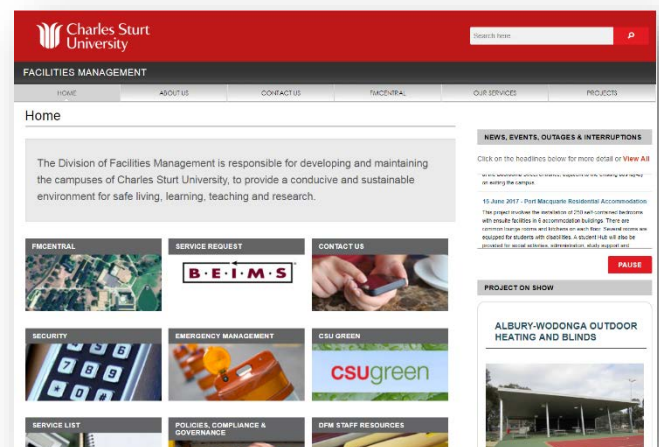
Evidence

Staff Meetings continue be held three times a year with the most recent occurring in November 2017.

[Presentations](#) for these meetings are available to divisional staff via our Staff Resources webpage.

The content for these presentations is varied and covers the following:

- CSU Structural Changes
- CSU Values
- Your Voice 2017 Completion
- EDRS Results for 2016 and status for 2017
- CSU Strategies
- Communications in general
- Foundation Day
- Results of the Client Satisfaction Survey
- Summary of Operation and Maintenance
- Sustainability
- Summary of Planning, Design and Construction
- Summary of Procurement and Risk Management



Bi-Monthly meetings are held between the Division of Facilities Management and the following units within the University:

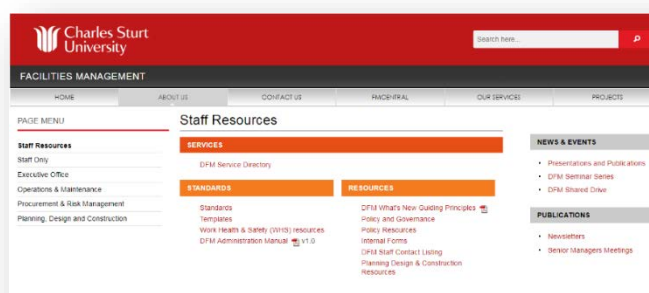
- Division of Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Division of Finance

Meetings were held in 2017 between the Division of Facilities Management and the following faculties, it is envisaged that these meetings will be held bi-annually:

- Faculty of Arts and Education
- Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioral Sciences
- Faculty of Science

The '[Staff Resources](#)' page on the Division of Facilities Management website is maintained by the Executive Officer and contains content relating to:

- Standards
- Templates
- Work, Health and Safety Resources
- Policy and Governance
- Policy Resources
- Internal Forms
- Staff Contact listing
- Presentations and Publications
- Seminar Series events
- Recent updates to the Shared Drive
- Newsletters
- Monthly Division of Facilities Management Seminar Series events are scheduled on the last week of each month and all staff are invited to attend. The [webpage](#) dedicated to these meetings is updated with the dates for each event and copies of presentations are uploaded to the webpage following on from each occurrence. To ensure that these occasions remain valuable and interesting for staff a survey is circulated each month to evaluate the presentations and content. Staff also have the opportunity to suggest future topics.



Bi-monthly newsletters are circulated via email to all staff within the Division of Facilities Management and are uploaded to the [webpage](#). Hardcopies are also provided in lunch rooms/kitchens etc. to ensure that all staff have access to the newsletter.

[Email Bulletins](#) are distributed to staff when important communications are required across the Division of Facilities Management, these were designed to be eye-catching and informative.



The Division of Facilities Management [Staff Training Calendar](#) is circulated each month to advertise any upcoming training sessions that may be of interest to staff and allow for professional development.



Impactful – Measuring and responding to cross-unit communication outcomes

Demonstrate to staff that they're valuable and making a difference, and encourage them to build a professional profile across CSU and beyond.

The CSU Onion Tool Connection Prototype

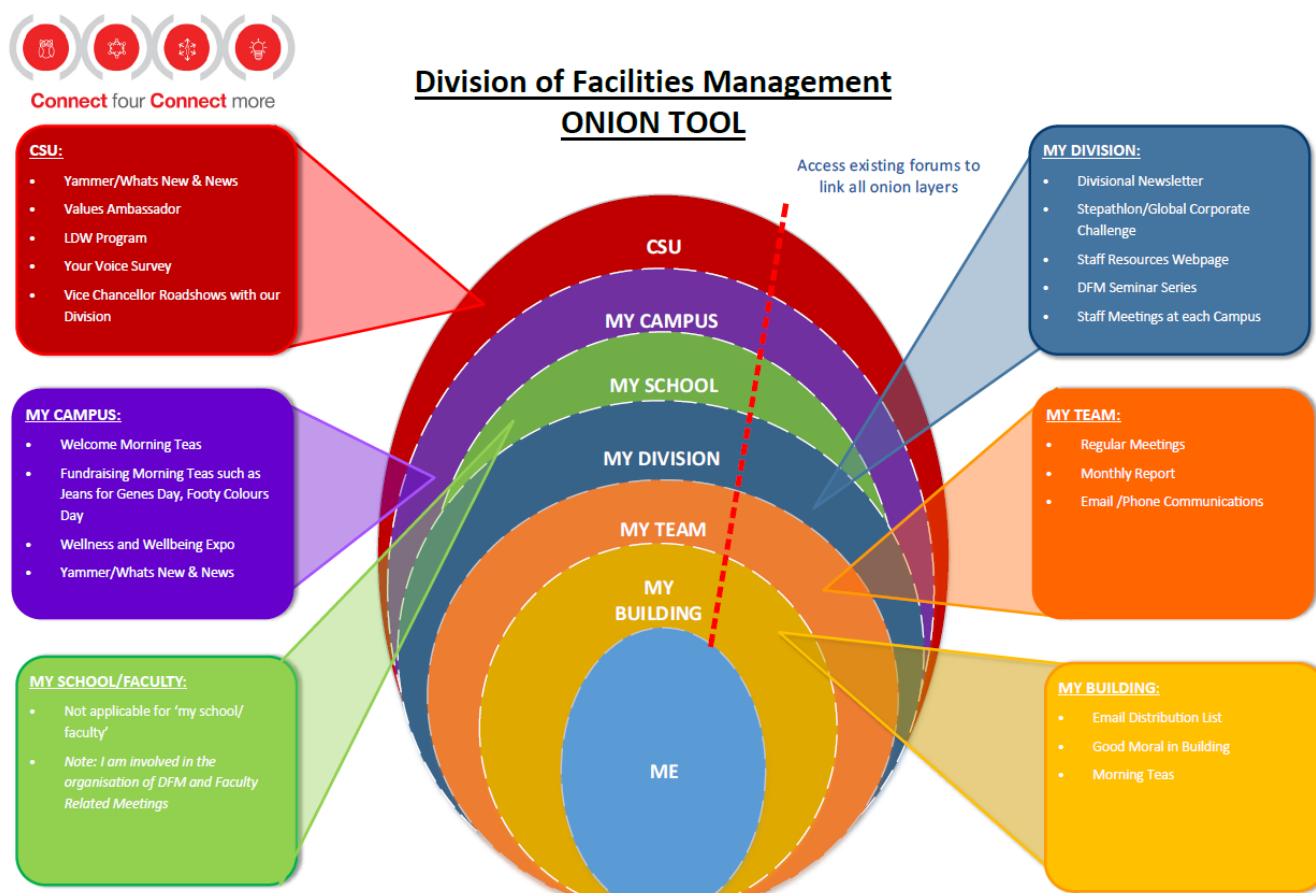
The *Connect Four, Connect More* group utilised the “Onion” concept to develop a visual tool for connections and interactions staff members may have across their working days at CSU.

CSU staff could utilise this tool to be aware and mindful of who they do currently collaborate within at all levels of the university and to also identify any gaps to address.

The “Onion Tool” is a practical example that could potentially be rolled out (even as a 3D model) within the various Divisions, Faculties, Offices and Schools to compliment the values of being *Insightful, Inclusive, Impactful and Inspiring*.

The “Onion Tool” also allows for individual staff to take responsibility for their own cross-unit cooperation and communications within the university. Further development of the tool could enable staff to match their cross-unit communication touchpoints with KPIs and business goals.

Below is an example of the tool completed personally for a staff member within the Division of Facilities Management:





Inspiring – Leading for the future as a connected and informing organisation

Invite staff into the full breadth of CSU life so that they feel connected to the university and its community, and engage in its mission and achievements.

One of the initial conversations the **Connect Four, Connect More** group had was around the propensity for siloing in a large organisation as a result of narrow inductions or lack of induction.

A potential solution to this was identified through an Elmo induction package that would give new staff a high level understanding of the organisational structure and high level strategic goals.

ELMO CSU INDUCTION PROTOTYPE:

Welcome to Charles Sturt University

A broad overview of CSU to get you started.....

Welcome to Charles Sturt University

- This induction ELMO is intended to provide an overview of CSU to help you navigate the complex structure of this large organisation.
- This ELMO includes many links to webpages on the CSU website – we encourage you to explore the links to learn more about the many areas of CSU.
- We also encourage you to save this ELMO to your computer as a future resource to aid in navigating the who, what and where of CSU.

We hope this aids your journey with CSU

CSU Background

Charles Sturt University (CSU) was established in 1989 as a multi-campus institution and has grown into a dynamic and progressive university well-known for its innovative approach to education and applied research.

Charles Sturt University now attracts more than 9,600 on campus and 24,000 distance education students.

CSU also employs over 3000 people across the campuses.

Fun fact: Foundation Day is celebrated each year on the Wednesday after 19 July. All staff are invited to wear red and celebratory activities take place on each campus.

[Read more about CSU history](#)

Governance and Management

The University is governed by the University Council who assists the University to achieve its mission and vision.

The academic and administrative management of the University is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor and senior executive, who manage policies, processes and decision making for the operational management of the University.

A vice-chancellor is the equivalent of a chief executive office. They are also the public face of the university. The Vice-Chancellor at CSU is Professor Andrew Vann.

[Short video of Andy Vann welcoming new staff]

[Read more about Governance and Management](#) and the [Vice-Chancellor](#)

University Strategy

The University's Strategic Direction for 2017 - 22 sets the direction for CSU. It was developed and approved by University Council in December 2016.

The latest versions of the Strategic Direction, University Performance Measures and a concept of how the strategy will work along with a short video to take you through the key points is available from the University Strategy link below.

We encourage you to read the next slide and explore the full website: [University Strategy Office](#)

Taste of Strategic Direction

For the Public Good (Charles Sturt 1989)

We are a university of the past and present of our region. True to the character of regional Australia we have created, we have and we will continue to create.

We develop leaders, we inspire people who help their communities grow and flourish.

Anticipating the future and vision of indigenous Australia, CSU's vision is described in the phrase from the Strategic Direction: *the future of our region*.

Unleashing our potential

(The vision of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in)

Guided from our vision, our values are to be respectful, inclusive, impactful and inspiring. By living these values, we want to *make life a world worth living in*.

Our mission is to build skills and knowledge in our region. We offer choice and flexibility to students and work hard to build with our students and communities in teaching, research and engagement. Learning from our regional roots, we shape our strategy and expertise as a significant regional impact university and are living through and learning from the best in our region.

We are a world-class university and embrace our vision through our goal to be the premier provider of higher education for our region and to build a better future for all.

Our Values

Charles Sturt University has a proud history and we are very fortunate to have an outstanding group of diverse, passionate and engaged people working with us. Each person's experience at CSU will be the sum of the ways in which we all behave – as co-workers, as professionals and as the "faces" of our university.

As a values driven organisation, we all therefore have an important role to play in bringing our values to life and making them part of our daily lives. Underpinning our ethos, our four values are:

- **Inspiring**
- **Inclusive**
- **Impactful**
- **Innovative**

These values aim to guide our behaviour and way of working to help us achieve our ethos of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in.

[Learn more about the values at Our Values](#)

Locations

CSU's NSW campuses are located in some of Australia's fastest growing regional cities. Faculties, Schools and Divisions can be located on multiple campuses. There are also study centres in some capital cities.


The main campuses are located at:

- Albury-Wodonga
- Bathurst
- Dubbo
- Orange
- Port Macquarie
- Wagga Wagga

Fun fact: You don't have to drive to each campus to take a tour as you can take a virtual tour of the main campuses <http://www.csu.edu.au/2020>

[Read more about each of the CSU Locations](#)

Faculties



A faculty refers to a group of university schools and centres which are viewed as a body or division.

At CSU there are three faculties:

- ❖ Faculty of Arts and Education
- ❖ Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences
- ❖ Faculty of Science

Each faculty at CSU comprises of 8 schools and is led by an Executive Dean.

Read more about [Faculties and Schools](#)

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Faculty of Arts and Education

The Faculty of Arts and Education specialises in communications, art history, teacher education, theology, literature, sociology and a range of other areas.

In the [Faculty of Arts and Education](#) the schools include:

- ❖ School of Communication and Creative Industries
- ❖ School of Education
- ❖ School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ❖ School of Indigenous Australian Studies
- ❖ School of Information Studies
- ❖ Centre for Islamic Studies and Civilisation
- ❖ School of Teacher Education
- ❖ School of Theology

Read more at <http://www.csu.edu.au/about/organisational-structure/faculties-and-schools?>



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Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Studies

The [Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Studies](#) brings together a range of courses and schools that focus on real-world challenges.

Business

- School of Accounting and Finance
- School of Computing and Mathematics
- School of Management and Marketing
- City Futures Institute

Justice

- School of Policing Studies
- Australian Graduate School of Policing and Security
- Centre for Systems and Justice Studies
- Centre for Law and Justice

Behavioural Sciences

- School of Psychology

Read more at <http://www.csu.edu.au/about/organisational-structure/faculties-and-schools?ug7661uac3u39>



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Faculty of Science

The [Faculty of Science](#) at CSU is one of the most broadly based scientific academic concentrations in Australia.

Our schools include:

- School of Agricultural and Wine Sciences
- School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences
- School of Biomedical Sciences
- School of Community Health
- School of Dentistry and Health Sciences
- School of Environmental Sciences
- School of Applied Science, Sport and Health
- School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health

Read more at <http://www.csu.edu.au/about/organisational-structure/faculties-and-schools?>



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Research at CSU



- Research is another important component of CSU.
- CSU is committed to excellence in research, to identifying and supporting areas and projects which allow the University to undertake internationally competitive research and research training.
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (DVC Research, Development & Industry) is responsible for research; research training; partnership with industry and end-users to enhance research and maximise research impact; international education; national and international education partnerships; and indigenous education, and is a member of the Vice Chancellor's Leadership Team.
- Read more at <http://www.csu.edu.au/about/organisational-structure/offices-and-divisions?>

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Research Strategy at CSU

The Research Narrative (RN17) sets the direction for research at CSU.

Three interdisciplinary research spheres have been identified to encapsulate our research activity.

Resilient People

- This encapsulates research that contributes to the development of educated, healthy, resilient people.

Flourishing Communities

- This encapsulates research that contributes to developing communities that will be thriving economically, with strong social frameworks, and where diversity and harmony reside.

Sustainable Environments

- This encapsulates research that contributes to the development of sustainable solutions in agriculture and water resources while enhancing the biodiversity of our environments and strengthening ecosystems.

RN17 is aligned with the University 2017-2022 Strategy in delivering impactful, solution-driven research that reflects our existing areas of strength and tackles new challenges. RN17 will have greater impact for investment and recruitment at CSU. It will drive research investment decisions, research staff recruitment activities, and HDR recruitment and scholarship support.



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CSU's Research Centres

There are four University Research Centres at CSU.








CSU is committed to internationally competitive research and research training. The four centres of research excellence are key areas of research concentration and expertise. Membership draws from staff across the Faculties of CSU and includes research higher degree candidates.

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Office of Chief Financial Officer

- The portfolio of Office of the Chief Financial Officer has the overarching responsibility and commitment to lead the physical and technological development of the University; to lead organisational change and development in the service and support areas of the University as part of the University Strategy 2017-2022.
- The portfolio supports the teaching and research operations at the University and covers gardening, building maintenance, security, travel, car fleets, finance and web updates.
- Take your time to explore the following links:
 - [Division of Finance](#)
 - [Division of Facilities Management](#)
 - [Division of Information Technology](#)
 - [Web Strategy Office](#)




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Division of Human Resources

- The Division of Human Resources is responsible for providing strategic leadership and advice to the University in the development of its policies and practices, to enhance the personal and professional development of its staff, and to enable managers at all levels to optimise the performance of their staff within a dynamic environment.
- The Division covers recruitment, salaries, conflicts and complaints, health and safety, CSU cards and much more.

Take the time to explore the [Starting at the University](#) tab.

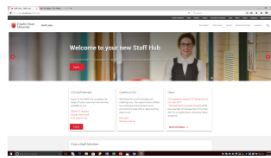
• [More on the Division of Human Resources](#)



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Where do I find Information?

- The Staff Hub which contains convenient links to maps, finding staff members, IT requests and Web Kiosk (timesheets & leave requests).
- Ask questions and explore!



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Recommendations

The evidence presented within this *Connect Four, Connect More* project confirms that addressing the problem of siloing at Charles Sturt University is necessary.

The *Connect Four, Connect More* team recommends that Charles Sturt University:

- Promotes existing examples of cross-unit connections being undertaken at the various levels of CSU.
- Develops tools such as the Induction ELMO to assist staff with understanding the common goals and vision of the organisation at an early stage of their CSU career.
- Create tools such as the Onion that encourage staff to be mindful of their role in cross-unit connections and collaboration.



Reflections

Alexandra Knight | Lecturer | School of Environmental Sciences

I started my position as the only Early Career Development Fellow at CSU in December 2017 after working as a sessional lecturer for seven years. The position I'm in is a transition position with the potential to move to being an ongoing academic. I thought the LDW course might be useful as I knew very little about the structures and functions of the University beyond the immediate sessional teaching sphere and it might also help me build confidence in my new role.

I feel that the course has helped facilitate both of those things. I do know more about why and how the University works, and importantly I know more about the different sections and have started to build an ability to move across those 'silos' and reach out to others. I need to do more work on that. I've also really enjoyed some of the video presentations from CSU staff who have shared valuable and sometimes quite personal stories that have been meaningful and provide insight. As an aside I'm also starting to get on top of the different types of technology that enable meetings and work sharing as a result of having to do it regularly through the course. It's interesting how technology that seems quite simple to some people can be quite challenging for others.

The best thing about the course has been working with the *Connect Four Connect More* team. These are people that work hard, are encouraging and are creative. Beyond that they are willing to contribute and do so while persevering through difficulties. They are an inspiration to me.

Deborah Munns | Research Liaison Officer, Research Office | Faculty of Science

I began the LDW program at a fairly turbulent time in my career having just experienced a period of intense change after the CSU administrative restructure. In the months prior to the program I had changed faculties, teams, supervisors, job functions and buildings. I was feeling fairly uncertain of where I fitted within CSU, and felt that to a certain degree I was starting at the bottom again. In reflection I realise that I had also lost confidence in my abilities during the restructure process.

I have particularly enjoyed working with the other three members of the *Connect Four, Connect More team*. It was interesting that the four of us had similar views about siloing across the

university. It was good to realise that it was not only a problem in my section and that it was a real-world problem worth trying to overcome.

It has been interesting to see the different skills and viewpoints that each team member has contributed to the project. We have worked well together, each contributing in different ways. We all have a can-do attitude focused on delivering positive outcomes rather than whinging or dwelling on the past. This approach has led to a great project.

I feel that the LDW program has contributed to my goal of encouraging positive change in my broader sphere of influence. I feel that I have regained my confidence to share my skills and experiences in a positive manner at CSU. Along the way I have gained a better understanding of the complex environment of the university. This knowledge has already been useful in my day-to-day job.

Overall, the best thing about the program was meeting, and working, with women from across the university. The connections made through the program are already proving to be a valuable on-going outcome of the project. I also appreciate the insight into my personality, which is helping me to work and lead project teams.

Sandra Sharpham | Acting Manager, Content Marketing | Division of Marketing and Communications

As a new to CSU employee in 2017 I was motivated to join the Leadership Development for Women program to discover more about how CSU functions as an organisation and gain a deeper insight into the business units across the organisation. I was also interested in the professional development that I anticipated could be gained through examining leadership practices and connecting with CSU leaders through the mentoring aspect of the program.

The program did meet my initial requirements above. But the unique approach of mindful leadership delivered professional and personal developments benefits beyond my expectations. Through the group work in the project I have gained significant insights into other areas of the university outside my own division and have also been able to explore the key challenge of functional siloing at CSU.

Our group is an interesting mix of academic, administrative, research and marketing backgrounds and this has been invaluable in being able to bring together different requirements, perceptions, perspectives and learnings. It has been very rewarding for me to be able to connect with people from these different areas of the university and I have learned a lot from them about what it means to be part of a large organisation with so many different moving parts.

To be completely honest I was unsure about approaching leadership from the perspective of mindfulness. The typical traits of decisiveness, confidence and stability that we associate with strong leaders didn't naturally align with mindfulness for me at the beginning of the program. However, after reading the recommended text, *Leading Mindfully* by Amanda Sinclair, and working through the program activities such as the Majors Review and group sessions on response to issues, it has enabled me to form a new definition around what defines a "strong" leader.

One of the biggest learnings for me during this program has been that mental and emotional strength is more effective when it is developed through mindful practices. And rather than my expectation that being mindful would slow me down in my efforts to solve problems and achieve progress as a team leader it has proven to have the opposite effect. When I engage in mindful practices as a leader the outcomes are more considered and the team uptake is more enthusiastic and committed.

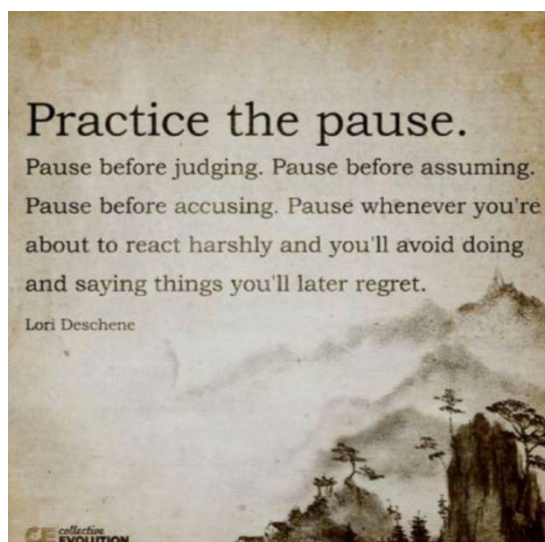
The program has motivated me to maintain contact with different people from different areas of the university that I might not normally interact with and has also helped me to assess the impact of my leadership style on myself and my team, examine the type of leader I want to become and focus on developing strategic growth areas for myself as a leader.



Katie White | Executive Officer | Division of Facilities Management

Over the duration of this course I have found it to be inspiring and captivating. I have enjoyed participating in the workshops and video conferencing opportunities and learning about leadership within CSU.

In being relatively new to CSU (18months), initially I was hoping to increase my connections and networking within the University; however learnt much more. I have especially enjoyed learning about my personality type (not that it was a surprise to me); and how better to interact with others that work and think differently to myself. This course has given me insight into leadership and provided me with the skills to deal with challenging situations, should they arise.



I am conscious of being mindful when communicating with others and the one thing I have taken away from this opportunity is that hesitation or pausing is the key. Before communicating verbally, replying to emails or reporting on issues or concerns, it is best to pause, think through the situation, think of your potential response, think of how this could be interpreted and impact it may have, is what I am about to say the way I wish it be received? Sometimes pausing may change your initial intended response or objective and as long as your intentions are honourable, if you are mindful before reacting, this can be the prevent misunderstanding and miscommunication.

In addition to the journey I have embarked on as part of the Leadership Development for Woman Program I have had the opportunity to develop some strong relationships with the other members of our **Connect Four Connect More** team. I have enjoyed our time together and admire them for their commitment, work ethic, insight and willingness to share their experiences. We have formed a great friendship.



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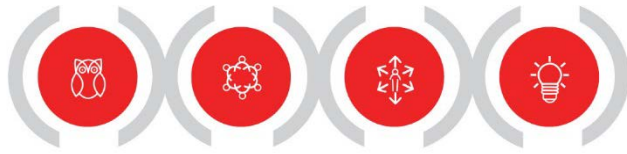
Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview with Justin Williams

Appendix 2: Connect Four Connect More Presentation

Appendix 3: Dealing with Market Disruption – Seven Strategies to breaking down silos





Connect four **Connect** more



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Connect Four – Connect More

Breaking down silos at CSU



Insightful



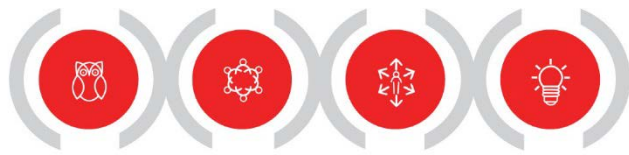
Inclusive



Impactful



Inspiring



Connect four **Connect** more



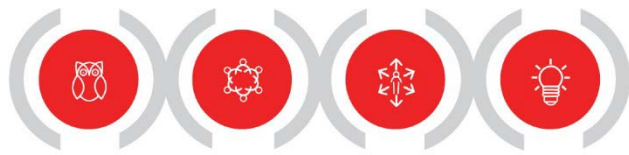
Why we chose it...

At the initial Leadership Development for Women (LDW) meeting each member of the group identified siloing at CSU to be one of the most important leadership issues at CSU.

Four people from four different areas had experienced:

- A lack of cross-unit communication and cooperation on projects
- Lack of clarity around organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of business units or individuals
- Confusion around who to contact to establish correct process for professional activities.

The **Connect Four, Connect More** group was developed to align with CSU's four values to promote cross-unit cooperation.



Connect four Connect more



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CSU Your Voice Survey

- There is good communication across all units of CSU

2015 27%

2017 28%

- There is cooperation between different units in CSU

2015 39%

2017 36%

In response to the 2015 and 2017 CSU Your Voice Survey, cross-unit cooperation has been identified as a top five priority area by the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Team:

Cross Unit-Cooperation: increasing communication and collaboration with work units and within CSU and sharing of knowledge and information.



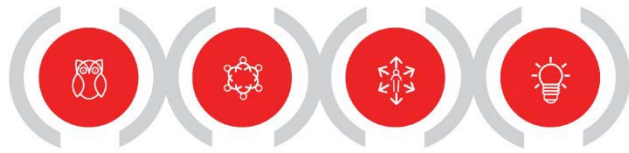
Text responses from the 2017 CSU Your Voice Survey indicate awareness of silos and willingness to break them down is high.

List three ways CSU could be improved as a workplace

- Communication and collaboration between staff and management, and between different organisational units must be improved.
- CSU is a large organisation that is organised in silos. Break down the silos.
- There needs to be more synergy and information sharing among departments.

List the three things you really enjoy about working at CSU

- Interaction and working together with colleagues from my and other areas.
- I really like the people that I work with and what we are all trying to achieve together as a team.
- Get to work with some amazing people who are so dedicated to making a difference in people's lives.



Connect four Connect more

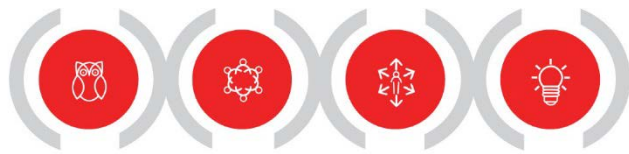


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What is siloing?



The Silo Mentality as defined by the [Business Dictionary](#) is a mindset present when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same company. This type of mentality will reduce efficiency in the overall operation, reduce morale, and may contribute to the demise of a productive company culture.



Connect four **Connect** more

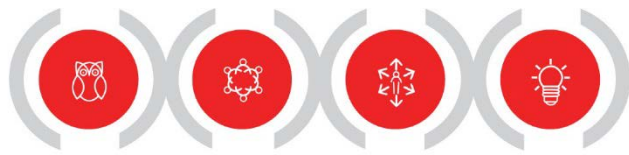


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Ways to Overcome Siloing:

- 1. Unified vision for the organisation delivered by leadership***
- 2. Work Toward Achieving a Common Goal through cross-functional work streams and teams***
- 3. Motivate and incentivise through joint incentives to promote cohesion***
- 4. Execute and Measure to provide feedback and results***
- 5. Collaborate and Create to harness people's desire to work together to achieve common goals***

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Connect four Connect more



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Our Approach

Contribute positive ways to break down silos through bringing the CSU Values to life

Ethos



Inspiring

Leading for
the future



Impactful

Outcome driven



Inclusive

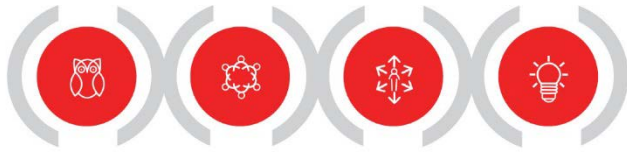
Stronger together



Insightful

Understanding people
and the world

The Wiradjuri phrase *yindyamarra winhanganha* means the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in.



Connect four Connect more



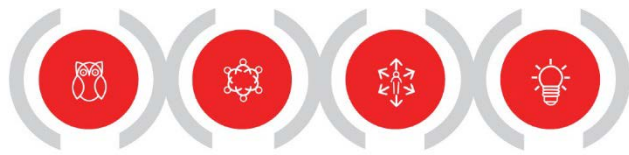
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Project Aim:

Develop a practical toolkit aligned to CSU values to promote and enable better cross-unit cooperation at CSU.

“... focus on what matters, influence for good, and enjoy leadership more

Amanda Sinclair, Leading Mindfully



Connect four **Connect** more



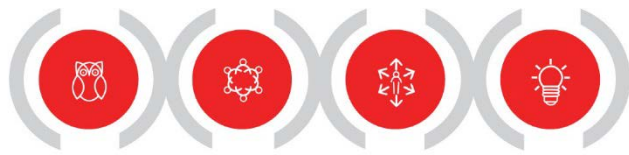
Insightful – Understanding for enhanced cross-unit communication

Invite staff to share their knowledge and insights into the university operations, culture and focus on the future.

Research Office (RO) Roadshow – The RO staff from 4 internal teams worked together to roll out a series of information sessions across five campuses. RO staff visited each campus and met with research related staff.

Result: *The roadshow has led to more cross collaboration within the research office, and new connections with researchers.*





Connect four **Connect** more

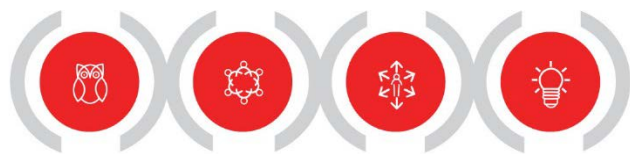


Inclusive – Commitment to connection for a stronger organisation

Cultivate a welcoming, diverse and inclusive culture, where staff support and lift up one another.

Case Study – Bridging the Communication Gap through Gaming – an individual initiative to enhance communication and support new colleagues

CSU employee Justin Williams hosts a lunch time strategy gaming group on the Bathurst campus, which includes up to 15 staff and students on any given day. Justin demonstrates how an individual can break down silo barriers.

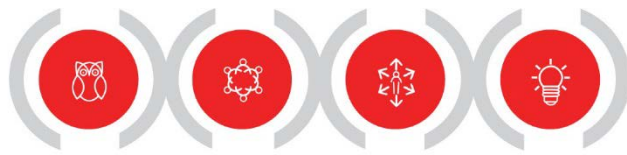


Connect four **Connect** more



Charles Sturt
University





Connect four Connect more

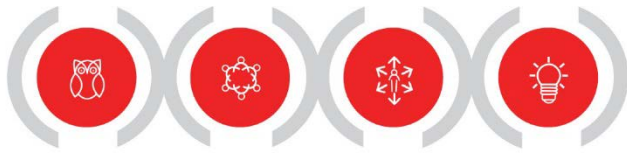


DFM Case Study –

Motivate staff to engage with each other by including a range of activities, awards, news & feedback about the great work being done within the Division of Facilities Management (DFM).

Result: More engagement of DFM staff.





Connect four **Connect** more

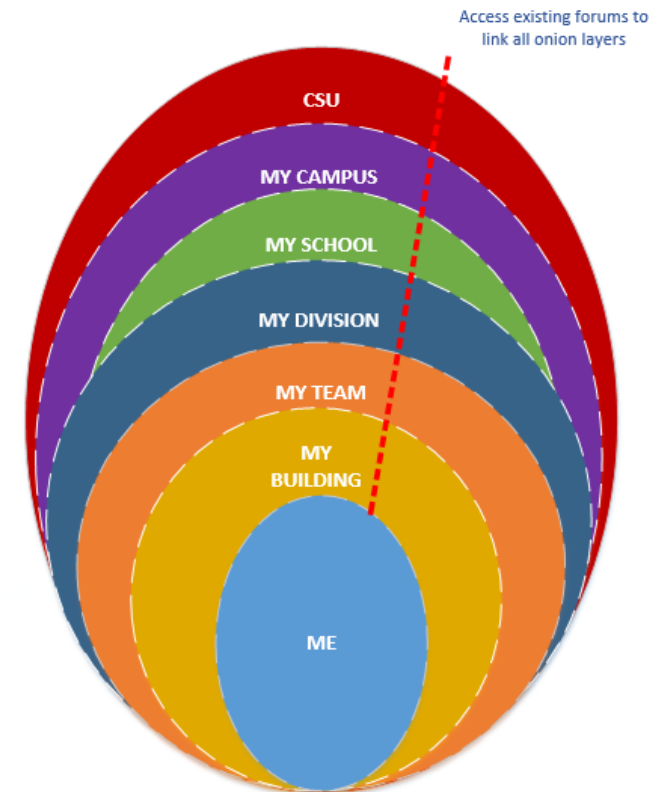


Impactful – Measuring and responding to cross-unit communication outcomes

Demonstrate to staff that they're valuable and making a difference, and encourage them to build a professional profile across CSU and beyond.

Onion Tool – Visual Tool to raise awareness of all connections within your daily life across all layers of the CSU Onion.

To remind people to constantly determine who they need to collaborate with at all levels of the organisation.

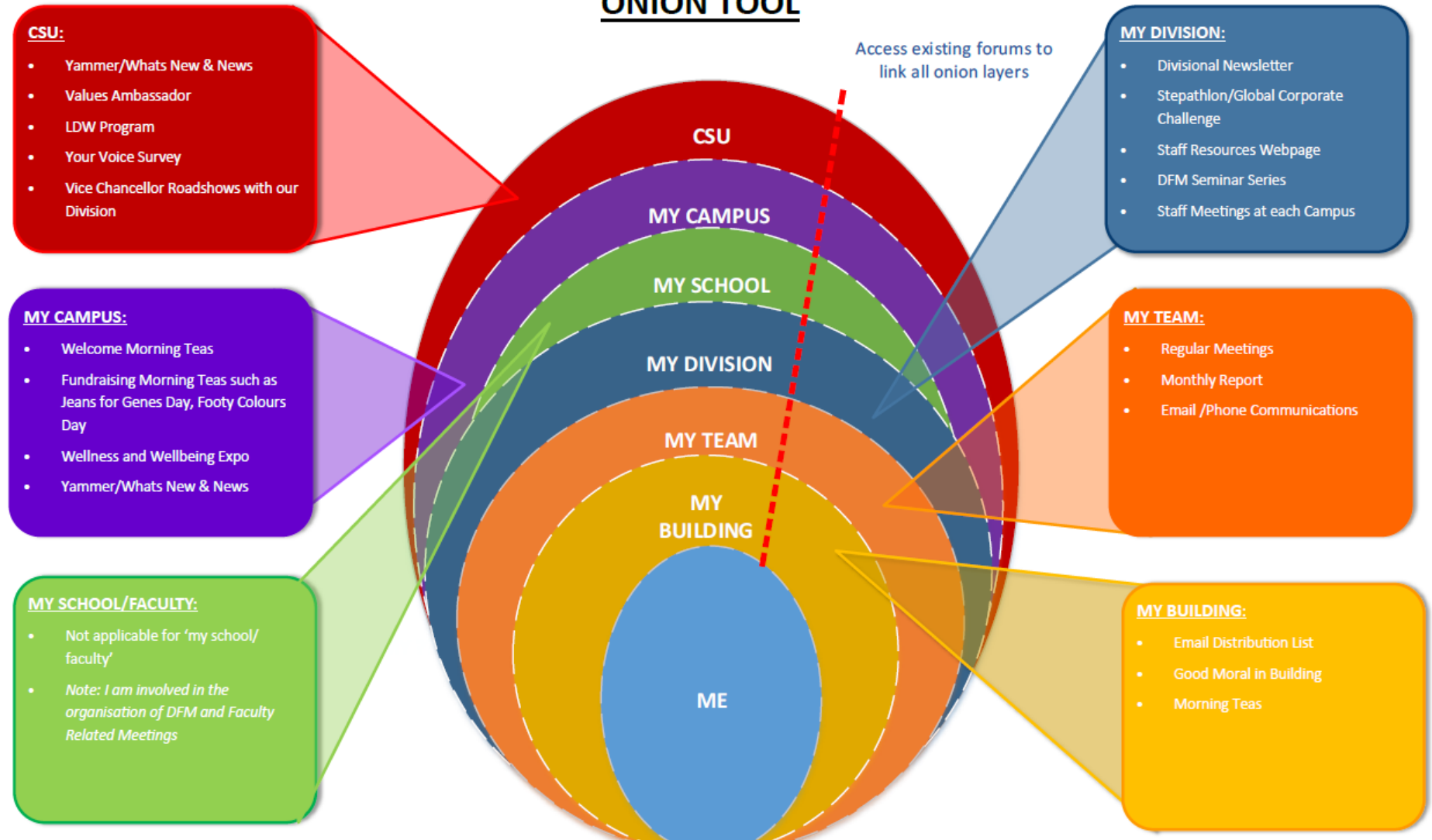


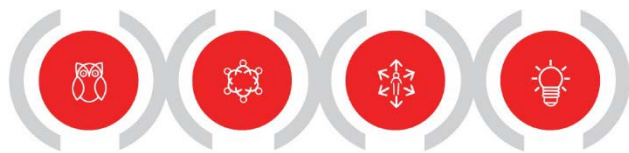


Connect four Connect more

Division of Facilities Management

ONION TOOL





Connect four **Connect** more

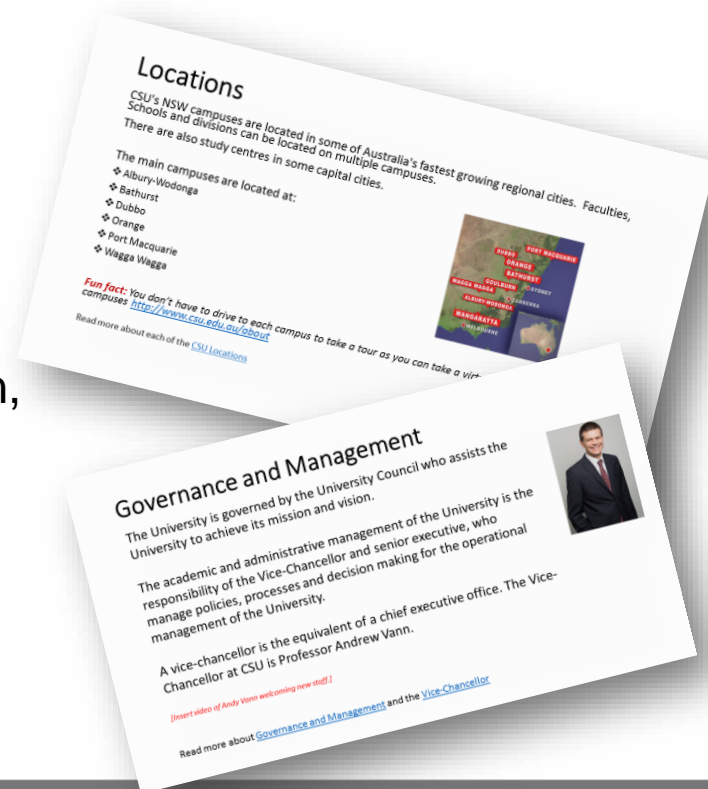


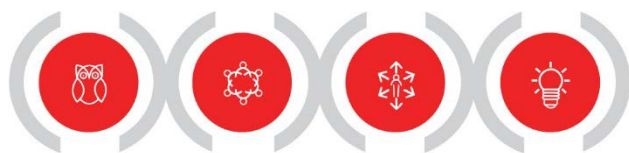
Inspiring – Leading for the future as a connected and informing organisation

Invite staff into the full breadth of CSU life so that they feel connected to the university and its community, and engage in its mission and achievements.

Induction Elmo Training Module

Why: Ensure all staff are aware of the CSU vision, provide an overview of the University for all staff when they begin their employment with CSU. Setting a unified path, early.





Connect four Connect more

Next Steps for CSU:

1. *Implement an ELMO Induction Training Module for new staff (we have given you a head start 😊).*
2. *Implement Case Study lessons (DFM, Research Roadshow, Individual Gaming Initiative) across CSU.*
3. *Create a CSU onion.*
4. *Live the Values!*



++++

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***Dealing
with market
disruption***



**Seven strategies
for breaking down
silos**

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Executive summary



To stay competitive in the face of increasingly accelerated disruption, many companies need to rethink and retool their offerings and operations. That kind of transformation, however, requires a collaborative effort from all parts of the organization, no matter how different their processes, systems, and cultures have been in the past.

Too often, the transformation effort falls flat due to the problems that arise when disparate parts of the company fail to work together with a shared sense of mission. Most large companies have divisions, or even groups and functions within divisions, that operate in silos. This can be for good reason; in the knowledge economy, jobs often require that professionals work with people who possess similar professional skills to fulfill specific mandates. Silos can exist to harness knowledge-based skills, or specific job functions, or they can be geographic. In many industries, silos are vital to productivity. But when organizational transformation is needed, silos mean that the very parts of your company that must work together are unaccustomed to doing so, and even unable to communicate with one another because they are culturally misaligned, or inherently mistrustful and territorial. These problems can complicate change efforts, or delay or derail delivery of their benefits.

This report highlights seven common challenges that occur when a company tries to break down silos, and best practices for overcoming each of these challenges so that you can build and empower cross-functional teams. These strategies will help the organization harness the right mix of knowledge and skills needed to bring about large-scale change.

Rethinking silos

Digitization, globalization, technological advances, and greater reliance on data analytics are accelerating market disruption at a historic pace, making it increasingly difficult for companies to maintain their competitive advantages. Businesses must adapt their processes, systems, and operating models — often simultaneously — to retain the strategic capabilities that are necessary to have the “right to win.”

Through numerous client engagements, we have found that adapting on the scale necessary to remain competitive, whether done proactively or reactively, is especially difficult for companies that operate in deeply entrenched silos. Conventional wisdom holds that silos are a flawed business construct: a legacy of command and control leadership symbolizing outmoded and inefficient management. In truth, silos help establish boundaries and maintain order — and allow professional teams to operate in a focused, specialized way. During “business as usual,” the positives often outweigh the negatives. Yet during times of significant change, when organizations must be agile, silos can be stubborn obstacles to creating a more effective path to growth and profitability.

Statistics from PwC’s 2015 Global Operations Survey, “[Reimagining operations](#),” tell a compelling story about the challenges of responding to disruption:

- 61 percent of respondents expect changes in customer behaviors to become a disruptive factor for their industry in the next five years.
- 70 percent believe changes in industry regulation will become a disruptive factor — resulting in the need for transformation.
- 58 percent of companies no longer focus on continuous improvement of existing processes alone, but instead focus on transformational change.
- 61 percent of leaders believe changing direction is one of the biggest challenges they face.

The same PwC study reveals how seldom companies successfully work across silos:

- Only about a third (36 percent) of companies prioritize a few cross-functional capabilities at the company level and expect functional leaders to identify how they contribute to the mission.
- More than half (55 percent) of companies work in silos, with each function making its own decisions on which capabilities matter most.
- Three out of five companies (61 percent) say the solution to reaching their strategic goals is collaborating more across functions, paired with faster decision making.

In our experience, a common example of silos slowing down change can occur when a company moves to a new digital platform. Such cases call for collaboration between lines of business and IT groups that have never had to work together before or have tried to do so unsuccessfully in the past. We have seen the silo mentality (“you do your work, and I’ll do mine”) prevent stakeholders from designing and implementing an appropriate technology solution. In other instances, lines of business with competing goals may clash. Finally, functions such as HR or finance can find it difficult to work with business units and vice versa, ultimately slowing down required changes and stunting growth opportunities.

We witnessed how silos slowed the pace of change at a financial- and information-services client company that had been extremely successful for decades, enjoying high operating margins, a large market share, and strong pricing power. When the financial crisis struck, however, the firm had to adapt to a changing world and found that it needed to share information across all divisions. When the company realized that keeping information siloed got in the way of change, senior management decided to upgrade technology systems and the company’s operating model to better share information across business lines.

However, silos also posed a problem when it came to transformation. Accustomed to working in silos, the company undertook a change initiative the same way: The technology team pursued IT projects in isolation; the business side pursued its own organizational and process improvement efforts. Compared with companies where such efforts are pursued jointly, this company’s isolated efforts were less efficient, and effectiveness was delayed.

We have seen the silo mentality prevent stakeholders from designing an appropriate technology solution.

Common causes of silos

There are usually sound business reasons for silos (*see Exhibit 1, next page*). Three of the most common are described in detail here.

In the knowledge economy, specific functions require equally specific skills. The need for deep expertise leads employees to follow vertical career paths, staying within a functional group — e.g., supply chain or HR — or within a business unit. There is little opportunity for individuals to bring knowledge from one area to another (e.g., someone from finance bringing their knowledge and expertise to HR so as to learn about talent management, or allowing someone from HR to gain knowledge about how to operate a profit-and-loss division of the company). In turn, siloed companies may place less value on general capabilities, creating resistance or lack of respect for the managerial and leadership skills that broad-based change initiatives demand.

The second cause is decentralized services or fractional ownership of cross-business processes, such as order to pay. We frequently see one of two scenarios. The first is that one of the process owners tries to optimize its part of the operation with little regard for how doing so might affect other owners and customers. The second is that process owners, lines of business, and functions such as HR or finance develop and adopt their own systems, resulting in uncoordinated overlap or a plethora of unintegrated platforms.

Finally, silos emerge due to geographic dispersion. An increasingly global business environment requires companies of a certain size, scale, and scope to have multiple locations, often in various countries and across continents. In other cases, it's necessary to have a line of business or function in a specific location (for example, an energy company locating downstream operations near the energy source). These dynamics can compound the effects of existing silos, or create them anew. Furthermore, acquisitions or entry into new markets can increase cultural disconnects. The concentration of employees in a line of business or a function can create a sense of separation from the rest of the company.

Based on our work supporting numerous clients striving to remain competitive in the face of market disruption, we believe that silos do not inevitably prevent success. Common problems associated with silos can be identified — and even anticipated — and counteracted by best-practice solutions that build trust and improve chances of successful adoption. If you believe you face potential market disruption and your business operates in silos, consider taking action now to combat these problems that silos can cause. In the following section, we highlight common challenges associated with silos, telling symptoms, and potential recommendations for how to deal with them (*see Exhibit 2, page 9*).

The need for deep expertise leads employees to follow vertical career paths, staying within a functional group or within a business unit.

Exhibit 1
Common causes of silos

**1.
Companies
value domain
expertise**

Pros

Most individuals are highly knowledgeable about their areas
Experts rise rapidly to the top of functional management

Cons

Little opportunity for the development of cross-functional knowledge sharing
General management skills may be lacking

**2.
Divided
ownership
of processes**

Pros

“Divide and conquer” mentality may mean processes are “optimized” within a given functional area or process step

Cons

True end-to-end process optimization is difficult
Platforms and investments are uncoordinated or duplicative

**3.
Business units
and functions are
geographically dispersed**

Pros

Diverse and global talent pool
Labor arbitrage opportunities
Tighter management of downstream resources
Proximity and access to key markets

Cons

Culture, language, and time zone differences compound the effects of existing silos

Source: Strategy& analysis

Exhibit 2
How to break down silos

	Challenge	Recommendation
<i>Ready the leaders</i>	Unclear path forward	Align leaders and build governance
<i>Ready the team</i>	Siloed teams struggle with cross-functional problems Teams are confused on priorities and expectations	Create cross-functional teams Create clear roles and responsibilities
<i>Set the team up for success</i>	Global teams run into complexity with scheduling and limited time together Cross-functional teams don't work well together	Co-locate teams during transformation period Create joint incentives
<i>Lead the team</i>	Single leader creates political challenges Consensus can't be reached	Create a "two in a box" structure Clarify decision rights

Source: Strategy& analysis

Making change stick

After you have broken down silos, you might have to develop additional cross-functional ways of working to sustain the benefits. Something that will help will be the creation of joint governance forums that come together centrally and regularly to debate challenges, issues, and trade-offs, with the goal of ultimately landing on common ground. These forums hark back to the importance of establishing clear decision-making authority early in the change process; if there is a stalemate and consensus can't be reached, someone has not only the authority but also the responsibility to make the decision — and make sure there is follow-through. These forums also help with continued information sharing — across geographies and organizational units.

For example, at one client company that was going through a major finance function transformation, there was a strong culture of working remotely (a legacy of only partial post-acquisition integration). Though this practice worked relatively well in business as usual, it proved to be a stumbling block

during the transformation. Time zone differences slowed response times and complicated scheduling working sessions. The need to coordinate travel schedules meant it was also difficult to get the necessary leaders and managers in the same room to make critical decisions.

The transformation's cadence became a game of "hurry up and wait." The client ultimately succeeded in its transformation efforts by focusing decision-making authority in a small core team based in one location, with only a few executives traveling. With the group mostly concentrated in one place, it became easier to schedule decision-making forums and ensure that all participants were able to discuss their views and achieve alignment. But it became clear that the results could have been achieved more quickly if there had been a core, centralized location and decision-making forum from the very beginning. Recognizing the benefits that came from reduced dispersion, the client embarked on an effort to become more centralized around major hubs.

Challenge: It is clear that change is needed, but the path forward is unclear.

Symptom: Warring, competing agendas at the top; inertia at the bottom among those not yet directly affected by the changing market; and confusion among the rank-and-file about what to do day-to-day to enable strategy.

Recommendation: Align senior leaders to clarify the path forward and develop the governance to provide guidance along the way. Depending on the level of change required, you may have to engage both business lines and functions broadly, which requires strong and clear messaging from the C-suite. For many of our clients, this support can mean the difference between failure and success: When teams have aligned

support and ownership, we see a much higher rate of success compared with those that haven't.

Next, the appropriate governance must be established. Providing the right guidance to manage change requires establishing the appropriate forums — e.g., a steering committee — with the right membership and decision makers. Last, as any effort progresses, day-to-day involvement should transition from those leading a change program to those running the business on an ongoing basis.

Challenge: Siloed teams are assembled and struggle to solve cross-functional problems.

Symptom: There is a strong temptation to create teams composed of people who have a history of successfully working together; it seems efficient because they can speak in shorthand and share similar norms and ways of working. However, this approach replicates existing problems—often the ones that you are trying to eliminate—instead of encouraging individuals from different functions to truly “think future state” and collaborate.

Recommendation: Rather than creating separate groups of functional and business unit representatives, create cross-functional work streams and teams. Pay attention not just to the composition of the team, but also to the size. In large teams, responsibility is often diffuse, which can lead to stalling of efforts.

Challenge: Freed from the natural comfort zones and power structures of their silos, employees in cross-functional teams can be uncertain of priorities and expectations.

Symptom: Employees don't know what to do, whom to listen to, or how to balance the demands of their day jobs with new company or team needs.

Recommendation: Determine clear roles and responsibilities for team members. If a joint team is created, determine who is accountable for final sign-off and who in the business and function must be informed. Another way to break the silo is to create strong “process feeders” or “global process owners” who can drive horizontal integration, or have a very senior leader with a mandate from the CEO, the chief operations officer, or the chief financial officer pull work out of these functions to create a stand-alone unit.

Challenge: The organization is global and so are the teams.

Symptom: Global teams may work well within the context of business units or silos, but global teams working on cross-functional efforts often run into complexity, with scheduling problems and reduced time to work together.

Recommendation: Co-locate. Although geographic dispersion is often inevitable, in some ways it is the simplest problem to solve. Since the need for communication, collaboration, and planning will be extensive, we recommend keeping teams in the same physical location.

For example, in one international shipping and logistics client headquartered in the U.S., the majority of the transformation efforts were focused domestically, despite the fact that growth was expected to come from international markets. It was necessary, then, to design for the future of the organization, and that meant involving people from overseas. Ultimately, the company brought staff from all over the world to its headquarters so that everyone could work together on one floor for several months during a critical period of the transformation.

Though it was not practical to co-locate teams for the duration of the multiyear effort, having them together during this period allowed for a level and type of collaboration that would have been impossible otherwise. People from both different geographic locations and business functions who would otherwise never have spoken to each other did, paving the way for a stronger collaboration and better communication going forward.

Challenge: Joint or blended teams don't "play well together."

Symptom: Individuals in cross-functional groups sometimes revert to a cliquishness that can border on high school lunchroom behavior when confronted with new team members, new ways of working, and different metrics. We often see this as a result of process-oriented silos, with each part of the process trying to optimize its part without thinking about the impact either upstream or downstream. In some cases, there may be two functions whose mandates seem to be in conflict. For example, in a large international drugstore chain, we saw that the logistics division was concerned about having sufficient inventory, whereas the finance division was worried about minimizing working capital.

In this case, the logistics division had an incentive favoring availability of product, while finance had an incentive to maximize the cash flow. To solve the problem, a joint committee led by a senior executive designed

joint incentives. These incentives tied working capital and inventory levels not just to individual silos favoring maximums and minimums but to the level of each variable that optimized the company's overall profit.

Recommendation: Create joint incentives. Particularly in a heavily siloed company, it's important to create not only joint deliverables and metrics, but also joint incentives to get people working together more cohesively. Ensure that year-end reviews and bonuses tie joint or blended team leaders to overall desired outcomes, not business as usual. This improves the likelihood that the decisions made will be best for the business overall rather than for individual siloed functions.

Challenge: *Businesses assign a single leader to a cross-functional team made up of people from different silos.*

Symptom: Though conventional wisdom dictates that “no man can serve two masters,” the choice of a single leader who comes from one of the silos can appear political and generate resistance.

Recommendation: Designate co-leaders. With multiple stakeholders representing multiple functions, having a single accountable leader for people to rally around is often unrealistic. Appointing two leaders of significant stature in the company — what we sometimes call “two in a box” leadership — can enforce accountability and encourage collaboration on all fronts.

One way we have seen this work with clients is to ensure that every initiative has two executive sponsors who directly report to the CEO or another senior executive — often one who is responsible for a given process, and one who is a direct customer or supplier of that process, with strong vested interests. At a software company looking to improve the installation process, the head of operations and the head of R&D were assigned to act as the executive sponsors of a workstream.

To the extent possible, the executive sponsors populated the teams with staffers from different functions who brought in varying perspectives because of their disparate expertise and knowledge. Next, the company began hosting formal events, such as workshops, and informal events, such as happy hours, to help everyone come together as one team working collectively for the good of the company.

Challenge: *Leaders can't reach consensus.*

Symptom: Conflicts are inevitable, but with the establishment of new governance models, teams, and structures, the path to resolution is also

uncharted territory. And although we often recommend having two leaders, their equal stature can result in a standoff.

Recommendation: Clarify who has the final decision-making authority. In some instances, you can deliberately create a situation where two people have the decision-making authority and must jointly make the final decision. In such cases, you need to make certain the right data is being brought to the table and is transparent to both parties, to ensure that the disagreement is not a result of one party's data that the other might dispute.

Sometimes, however, the decision-making authority will have to go to a third party—someone more senior in the organization, or someone who is not directly involved but serves as a tiebreaker. This should be someone with a proven track record and broad reputation for being neutral and objective, driven by the facts, and able to fend off what is good for just one function or part of the organization in favor of what is good for the enterprise or the cross-functional initiative. With one of our clients, the finance function was positioned as the tiebreaker because of its influence in the organization—a common situation for the finance function in most industries. Ideally, the parties should be judicious about what disputes they bring to a third party, a more senior person, or a governing body.

Conclusion

Whether done in anticipation of competitive threats or as a response, adjusting to market disruptions is often a high-stakes proposition for organizations. Failing to break down silos and disrupt the status quo is riskier. By leveraging the seven best practices described here, leaders can improve collaboration, communication, and trust between their teams and create a more effective path to growth and profitability during times of significant change. And even after the most significant changes have occurred, the process of breaking down silos will have made an organization more flexible and agile for the future. Silos may remain, but they are less likely to be rigid obstacles if a company has approached transformation this way.

Related reading

"The Bureaucracy Measurement Index: A systematic way for companies to assess the burden of red tape," Strategy&, June 2016

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