

MANDALAY RESOURCES COSTERFIELD OPERATIONS

Forging a Leadership Team Capable of Turning the Business Around



Background

Mandalay Resources started out as an exploration company listed on the FTSE and the ASX. The Costerfield gold-antimony mine located 90 minutes north of Melbourne, Victoria, was the company's first operational acquisition inside its strategy to acquire underperforming assets and turn them around.

With the acquisition of this business came the need for a General Manager for Australia and Andre Booyzen, a highly-experienced mining professional from South Africa recently moved to Australia, was appointed.

Case for Action

Costerfield had been operating for many years but was struggling to survive. Because of that struggle the workforce were left deeply cynical about management's commitment to the success of the operation and, given it was located in a reasonably remote regional area, felt trapped by the lack of options available to them and blamed management for their predicament.

Andre was charged with the job of turning the business around and contacted Hewsons very early into his tenure to request support in galvanising his leadership team to make that happen.

Hewsons are professional, they have a huge amount of experience. They are really direct, they call it for what it is...

Andre Booyzen, GM Australia, Mandalay Resources

Mandalay Leadership Development Programme

Hewsons developed this programme specifically for the Costerfield operation based on our standard leadership team programme. The programme of work consisted of many parts – a programme for the operational management team (MLDP), workshops for their direct reports, strategy development workshops, individual coaching and meeting facilitation and has continued to date over a six-year period.

The participants in the MLDP, the management team of 12, had little or no exposure to leadership development so we began with a 2-day introductory programme that gave them a common language and the opportunity to re-set their relationships with one another, and the company itself. A critical outcome to be produced in this first workshop was aligning the group around taking on the resurrection of the Costerfield operation rather than leaving it up to Andre.

This first workshop was followed by six more. Each workshop built on the skills introduced in the first and expanded people's capacity to operate accountably, with integrity and as a true team. The workshops incorporated Mandalay's company charter and the values it contained and supported the leaders in being a demonstration of those values across the site.

I had my view of Hewsons but in the beginning, there were those who didn't perform and they had a different view. They would respond in two ways – they would chatter about what was wrong with the programme and about Carolyn and what she was doing. The other way is that they would start missing coaching calls. They did this because they weren't doing what they said they would. Now, they're all performing and their view of Hewsons is the same as mine!

Once the management team was humming they took on introducing their direct reports into the process via Hewsons Engagement Coaching Workshop and by offering ongoing coaching to key individuals.



Hewsons was used to support the leadership team in developing and driving a culture across the organisation of safety, accountability, productivity and collaboration by galvanising a group of 'Costerfield Champions' and supporting them in communicating down into the operation.

A [video](#) was produced, which captures the spirit and power of what was accomplished at the Costerfield operation.

Organisational Results

Raising the performance of the business actually takes choreographing an entire range of activities simultaneously, however, over the course of the first 18 months of Hewsons' work with Costerfield, production increased by 30%, staff turnover decreased from 68% to 13%. Beyond that first 18 months the operation moved itself out of relying on Mandalay to finance its capital needs to contributing to the lion's share of Mandalay's overall profit.

Testimonials

I don't try to hide things anymore, like "maybe I don't know what I'm talking about", "maybe that person doesn't think I'm good at what I do". If there is a feeling or a concern I have I'll go and ask them. Having the ability and having the confidence to ask questions that might be uncomfortable and difficult, finding out the value in asking those questions has been the biggest revelation for me.

I thought everyone in the group was smarter than me but I actually think we are all on the same wavelength now which is good. I grew in a lot of confidence. I hated speaking in front of people before and I can do that now. It's really helped me big time.

I did judge people unfairly. To see the person for who they really were was a big journey for me, to change that viewpoint I had. So, seeing others in a different light was a big change.

One of the main learnings for me was listening to myself and listening to others. Listening to what someone says instead of listening to what I think was said or what I wanted to hear.

