Focus on your career

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Online learning
ALL STAFF are encouraged to complete the following online modules in ANU Pulse:

• Harassment, Discrimination & Bullying
• Indigenous Cultural Awareness
• Code of Conduct

To access these and other modules in Pulse, Register or login

Career Development Programs for all staff
Download the Career Development calendar
Note: Look out for our upcoming 2012 Career Development Program Prospectus offering opportunities for academic and professional staff.

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Next issue:
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Research

Staff work and feel better with career development

A number of ANU professional and academic staff who participated in 2010-11 ANU Career Development Programs have been part of a research initiative designed to evaluate the impacts of the programs.

This research is designed to measure changes in how people think and feel about themselves and their work; and the effects of these changes on work engagement, wellbeing and performance.

Preliminary data is demonstrating significant improvements in: wellbeing measured by positive and negative emotions; self-determination and authenticity measured in terms of self-acceptance and self-regulation; and psychological wellbeing measured in terms of autonomy, self-acceptance, purpose, and environmental mastery. Preliminary evidence suggests that all these improvements in wellbeing are sustained over a six month period post course.

Work engagement measures show a significant increase in vigour (vitality) and dedication for those on mindfulness programs.

Academics reported very high levels of intrinsic motivation to do research, with slightly lower levels of intrinsic motivation to teach and much lower levels for administration. There were significant improvements in self-rated performance.

Correlational evidence shows: people who are more mindful are more likely to be engaged in their work; well-being is significantly related to work engagement and self-ratings of performance; and managerial support is a better predictor of work engagement for professional staff than it is for academic staff.

This research is central to our ongoing effort to develop evidence-based approaches to improving university life.
MENTORING AT ANU

Mentoring is an important and recognised way to develop your career and it occurs frequently across the ANU. Whether formal or informal, academic or professional, staff mentoring occurs at various levels and for different reasons all around the University.

It is within this environment that Mentoring at ANU is undergoing an exciting shift in two specific areas: The environment in which individuals share information and the types of relationships individuals are engaging in.

Mentoring is no longer confined only to long-term, one-on-one relationships and can now be used to support engagements that incorporates both career and interpersonal development, emphasising mutual learning needs through formal and informal relationships with supervisors and peers alike.

At ANU, mentoring is founded upon four basic principles that characterise good mentoring practice:

- mutual learning
- encouragement
- trust
- action

These principles form the foundations of the University’s Online Mentoring System, which has been designed to help individuals find mentoring relationships across the organisation. These relationships or ‘engagements’ allow individuals to share critical insights, and focus on addressing individual learning needs.

Staff can simultaneously leverage multiple types of learning connections to create several mentoring networks within the online mentoring system.

These engagements are grouped in the following ways:

Topical mentoring brings together multiple learners to learn about a specific topic in a peer-learning environment.

Career engagements are individually crafted to provide long term, career development advice and guidance through one-on-one interactions.

Situational engagements provide immediate help on a specific issue, problem or opportunity from one or more mentors. For more information on how mentoring can help you discover your potential and connect you to opportunities across the ANU, email the team at: mentoring@anu.edu.au.

Are you engaged at work?

Employee engagement is vital to the success of ANU

Dr Adam Fraser is one of Australia’s leading educators, researchers and thought leaders in the area of human performance.

He reports that there are three broad categories of Australian workers: engaged (17%), not engaged (63%), and disengaged (20%).

This is relevant to all staff as we are all responsible for our own career.

If you are a supervisor/manager, there are many implications for you too involving coaching, mentoring, motivating and career planning.

What is your learning style?

How do you prefer to learn? Can the method you choose affect your results?

There are numerous theories around learning styles, what they are and how our preferences impact on how we best learn, process information and interact with others.

The concept has been explored since the 1970s, and has had varying degrees of impact on teaching, curriculum development and education materials. The idea is that you will learn more easily if the information you receive is tailored to your preferred learning style.

For example:

Visual learners
- use visual materials (eg images, charts, graphs, multi-media etc.)
- look at body language and facial expression
- use colours to highlight important points in text
- take notes or like receiving handouts

Auditory learners
- enjoy taking part in class discussions or debates
- make speeches and presentations
- use a tape recorder during lectures instead of taking notes
- read texts out aloud

Tactile/Kinaesthetic learners
- take frequent study breaks
- move around or use touch to learn new things (eg read while on an exercise bike, mould a piece of clay to learn a new concept)
- work at a standing position

You can do a quick test of your own preferred learning style at the following websites:

Learning Styles or VARK Questionnaire

Whatever your own preferred learning style, increasing your awareness of what works for you is the key to making the most of your learning opportunities. Continuous learning is in itself an important element in crafting a rewarding career for yourself.