

Case study 3

Delivering your Aboriginal strategy: Using strategic change planning in a Victorian health and community support alliance

Review questions

- 1 In what ways can the objectives of your organisation be brought into alignment with the intentions of the United Nations Global Compact (2007) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008)?

The United Nations Global Compact (2007) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2008) have been endorsed by a number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region. There are many sections of these international mechanisms that may be applied to a particular organisation's strategic goals depending on its purpose. For example, is the organisation a public or private service organisation? Organisations that are responsible for the delivery of public services across health, education, housing, justice and so on are given clear guidance in the Declaration. International agreements such as the Global Compact guide the approach to be considered by private-sector businesses.

The Declaration (also known as UNDRIP) addresses both individual and collective rights, cultural rights and identity, rights to education, health, employment, language, and other matters. The text states indigenous peoples have the right to fully enjoy, as a collective or as individuals, all human rights, and fundamental freedoms as recognised in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law. Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity. Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By that right, they can freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. They have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their rights to participate fully, if they choose to, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state.

This question asks the student to examine the relevant clauses of the Global Compact and the UNDRIP and think about how their organisation addresses the recognised needs of this specific population.

- 2 Consider the chapters on strategic planning. Why is it necessary for senior managers to develop their knowledge and skills about the rights and needs of Indigenous Australian populations in order to improve the provision of services to these populations?

Arguably it will be the leaders and managerial administrators of public service organisations who will provide the impetus for change to address the recognised sui generis rights and needs of Indigenous Australian populations, but can they properly imagine what the provision, for example, of appropriate health or education services to these populations might be, educated, as they all have been, in the present system? Equally, what demonstrable skills, knowledge and understanding do senior administrators of public service organisations have that would enable them to wisely manage strategic, quality-focused, organisational change within the systems for which they are responsible? What professional cultural competencies do they have for developing and implementing policies that serve the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? As Moore (1995) suggests, such work needs to facilitate the creation of public value using strategic change management approaches, a set of professional skills for which most are poorly prepared. The same can be said for private-business leaders. Like their public service counterparts, few have the necessary skills or knowledge to provide the type of cascading sponsorship required by strategic planning.

- 3 Consider the chapters on organisational change and think about human resource development. What is your preferred style of intervention when thinking about undertaking organisational change in order to improve the way your organisation responds to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other minority cultural groups in the Asia-Pacific region?

This integrative case study suggests that new ways of thinking about organisational change and strategic planning are necessary in order to harness the available skills and knowledge of professionals effectively in an organisation. While linear strategic planning might work in a fairly stable organisation, the work of Bovaird (2008), among others, shows that it is more effective to use complexity theory, and its applied form, intelligent complex adaptive systems theory, to undertake strategic planning in highly flexible organisations where staff are virtually autonomous in the delivery of their professional services. An approach such as PAR fits well with this approach and gives a framework

for the engagement of managers and leaders of change while allowing for flexibility and unpredictability as the program of work develops.