

## Leadership Development Improves Culture and Performance

Growing and developing managers into leaders to improve business for the future.



## Background

ConnectAbility Australia was established in 1992 by a group of community members and families. Their mission was to meet the needs of people with significant disabilities by providing access to community-based resources, facilities, and services.

Over time, ConnectAbility expanded its services to include other community groups through aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Since 2015, ConnectAbility has experienced remarkable growth, with a staggering 1566% increase in the number of customers receiving their services.

In 2023 Connectability acquired Early Links, another local provider delivering therapy and support to help children and adults living with a disability and/or additional needs to live independently and reach their goals, aiding clients in their day-to-day lives and assisting in various ways depending on individual needs.

The decision was made to reinvest in their managers and supervisors as pivotal influencers in the development of a strong, positive culture and create an environment that would attract and retain the best people.



## Need for Change

During this time of growth whilst their purpose remain unchanged, the business had to become more efficient and streamlined, more profitable and find a way to bring together two organisations with two different cultures, systems, processes and procedures.

- **Blending two culture**  
The organisations needed to move fast to merge, integrate and realise reductions and rationalisations where possible whilst still delivering high quality services to the community in need.
- **Industry overhaul**  
This timing was critical as they entire NDIS industry they operate in faced significant change and upheaval since a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability which brought major reforms.
- **Retaining collective knowledge**  
During the changeover it was imperative to retain great staff, key leaders and ensure the best of their knowledge and know how wasn't lost and instead built on and maintained.

The Executive Team led by the CEO and the Board were under immense pressure to make fast and lasting decisions to maintain viability, visibility and service. This meant making some tough decisions, taking some losses and shaping a new future with an anxious workforce and tight budget constraints.

# Solution

The Manager to Leader Shift Accelerator Program is 5 month program offering a mix of learning modules to suit different learning styles and ensure that the participants are able to learn, apply and reflect on all their learnings, layering their development and skills as they go.

This practical leadership program took committed and solid operational manager to become more strategic thinkers and better people leaders in half the time.

## 1 Embedding their purpose.

People were their point of difference. A leading provider needed to attract and retain talent.

## 2 Reinvesting in their people.

The program focused on building the right leadership behaviours and capabilities.

## 3 Linking culture to performance.

The Program included:

- A leadership capability gap diagnostic to ensure each participant has a clear direction for their right first focus area and shift to take action on.
- Nine specifically designed foundational modules including:  
Time Management, Productivity, Giving Constructive Feedback, Personal Strengths, Taking Ownership, Building Trusting Teams, Developing Others, Self-Worth Mastery and Coach-like Leadership.
- Monthly group coaching training workshops inhouse to continue to support the participants on their shifts and development challenges.



# Outcomes

- **Empower Leaders**  
Equip leaders with the skills and mindset to drive positive change and inspire high-performance teams.
- **Foster Collaboration**  
Cultivate a constructive culture of trust and open communication to enhance teamwork and collective problem-solving.
- **Promote Innovation**  
Encourage creative thinking and adaptability to address challenges and seize new opportunities.
- **Enhance Strategic Thinking**  
Strengthen ability to analyze complex systems and make decisions that align with organisational goals.
- **Drive Organisational Alignment**  
Ensure leaders and teams are aligned with the organisation's vision, values, and strategic objectives.
- **Facilitate Sustainable Change**  
Develop leaders who can implement long-term cultural and operational changes that benefit the entire organisation.

The Outcomes included:

- 100% of leaders felt more confident and comfortable as a result of the training
- 88% felt the training materials were useful
- 96% of participants felt the training sessions were interactive
- 100% of participants felt the program met the defined objectives

Overall the leaders who participated saw an overall 26% improvement in their leadership scores.

