

Initiation of new Recruits

'Initiation' or induction programmes for new recruits exist in every organisation. However, they are much shorter than the Nhunggabarra initiation; rarely more than a couple of weeks in the first year plus a couple of follow-up courses in following years. The research on collaborative climate indicates that induction should be much longer, more than five years, and that follow-ups should be made up to ten years! The Nhunggabarra knew something that Western organisations seems to have lost; that it takes a person a very long time to build up experience and the social networks necessary for effective function. This is crucial for knowledge-workers.

The results of our research suggest that it takes much longer for new employees to become truly effective in their new environment than has been generally understood. New employees enter the organisation enthusiastic about the internal climate; they then grow more cynical. The disillusioned probably leave within the first five years, (in professional services firms staff turnover is highest 2 -4 years after employment).

People who have been employed longer, the 'seniors', generally have better internal networks and more experience in navigating the internal politics than the new recruits. The seniors do not experience the same barriers as the new recruits and thus regard the collaborative climate in a more positive light.



Figure 1. Reality hits...From Enthusiasm to Cynicism.

(OC = Organisational Culture, IS= Immediate Supervisor, EA= Employee's own attitude, WGS=Work Group Support)

The research results also have important implications for the effectiveness of knowledge work. Every year a knowledge worker spends below his/her potential can be seen as a lost opportunity or a 'gap' in terms of effectiveness. To put more effort into helping employees up to 3-5 years of employment to build relationships and getting 'logged into' the human knowledge infrastructure should be very profitable investments. There is a lot of money involved here; probably much more than even the cost of staff turnover, which as a rule of thumb amounts to 2-3 times annual salary for a person that leaves.

Read more: [Collaborative Climate and Performance - emerging research](#). (Sveiby & Simons 2004)