

TRANSCRIPT OF PODCAST

WORK WITH PURPOSE EPISODE #42

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DAVID PEMBROKE: Hello, everyone and welcome to, Work with Purpose a podcast about the Australian Public Service. My name is David Pembroke. Thanks for joining me. I begin today's podcast by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today the Ngunnawal people and pay my respects to their Elders past, present, and future and acknowledge the ongoing contribution they make to the life of our city and this region. Studio 19 is once again back at IPAA ACT headquarters here in Canberra. And this week, we are discussing both the challenges and opportunities of communicating authentically and effectively with indigenous communities across Australia. Joining me to discuss this topic is Ray Griggs AO CSC, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Ray is responsible for leading and coordinating the Commonwealth indigenous advancement strategy that includes policy development, program design and implementation and service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. And he also provides advice on whole of government priorities for Indigenous Australians. Welcome to you Ray.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Also, joining us on the panel today is Letitia Hope, who is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency. Letitia is a proud Bundjalung Torres Strait Islander and South Pacific Islander woman. She is accountable for the operations and delivery portfolio of the agency, ensuring that through ongoing engagement with communities and cross jurisdictional partners the NIAA is a trusted and reliable partner contributing positively to the lives of all Indigenous Australians. Welcome to you Letitia.

LETITIA HOPE: Good morning.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And finally, we have Justine O'Brien SCMP who is the president of the International Association of Business communicators, the chapter here in Canberra. Justine is a consultant, and educator in the communications field. She's worked for the last 25 years across communication and public relations in both the public and the private sectors. And her breadth and depth of experience across the communications field includes delivering high quality, strategic advice and issues management, along with communication products and activities that are required to support an organisation's strategic objectives. Justine, welcome to you.

JUSTINE O'BRIEN Thank you, David. Welcome.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Letitia, if I might start with you, what is the key to effective and authentic communication with indigenous communities?

LETITIA HOPE: Thanks, David. And before we start, I too would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land that we meet on today, and pay my respects to elder's past, present and emerging. Look, I think this is, it starts with respect. It really is that simple. I think sometimes we try and create a bit of a mystical art around this thing, but it's really about respect. So, what does that mean in practice? For me, in my experience, it means understanding who you're talking to, and trying to come from a position where you're not... people get very wrapped around the axles on this issue. But it starts with that respect, understanding who it is you're talking to, what's the context of what you're talking about. If you're going into a community that you haven't met

before, do your research, understand what's happening in that community, use your local experts, and I do want to talk a little bit about that further on today.

LETITIA HOPE: But context matters. So if I'm going into a community, I need to explain who I am and what I'm doing there. We need to understand that as bureaucrats, quite often our local communities have got multiple relationships with bureaucrats who come and go. And there's a History Day to that story. But I think understanding the context of your conversation being authentic, as you said, being honest about what you're there to talk about, doing your research about, are there protocols? If you don't understand what those protocols are, it's pretty safe to ask, how would you like to be addressed today? Is there people I need to talk to in this conversation? Is there particular things that need to happen in this conversation? And I think being able to lean into that discussion with that basic respect is probably good for most relationships that...

DAVID PEMBROKE: Do you have experience of perhaps where you might have got it wrong in the past?

LETITIA HOPE: Absolutely. So when I was a pretty junior in my career in the public service, I was working in New South Wales Government. And at that time, I was what then was known as the, I don't know, some ridiculous acronym, the Senior Project Officer or SPO or something like that. I had to go out to a community, and yes to have a conversation around money negotiations. And to be quite honest, I went with my public service view. And I was there to do a job. And I walked into a community and went into a community meeting where there were lots of elders. And it was really strange. I was there to talk about this really positive thing where we wanted to give money to this community for housing, purchasing et cetera, and I could not get a single person to engage in the conversation.

LETITIA HOPE: And so I went through the first 30 minutes of this meeting, leading up to morning tea with this stillness, just this frosty stillness, really awkward. Anyway, when I broke for morning tea, one of the uncles came up to me or one of the senior men in that meeting came up to me. And he said to me, where are you from? And of course, my response was I'm from the New South Wales Department of Housing. And he said, no, I didn't ask you who you work for, I asked you where you were from. And so then I went, "Ah, right. I'm from Bundjalung mob," and this and I talked about my provenance. He then went and told the rest of the group where I was from, it was a really important lesson. And the rest of the meeting was very successful.

LETITIA HOPE: So, it was really important meeting about understanding local protocol. So he didn't just want to know, I went in as an indigenous officer. He didn't want to just know who I worked for, he wanted to know where I was from, which is totally appropriate in most circumstances. But I hadn't actually made the connection about my job, and what I was there for and the context of why I was there. Was a very powerful learning lesson to me. And so if people are unsure about those kinds of protocols, my best advice is ask. Who do I need to address? Is there particular things I need to do in this conversation and contextualise the conversation?

DAVID PEMBROKE: Is language a challenge? Given that often English isn't always the first language that's spoken?

LETITIA HOPE: Yeah, language really matters. So in some of our more remote communities, English is a third, fourth, fifth language. So there are language barriers that you know you may come across, but language matters again, in most conversations. Because when I say the word strategy, it means something to you, but it might need something to me. So being really clear about what you mean in terms of the words, being really clear not to be bureaucratic, we love to talk in acronyms. We love to talk in our own language of the tribe of bureaucracy, being really clear about what's the message you're trying to send, and breaking your language down into message. And I don't mean being disrespectful in relation to that. But, language matters for most people in conversations. So understanding who you talking to, understanding words, and not trying to be academic and bureaucratic. And it depends on the context of the conversation that you're trying to have.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And I suppose also getting comfortable with the stillness and the quietness often, in indigenous communities that often seem to be listened to and reflecting deeply rather than responding immediately as we might in more urban communities.

LETITIA HOPE: Yeah, look, that's certainly been my experience, pace and tone and cadence of a conversation really matters. I was always taught, two ears, one mouth and use them in that order. Listen first, talk later. And that can often happen across community. I mean, there's no stereotype, but it can often happen where people will be slow to respond and they'll be quite, really listening deeply to what's being said and reflecting thinking that through and then come back with something later. And that's quite common. It can be common. But as I said, those kinds of flows of conversation, which is why building local relationships, building relationships in place, not making stereotype judgments about who you're talking to, being forward leaning in the conversation around, why are you there? What's your outcome? Who do you need to talk to? Making sure that people understand what you're saying using language that means something to them, rather than to you, I think are all really important communication cues, no matter what environment.

DAVID PEMBROKE: So really preparation is key to this. But Ray many of our indigenous people are living in urban communities. Does it make it easier to get the message across? What are some of the considerations that people should take into those conversations with indigenous peoples in urban centres?

RAY GRIGGS: Well, I think it's always important to understand the demography of the audience you're trying to communicate with. 80% of Indigenous Australians live in the Southeast corner, predominantly Western Sydney and Brisbane. From that corridor there. 50% of that 800,000 people are under 25. So, got some cultural history about valuing what elders say. Nearly 50% of the population is under 25, what does that mean for your communications? So, understanding the demography, I think, particularly as a non-Indigenous person is really important. And I think those numbers surprise a lot of people, because a lot of our focus tends to be drawn to remote and very remote communities, which is very important. But when you're trying to reach large

numbers of people, you've got to think about that. So I think the trick here is, how do you... you don't have to go to bespoke channels all the time. There are mainstream channels that can reach very large numbers of Indigenous Australians. But the trick is, how do you use those channels, and still engage authentically with them?

RAY GRIGGS: And I think one of the biggest things to remember, and I try not to have a deficit discussion here. But there is a deep distrust of governments, all levels, in indigenous Australia. So if you're about to go out, and anywhere in the public sector, and try and communicate either a new policy or even just to consult, you need to understand that there is that distrust. And Letitia talked about the long history of bureaucrats visiting. You're in the conga line of bureaucrats who've come and gone before these communities for a long time. So you need to really be very conscious of that. You need to approach any engagement with a great deal of humility, particularly as a non-Indigenous bureaucrat. If you don't, things are not going to go well. You do need to listen, you do need to be comfortable with silence. All those things that Letitia has talked about.

RAY GRIGGS: And no matter how experienced you might think you are as a public servant in this area, particularly as a non-Indigenous one, you're only scratching the surface of what you think you know. And again, I think that's really good framing for thinking about an engagement.

DAVID PEMBROKE: You talk there about going out and consulting and that, you're not the first bureaucrat who's engaged. And there are often others that are going to be out there speaking as well, coming back to the same communities. What are those risks of over consulting in community?

RAY GRIGGS: Well, there's a couple of risks, one is just the use of the word consulting. Because consulting can mean a lot of things to a lot of people. That's the first point is, is it a genuine discussion. Are you coming at the very start of your policy development cycle, for example, and engaging and listening, and you're going to take some of this input back and use it? Or have you already made your mind up and you're just going out to tick a box? People can pick that pretty quickly and pretty easily. In fact, one of the things that the government's been trying to do over the last couple of years is shift away from consultation, per se, to genuine co design and partnership.

RAY GRIGGS: Now, co-design's an interesting term. Again, it means a lot of things to a lot of different people. And again, it's also been abused a fair bit over the years, where there's a charade of co-design, people have actually already made their mind up. So that's what we've got to get out of, and really focus on that genuine partnership, that genuine engagement. That takes time. It's hard. Yeah, we've seen this in the Closing The Gap work we've done over the last two and a bit years. It's hard, it's prolonged, but the rewards, if you do it, well, are fantastic, for all concerned.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Justine, really, it all comes down to preparation really, and humility by the sounds of things, to really get this bit right. And that's best practice communications, isn't it? Being ready and really understanding the audience?

JUSTINE O'BRIEN Yeah, understanding your audience is key to any communication, but particularly with an audience that is seen to be vulnerable. And for who there is a very long history of mistrust, rightly so. And that continues through today. So understanding how to connect with the indigenous audiences and I use the plural there because, as Ray pointed out, it's not just one, for me, it's not one bucket. It's very diverse. You've got age, gender, lifestyle, location, going on. Understanding what's going on there. Also, understanding a particular community's reflection on government and communication. So there is research out there that shows that there is a very high percentage of indigenous communities and individuals who are just willing to receive information. And that's that, and then there's this smaller number, but still significant, who are actually active in finding out information on government. But there's also a small segment of indigenous peoples who are very resistant, they don't want to know. And that tends to be older generations who have a long history of mistrust, with the government for things that have gone on in the past, so they're a particularly difficult audience to get to.

JUSTINE O'BRIEN It's understanding that there are intermediaries that you can then go through for information that they really don't need to know critical information, for example, health information. So yes, knowing your audience and understanding them is absolutely key.

DAVID PEMBROKE: As the leader of the IABC here in Canberra, and you have many members who work in communication in government. Is enough being done to prepare those communications professionals to be effective in indigenous communication?

JUSTINE O'BRIEN There's a bit of yes and a bit of no in that. I think we've got a long way to go. I think as Letitia and Ray have spoken about it, that the NIAA is absolutely doing a better job of it. I think we can do better. I think there's a better understanding that communicators need to have. But it's not just about the communication professional, it is the organisation itself. Now Ray touched on this, almost stole my thunder there, Ray. A lot of communicators are used to the one way communication or two way communication. There's the third way, which is two-way, iterative communication, or transformational, which is where you're going out to a community, finding out what's going on and rather than using the word co design is actually getting input on the design of a policy or program that's actually best fit for that community, for as best as you can.

JUSTINE O'BRIEN That's the level of communication that we really need to get to in that. Communicators go out, they talk, they listen, they come back to the organisation and then they brief up to the decision makers to say, this isn't going to work because of this, this will work however, and then leave it to them to understand how a policy or program can work better.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Letitia, it would seem that these skills and this approach, really, it's not just about the communication professionals who might be sitting in a particular engagement. It would seem to me that these really need to become common across the public service that people really do need to build their skills of engagement.

LETITIA HOPE: Absolutely, I think it's part of the craft of being a public servant. I just wanted to echo in something that Ray and Justine's talked about. Partnership takes

time. And quite often in government, we're very, too rushed. We've got deadlines, we've got all these other pressures that we're trying to deliver on, which is our role for government. And they can clash, the time of trust and partnership. So, the other thing is, is about building these relationships, regardless of what's actually happening, right. These are long term relationships, they're not just transactions. So being in place, understanding community, working with community, understanding their values, their goals, and getting to understand what's important to them, as well as trying to deliver the business of government is part of the craft of what we need to do. And I just wanted to pick up on something else.

LETITIA HOPE: I think being really clear about your expectations with your conversation with community is really important. So it's the don't over promise, don't set expectations you can't meet, no matter how awkward the conversation is. You need to understand your authorising environment and the boundaries that you're operating in and where your delegations are and what you can and can't commit to. Because one of the easiest ways to lose trust in the community, not just for [inaudible 00:19:31] people for any relationship, is to promise something and then not be able to deliver it. So if you say you're going to do something, follow up and do it. Actually follow up and do it. Even if the answer's no, send the email and say, look, I'm really sorry, that can't happen, but what else can we do to work on? Or don't promise things that are well outside your delegation and remit because that will erode the trust in your relationship quicker than anything else.

LETITIA HOPE: And as Ray pointed out, we're talking about communities that have had a whole range of trust issues for whole range of good reasons. And so that trust building is really important. I think expectation management on both sides is important to maintain and build that.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Are you finding that with this awareness and understanding, and perhaps even through the COVID period where things were changed, things were different, decisions were made differently. Have you found improvements? Or are you seeing improvements in the way that we are engaging effectively with indigenous communities?

LETITIA HOPE: So, I think we've talked about this before in one of these podcasts around how important the relationships that are on the ground staff, particularly in the NIAA, but not only have built with community. 70 officers across the country, visiting 400 communities or so every year. Well, maybe not so much in the COVID environment, but relationships with over 400 communities, which allowed us to be able to understand, one, critically, what is actually happening on the ground. What is really happening on the ground for people. Two, what is community's desire and aspirations around managing these issues, which then allowed government to enable those things.

LETITIA HOPE: So, and we're currently in that season again. With what's happened over the weekend, we are currently in a season where we've got four states in lockdown, and we're talking about community and community safety and those kinds of things. So, you can't withdraw from a bucket you haven't

invested in. And it's why can I overstate building relationships in [inaudible 00:21:28] rather than just transactional interactions. Understanding the aspirations of community is the craft of government. Now, that doesn't mean we can always deliver community's expectations. But we can always be clear about what we can do to lean into help to create that public value in line with what government is trying to deliver.

DAVID PEMBROKE: You certainly seem to through that period, though, really worked well with the indigenous broadcasting sector to get the message out there. Can you perhaps give us a bit of an outline of what that sector looks like, and how people can use that to get messages through to indigenous community.

LETITIA HOPE: Yeah, absolutely. You're right, we worked really closely with the indigenous broadcasting sector, who are always happy to receive government funds in terms of advertising dollars. But we also worked really closely with the other indigenous sector, like remote stores, who had posters and things up, in language about what is and what isn't happening, the medical services, the schools leaned in, through a whole range of programs we run through their IAS. A whole range of service providers leaning to getting the messaging out about what's really happening for people. Out in Jinta Porta or Santa Teresa, the CDP program painted car bonnets and put them around the community with public health safety mechanisms or messages, sorry. And they use the school kids to do that. It was just fantastic about good public health messaging from community, in community language, to try and get the message across about how to keep communities safe. Totally driven by them enabled by government.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Ray, have you seen examples in the last period of time since you've been in charge at the NIAA where you have really been able to deliver a genuine community led design project?

RAY GRIGGS: I suspect any answer I give would be contested on that front. The example I would use, and it would still be a contested example would be the work we've been doing around the co design of the Indigenous Voice. Now that work has been undertaken by 52 Australians, the vast majority of whom are indigenous, probably about 75% are indigenous. They were selected, they weren't chosen by the community, they were selected by government. But what the government was very careful to do was to make sure that it was a real cross section. Because there is no point in just getting a bunch of people who already agree with. Where they might think the government wants to hit on something. And the 52 people that were selected, really do cover the spectrum right across and have a range of views on Indigenous Voice which I think were very hard for people to say that there was a common thread in that group which was terrific. And it made the first phase of the work, the initial design work, very, very challenging, but very rewarding. Again, because of that richness is a discussion.

DAVID PEMBROKE: What were some of those challenges that came about?

RAY GRIGGS: The one that always leads to mind in the discussion around Indigenous Voices they always state it from the heart. So you had a number of the 52, who are very committed to the Uluru statement that was not within the terms of

reference of the co design group to talk about enshrinement of the voice, for example. But what these people did is they brought their views and they brought their perspectives to the discussion and to the work. And I think that enriched the interim report that was handed to the government in October of last year. After that, the cabinet considered that. And very conscious that it's not a government process, it's the process of these 52 people... That 52 people in the co design group then took that out to about four months of public consultation, which was one of the more extensive public consultations that occurred about 115 different face to face consultations across 67 communities around the country, about 3,000 submissions, about 1,200 surveys, another 14, 1,500 people included in targeted stakeholder meetings and webinars. So a very extensive engagement process.

RAY GRIGGS: In terms of the communications the big thing here was, don't try and over control the product. Let indigenous broadcasting sector, for example, take the basic information and present it in a way that they know will resonate with community or they know will impact with the community. So don't try and over control the product. And the important thing there is to make sure that the base information you give for the product to be developed from is clear, is simple, is cognizant of the diversity of the audience that you're trying to communicate with. And I think we did that particularly well. And one of the things that was, I think done very well was the use of infographics. And that was very powerful, very useful in community and certainly some of the face to face consultations where people would be sitting there in the meeting, looking at the infographics, and then talking to that in their questions of discussion. So I think don't have the control, but make sure that your message, as Letitia said, is free of jargon, clear.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Visual.

RAY GRIGGS: Visual where it needs to be to compliment the language. Yeah.

DAVID PEMBROKE: How do you mature that capability around two key issues there, around time and giving these consultations the time that they obviously need and deserve? And that issue around control of not wanting to over control, but probably a large part of your instinct are wanting to control. How again, do we build that capability in the public sector to be more effective?

RAY GRIGGS: Well, I think the key there is building strategic patience. That's really what we're talking about. And it's the sort of Nevada I know. If we're serious and I know from the PM down that the cabinet's very serious about partnership being the way that we operate with indigenous Australia going forward. If we're serious, then we need to accept that we have to have the strategic patience to allow these consultations, these partnerships and the co design processes to occur. And to accept that they're going to take longer than we would like sometimes. And that is just going to be the price of doing business.

DAVID PEMBROKE: But then, yes, it is the price of doing business as such. But again, it's to that point of maturing that. How do we build that conversation inside the public sector that knows and understands that this is going to be the way that we're going to do it? How do we turn it from an aspiration to a...

RAY GRIGGS: I think it is already being, that's already happening. I think we've seen and it's not just in the Commonwealth public service. The whole point of the Closing The Gap partnership agreement is much more active engagement with states and territories as well. And I think the jurisdictional public services have really embraced this approach as well. For me, it all comes down from leadership messaging, that it is okay. That this may take longer. It is okay to build reasonable timeframes into your planning that the partnership approach will take more time. And we've seen evidence of that even in securing the National Partnership Agreement itself. That took probably six months longer than anyone thought it was going to take. And the government was accepting and comfortable that that occurred because what was important is that we land the agreement in a way that reflected a partnership approach. And so I think, top down messaging is hugely important. I don't think it's particularly complex thing to mature. But people need to know they have the authorising environment to do it.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Justine, you're advising the leadership, how do you go about it? How do you go about explaining to people the importance of this strategic patience that Ray talks about?

JUSTINE O'BRIEN I think it comes down to attitudes that people have where you want an outcome, people tend to go, oh, I know the solution before they actually get to the outcome and wanting people to pull back from that. It is an attitudinal behavioural thing that one needs to be able to pull back and say, "No, I'm going to wait." I'm going to wait it out, I'm going to listen, because at the end, we want the best outcome. And you're not going to get that best outcome if you provide a solution upfront without actually doing that proper consultation, listening, understanding, and working with. So it's not just listening and understanding is working with these communities and working with these people, for the best outcome. My advice is, don't focus on the immediate solution, focus on the outcome. And if you want it to work, you need to give it that time and patience particularly, I think, with the indigenous audiences, because it hasn't happened a lot in the past.

JUSTINE O'BRIEN And it's going to take a long time. I believe Leticia can correct me if I'm wrong. It may take a long time for communities to fully trust government across all of government.

DAVID PEMBROKE: Letitia it's an interesting point Justine makes there. Because it really goes to the capacity and the capability of the public service to be able to engage authentically and effectively, often in an environment that perhaps they're not used to. That there is a sense of, I'm not comfortable with this, because I don't do it every day. How do they build confidence to overcome that resistance, to be more effective.

LETITIA HOPE: I think it's a couple of things. So along with the strategic mechanisms that Ray was talking about, the Austrian Public Service Commission has actually developing the Academy. And that's all about the art and the craft. But before we get into those technical trainings, the art and the craft of being in public service as we talk about. The craft, it's really simple things, do your research, be prepared, that is respectful, understand why you're going in there, and what's happening in that community. Use your on the ground intelligence, be

clear about your boundaries and your authorising environment as a person. Test your messages with people. Sometimes what I try to say, is not what I meant to say, because I think I've said it, but I haven't really converted that in a great way.

LETITIA HOPE: Use organisations like Justine to help build those skills and capabilities, lean into those experts in communication and build your skills. And, as Ray said there's a bunch of different tools, infographics, not death by PowerPoint please people, but infographics matter. People learn and take in information in different ways. So, conversation, as well as graphics, as well as things in writing, they're all pretty standard ways people take in information. So be clear and use a multiple of techniques in relation to that. Keep the language simple. And the art side of it, I think is you have to be forward leaning to build trust, you got to lean into it.

LETITIA HOPE: Have a sense of humility, it's actually okay, if you get it wrong. Be brave enough to ask the question. In terms of when you're going into a conversation, be brave enough to say, how would you like me to address you? Is there anyone else I need to be talking with? Please let me know if I've said something that offends you because it's not my intention, right, that helps build trust as well. And be honest.

LETITIA HOPE: I think the other thing is, observation without judgement is really powerful. And what I mean by that is, if I came to your house, David, and I saw a bucket of shoes at the front of your door, and I knocked on the door, I may or may not know whether I can or cannot wear shoes in your house, but I could always say, David, I've observed a bucket of shoes, would you like me to take my shoes off? It's pretty simple thing. It's an analogy, but it's a simple thing to lean into, to have the conversation. And even having, asking the questions I think is a really important way to build trust, and it's a very important way to build respect, because it means I'm trying to understand where you're coming from. And I'm trying to understand how to build trust in this relationship. So I think those are some of the things that as public servants we need to make sure we balance. There's a skill side to it and then there's the art side to it.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And right from your point of view, what would you like to... What message would you like to leave people with, to inspire them to be more effective, to be better, to be more patient, to deliver on that strategic patience you mentioned?

RAY GRIGGS: Well, look, I think it all comes down to building your own cross-cultural knowledge. Now there's many, many ways to do that. We have a great program in NIAA which I'll plug which is available for the rest of the public service called Footprints, which is like a CPD program. Self-paced and self-directed, so people can actually... they can build their cross-cultural awareness. Yet simple things like if you're planning an engagement, allow the first half hour of 40 minutes to be a bit of a general yarn in community. Don't go straight into agenda item, one is... Because, as I mentioned, people have a

bit of a distrust of government. They won't care whether you're from the NIAA, DSS, a state department or local government, you will just be government when you're there. And so there's going to be a period in the meeting where people want to get things off their chest, and it might have nothing to do with what you're there to talk about.

RAY GRIGGS: Sit there, listen, because it actually gives you a bit of a window into what that community's thinking. It's little things like that. I think those little things really do matter. And if you think about how you plan your engagement, you will have a much more effective engagement than just stomping on and doing what you've always done.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And I would suggest be an opportunity for people to influence their own agencies and their own departments, working back into the agency. I imagine that you could encourage more people to take on the training, more people to be involved, more people to be engaged.

RAY GRIGGS: Well, yeah, I think you're absolutely right. There are programs like Jawun, for example, where we've had six or 700, secondees days from the APS go out into indigenous communities, working with indigenous organisations for weeks, sometimes months. They bring back a different perspective. There's a big alumni throughout the APS of people who've had that experience. There are people who've worked in this agency or its predecessors, who are now in different departments around the place, tap into their experience. They will share that. And that's obviously a way forward too.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And Justine, a final piece of advice from the communications professional on the panel. What would it be?

JUSTINE O'BRIEN Planning. Planning. And Ray mentioned that, and Letitia has mentioned it. Why are you communicating? And exactly to who within that community are you wanting to communicate with? And what then are the other best methods that you can use? And don't ever make assumptions about knowing something. I always find that with research, you always learn something new. So even though it does cost money to do good research, in some cases, it's actually well worth it. Because, A, you learn something new and, B, you can actually learn the best methods for communicating a certain message to a community. So, yes, planning and also being able to adjust as required. So, you have your plan, as I said before, you know what your outcomes are, but you can adjust the way in which you get to those outcomes.

DAVID PEMBROKE: All right, well, Justine O'Brien, Ray Griggs and Letitia Hope thank you all, for joining us on, Work with Purpose today, for this very important conversation. I think it's something that we should keep talking about, and keep measuring and keep building that capability across the APS. Because it is very important that we do so. So thank you, to you three to coming in today.

DAVID PEMBROKE: And to you the audience, thanks also for giving us some of your valuable time and attention today for this important topic. We do appreciate your support and we are continuing to see a growth in numbers for the podcast. So that's great. So again, if you would like to share, rate or review our program on your favourite podcast app, that's always appreciated. Thanks once again to our

great partners here at IPAA, ICT and to the Australian Public Service Commission who've been so supportive in making these conversations happen. So thank you. Once again, we'll be back at the same time in two weeks for our next program. But for the moment, it's bye for now.

VOICEOVER:

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