

# COLLABORATION POWERS UP AT ESSENTIAL ENERGY

Essential Energy operates Australia's largest electricity distribution network by area, covering 95% of New South Wales. In the second half of 2010 Essential Energy's Senior Management team commissioned two online collaboration events with Vulture Street Innovation.



The first Senior Management Challenge was held in September 2010. The strategic objective of the Challenge was to build and improve workplace culture, by soliciting specific ideas for improvements to communications, tools and resources. The Challenge topic and questions were developed on the basis of two consulting reports provided by external human resources and ethics advisory firms on potential ways to strengthen Essential Energy's workplace culture. Fifty eight of the Essential Energy

Senior Management team, including Executives, were invited to participate in the Challenge. Participants were asked to respond to seven challenge questions under the general theme of 'Help discover new ideas for bringing real change to Essential Energy'.

Overall, the initial Challenge was highly successful, with very strong participation rates amongst the geographically dispersed group. The event produced a particularly high vote-to-idea ratio, indicating that participants valued the opportunity to express opinions on ideas posted by others, as well as providing their own suggestions for change. Notably for a busy senior management team, contribution levels were robust over the entire duration of the two-week event. The process helped uncover internal management's own perspectives on how to achieve real cultural and operational change, in a neutral web-based environment that encourages constructive and forward-looking contributions.

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*Ben Hamilton, Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications*

After the successful completion of the first Senior Management Challenge the organisation wanted to build on the positive momentum already achieved by holding a second collaboration event. Held in December 2010, the second Senior Management Challenge built on the results of the first Challenge by targeting a number of specific strategic issues. The follow-up collaboration allowed the Senior Management team to provide direct input into the business blueprint that has laid the foundation for the future of the company following the divestment of the company's retail business.

"The Vulture Street Challenge process allowed us to deploy a simple and effective solution to a complex, difficult set of problems that clearly required constructive, collaborative input from our Senior Management team" says Ben Hamilton, Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications at Essential Energy. "With the help of these two events, we engaged our senior managers to contribute to a targeted, forward-looking plan, owned by the entire management team, for achieving sustainable improvements into the future."

For further information on Vulture Street's jam services, please contact:

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