



two ways :: one outcome

Media Release

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World Opens up for Warlpiri Small Business Entrepreneurs

Aspiring Warlpiri business people and entrepreneurs are one step closer to realising their dream after recently attending a ground breaking small business workshop in Yuendumu.

The “Doing Small Business in the Bush” workshop was delivered almost entirely in Warlpiri using learning aids translated for a Warlpiri audience.

The innovative approach to developing awareness about doing business in Australia was conceived by officers of the Central Desert Regional Council who, in partnership with Alice Springs consultants Matrix on Board, collaborated with local Warlpiri residents from Yuendumu to design and develop the workshop content.

Central Desert Regional Council President Adrian Dixon says he’s excited about this project. “Too often government people come out to community speaking about business enterprise and economic development but not many of us can have those conversations. The terminology they use is complex and confusing; it cuts us out of the conversation. Not enough of us truly understand how business is done in Australia. This is small but important step in helping people who speak English as a second or third language to understand business concepts in their first language”. Mr Dixon said.

Council CEO Diane Hood says the Doing Small Business in the Bush Workshop is one way that the Council is helping Aboriginal people to get involved in economic and enterprise development. “To participate in the economy, to take a smart business idea and turn it into reality, you need to understand the business world. Before you develop a business plan, you need a basic understanding of how businesses work. This is a very creative and innovative approach because it puts those business constructs into a local community context. The goal is to give people the confidence to engage in those economic development discussions when politicians, bureaucrats and potential business suitors come knocking.” Ms Hood said.

Warlpiri facilitator, artist, designer and aspiring businessman Otto Simms, was energised by the outcome. “You have gotten us into second gear and now we want to keep going!”, Mr Simms exclaimed at the end of the workshop.

The workshop has brought complex Australian business concepts to Warlpiri people in their first language. It has put local people at the centre of the training delivery and the learning. At the same time it has strengthened connections between the NT Department of Business, the Central Land Council, Central Desert Regional Council and the community members who are interested in running small businesses.

Ms Hood said that this is just the beginning. “This workshop could not have been delivered without the funding and support of the NT Department of Chief Minister. It’s a fantastic initiative that demonstrates what can be achieved by working together. But we don’t want to stop at a one off. Where there’s the will, this can be repeated in other Warlpiri communities and translated into other languages for other communities. It can open the world up to endless possibilities’. Ms Hood said

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