

Alex Ogg, Western Australian Fishing Industry Council; Susan Benedyka, Rural and Regional Community Development; Suzi Moore, CANEGROWERS; Michael Wilks, Indigenous Business Australia; Darryl D'Souza, Australian Pork Limited, course leader Zoë Routh, and Carl Jensen, Westpac on the course.



Course blazes trails in the amazing race of leadership in agriculture

*For as long as I can remember, I've wanted to be part of helping drive the Australian agricultural sector – to be one of the many people across Australia helping it to become all it can be. **By Suzi Moore, Communications Manager, CANEGROWERS***

Earlier this year, thanks to an excellent scholarship opportunity through Sugar Research Australia, I had a chance to attend a game-changing course which is custom built to help give people who want to be part of that, but don't know quite how to get there, a real shove in the right direction.

The program is called TRAILblazers and was put together by the well-respected Australian Rural Leadership Program.

It was a little like being part of the amazing race (TV series), but instead of competing against the other people on the course, you have to work really closely together to maximise the key strengths and abilities of everyone in the group to try and achieve the most successful outcome for the given scenario.

The format quickly exposed a broad range of deep-seated and longstanding leadership issues in each and every one of the participants; but even more impressively, provided a platform for

each of us to really take on what we were learning. What made this course completely different was that it took all the usual theoretical based learning material and threw them into scenarios.

It was interesting to see how simple scenarios pushed each of us immediately to our fallback positions, where flaws in leadership rose to the surface quickly and the cracks in each of our leadership styles became so evident that we could not cover it over.

This type of format really seemed to penetrate even the most ingrained behaviors and help us to genuinely learn the hard lessons.

You might be the most results-driven person in the business, but without the means to create new and innovative solutions to tackle long-standing challenges, getting results can be a slog. This program can really help you cut to the core of the issues and walk away with a fresh perspective and the tools to manage issues (with a clear focus on results) well after you leave the course.

My passion project is about ensuring the Australian agricultural industry is renowned as a strong, respected and competitive industry – both here and abroad.

I care deeply about creating a strong respected brand Australia; deeply about creating a smart computer resource that farmers can use to really get the best out of their land, their resources and the world market; and care deeply about getting the representative structure of agriculture right so we can achieve all that. The course has helped me to start to plan how to become part of that.

If you want to be part of driving the course of Australian agriculture, but feel like you need more practical skills in leadership, this course is for you. I would absolutely encourage anyone serious about developing their leadership skills to consider this course.

I would also like to sincerely thank SRA for the sponsorship and commend them on offering the scholarship again this year.