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Managing an ageing workforce: The Country Energy experience



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Who we are

- Leading Australian energy services corporation owned by the NSW Government
- 840,000 customers
- Revenue of around \$1.6 billion, placing Country Energy in Australia's top 150 companies
- Australia's largest energy supply network across 95 per cent of NSW
- Offer retail electricity in five states and territories
- Product range includes bottled gas, internet services and energy efficiency advice
- Also provide reticulated natural gas to 24,200 customers and water and sewerage services to 10,000 customers in far west NSW



A profitable energy retailer in five Australian states and territories.

Workforce snapshot

- 4,121 employees
- Ages range from 16 to 75 years
- Average age is 42 years
- 42% of employees are 45 years or older
- 317 employees are currently eligible for retirement



58% of Technical Officers are aged 45 years or older

Our key workforce planning issues

- Ageing workforce
- Rapidly expanding network
- Future skills
- Attracting and retaining key skills
- Attracting employees to remote locations



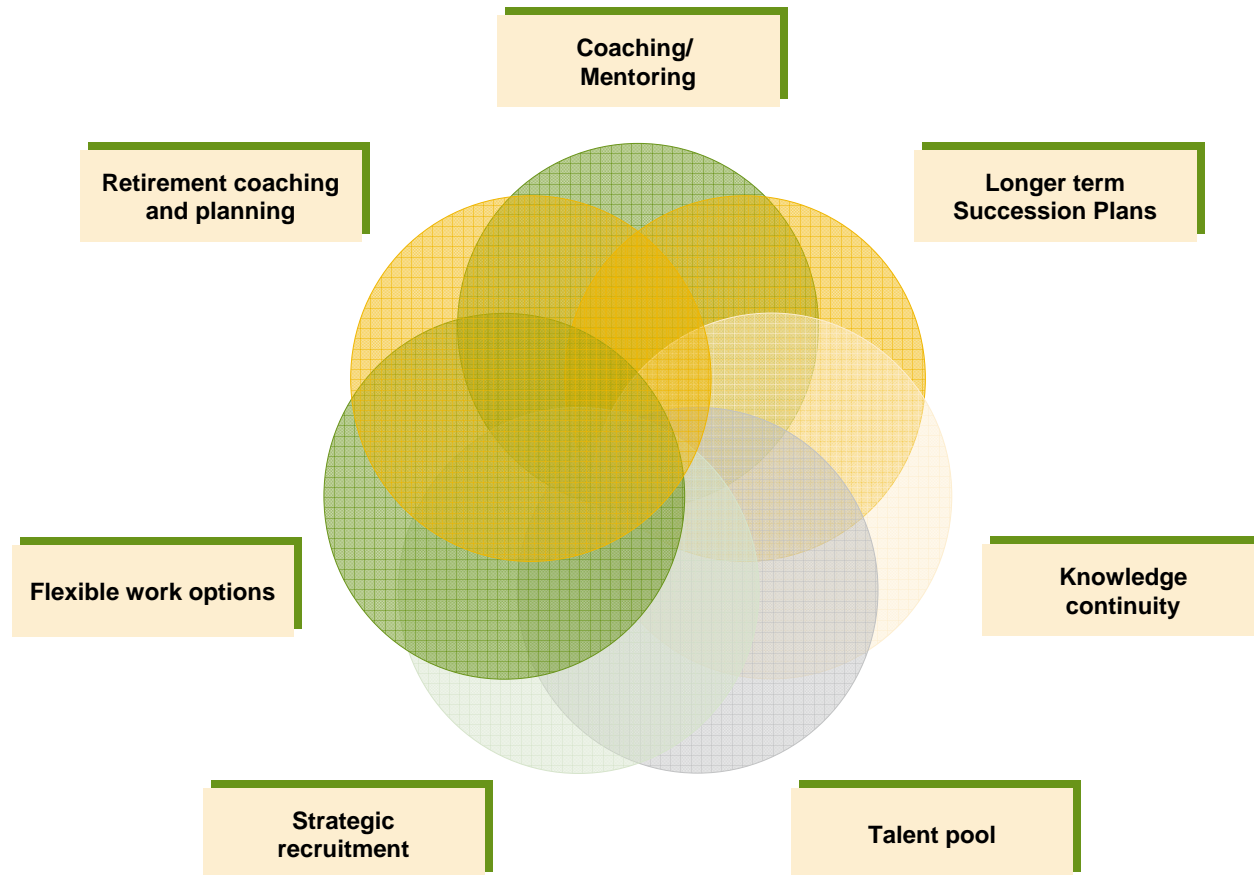
Our first steps

- Conducted demographic analyses
- Surveyed all business units
- Conducted focus groups
- Prepared retirement forecasts
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Result

- An age profile much higher than we thought (42yrs) - but consistent with our industry
- A projected ten fold increase in retirements
- Our most critical role - Technical Officer - has 58% aged over 45 years of whom 16% are eligible for retirement within three years
- As a group they comprise nearly 20% of all projected retirements
- Need for intervention strategies to 'buy' time such as phased retirement and programs for passing on critical skills and knowledge to less experienced employees prior to our experienced people leaving

An integrated response

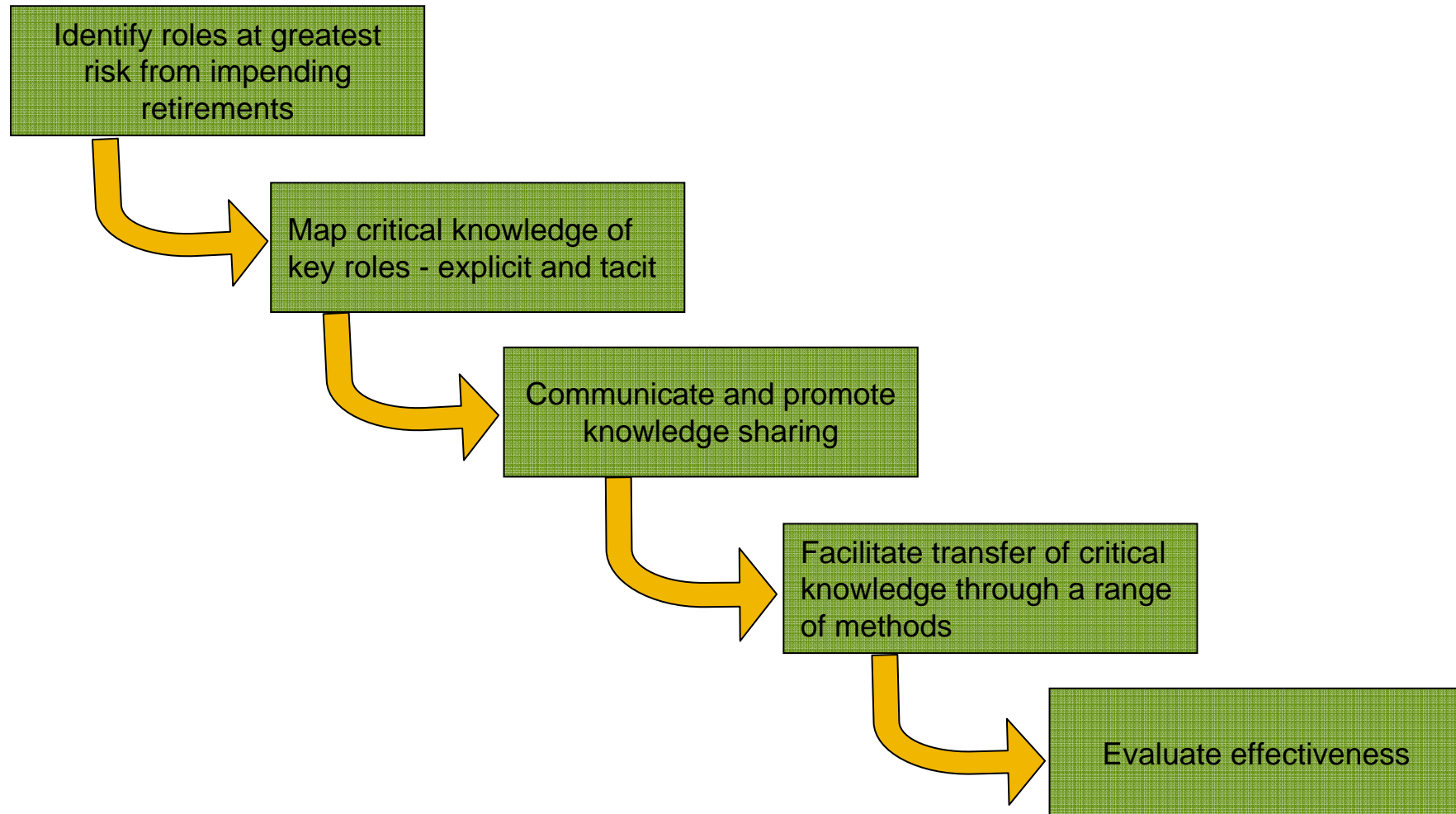


Powerful Knowledge

AIM:

To develop a knowledge transfer initiative which captures and transfers the wealth of corporate knowledge and technical expertise held by our mature workers in critical roles prior to their retirement and to assist in their retention.

In a nutshell...



Who & what?

- **People**
- Technical subject matter experts in critical roles with extensive experience in specialised roles
- **Knowledge**
- Tacit knowledge – experience, stories, impressions and creative solutions – lessons learned on the job



... transferring 240 years of combined knowledge and wisdom

Powerful Knowledge – what we learnt

- Involving younger employees in the workshops created greater understanding and respect of generational strengths
- Integrate with corporate knowledge management systems to improve accessibility
- Link to existing relevant documentation
- Update and review content on a regular basis and evaluate its use
- Expand content
- Must not stand alone

Other steps in the integrated strategy

- Succession planning incorporated into our Dashboard
- Ongoing recruitment of apprentices
- Expansion of our Trainee Technical Officers' program
- Expansion of our Senior Development Program
- Establishment of the Country Energy Talent Pool
- Review of current Graduate Engineers Program
- Country Energy Award amended with regard to Long Service Leave

Other steps in the integrated strategy con't

- Powerful Knowledge data now to be accessible via Lotus Notes
- “Technochat” - interactive technical chat room - to be part of the knowledge database
- Expert lunches with younger employees on topics of interest
- Mentoring and coaching program developed using potential retiree workforce
- Creation of the Country Energy alumni
- Ongoing discussions with the industry superannuation provider

Our success comes from our people



**Thank you for listening.
Any questions?**