

Enhancing ethical awareness in the APS



Australian Government
Australian Public Service
Commission

VODCAST 2: ANOTHER LIFE

Will Brooking APS 6 Policy Analyst

I do really like being a public servant. I feel what we can do really does make a difference. It's just one of those things, you know. We play a really important part in Australian society, but just recently, things have become a bit difficult. We've got a new Secretary, an internal promotion and just the new direction she's taking things in, I just don't agree with it – it seems crazy to me.

Tracey Day EL2 Team Leader, Policy Analysis

New Secretaries can be challenging, for everyone. We all have to get used to doing a lot of different things. We have to take a different approach to our work and sometimes when you are really passionate about work it's hard to let it go.

Will

You know its like taking all the good work we've done over the last three or four years and just tossing it all out the window. I am really struggling with it. The department is really, really good and its got a great opportunity to help a lot of Australians but with this new direction I just don't know how we can sort of show our place in public and I am a bit worried about, you know, senate estimates, and what other people are thinking about us right now.

Tracey

One of my staff members, Will, has a really strong ownership of what he is doing and he is pretty upset about what's happening. So I had a meeting with him to talk about some new changes that the new department head was implementing and needless to say he didn't hold back on his criticism about the new Secretary or the way the department was going.

Will

My team leader, Tracey, she came and tried to explain my next piece of work to me the other day and I don't understand it. It's just nonsense and I told her exactly what I thought, you know, where I thought we were going wrong, but, who knows.

Tracey

I wasn't aware of his website or his blog. I mean, how could I be? But I was today when the Secretary called me into her office. The *City Times* had been in contact with the department and they had just published some pretty damning information about the department from Will's blog.

Will

I've always been interested in the blogging, the social networking. You know, I've had my own website for five or six years now—the “e” stuff. I use it to keep in touch with mainly with music, the alternative scene, not the stuff you hear on commercial radio. Its got a little about me, who I am and a few pictures, what I do, my interests – a little bit about Governance, the social picture of the world, all that sort of stuff.

Tracey

It went on to suggest that some of our staff are being asked to do some pretty crazy work and that we are wasting tax payer's money. The Secretary was ropable, as you can imagine. She has showed me the site, and one or two of the postings are pretty terrible.

Will

It's all stuff I do outside of work, it's of no concern to work or anybody here. It's what I do when I go home at night, occasionally before I come in—it gives me something to do on the weekend, when I am waiting for the gigs to start. I do talk about you know a whole lot of stuff on there, you know, music, politics, sex, religion—it's all my stuff though.

Tracey

I've got to look into it and talk to Will. And I've got to get back to the Secretary within the hour. More media are contacting her and they want interviews

How was I to know?