



# Using MANAGECAT® and MYCAT® to launch the training journey

## An interview with Kaye Morris

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*Based on an interview conducted on 7 Sept 2015 by Dr John Mitchell, Lead Consultant, ACER JMA Analytics. The interview was fully transcribed then edited by John and validated as accurate by Kaye.*

### Purpose and audience

The purposes of documenting this interview are to:

- stimulate ideas about how to use capability analysis tools to improve staff capability and organisational performance
- encourage the development of a national community of practice among users of capability analysis tools (CATs) who are focused on improving their organisations.

The intended audience for this document are managers of workforce development, capability development, learning and development or similar.

### Background

OEH implemented two CATs in 2015 as set out in the Table.

Table 1. Implementation timetable

Capability analysis tool (CAT)	Focus	Target group	Date implemented
1. MYCAT®/ADMINCAT® (see note)	Collecting data to assist development of the workforce	Non-managers	March 2015
2. MANAGECAT®	Collecting data to assist management development	Managers	April 2014

Note: ADMINCAT® was renamed and customised as MYCAT® for this OEH project

### THE INTERVIEW

(John M) Why did OEH decide to implement MANAGECAT® and MYCAT® in 2015?

As a newly appointed Manager, to a newly created Workforce Capability Development (WCD) unit, I was very keen to undertake an initial training needs analysis to establish a point of reference from which we could develop a long term training plan across the OEH cluster. Prior to my appointment the WCD unit had previously used a simple pulse survey to establish training needs in very small pockets within the organisation.

However it was now apparent that a larger piece of planning needed to be undertaken to develop a training plan for approx. 5,000 staff within the OEH cluster agency.

Although the pulse survey was not problematic it lacked the rigour, sophistication and underlying validation that the CATs (capability analysis tools) possessed. In addition, the CATs were mapped to the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework. MANAGECAT® fully mapped.

I had previously utilised the CAT tools within TAFE NSW where VETCAT® was undertaken. Thinking back to my previous work and interaction with ACER and JMA Analytics I had remembered the rigour with which the tools were developed and the systematic nature of the reporting profiles developed by ACER.

Why did the MANAGECAT® and MYCAT® surveys receive such a strong response from staff?

It was a very strong response in regard to MANAGECAT®: targeting approx. 750 managers across the OEH cluster. Fifty percent (50%) of managers responded. MYCAT® was focused on non-managerial staff, and approx. 3,000 people were targeted. The comparative response was not as huge, with approx. 760 staff responding.

The strong response can be attributed to the fact that OEH staff generally are very motivated. They want to make a difference, there is a strong underpinning cultural drive that defines the work, working for a cause bigger than themselves.

In addition, the WCD team marketed the CATs extremely well. Focus groups were formed from across all clusters within OEH to help drive the success of the surveys. Weekly meetings were undertaken in the lead-up to the survey release. During the meetings any issues or points of clarification were discussed, communication enhanced and strong links were made to the cluster partners. By the time the survey was ready for release we had a very strong network of managers and staff who had been on the journey from the beginning. WCD had a lot of internal support from staff and senior managers.

In deciding to use MANAGECAT®, what core questions about your management workforce did you believe MANAGECAT® data would help you address?

Senior management within OEH has acknowledged that middle management is one of the foundations for the future success of OEH. Historically there had been programs to develop senior leaders, leadership training, however the majority of managers are not senior managers, they are middle managers. Within OEH there had been no real attempt to survey all managers, to determine the perceived skill level and the desire for training within this cohort.

The 'People Matters' survey had also highlighted a need for further development in regards to management skills, to find out how managers become better managers.

Overall, what were the broad findings about management capability, including strengths, from the MANAGECAT® reports?

Managers rated themselves as being highly skilled in communication, relationships, team building and project management. In addition, managers self-rated highly in regards to ethical behaviour and managing legislation. Managers scored lower in areas of managing innovation and change. Interestingly a low self-rating for managing workforce development also produced the highest demand for professional development in the area of managing performance skills.

The survey highlighted that staff had undertaken professional development roughly akin to the 70:20:10 model. OEH Managers stated that their PD [professional development] was sourced 60% of the time from the workplace, 24% of the time from mentoring and peers, and 16% of the time from formal learning activities.

An interesting gender difference arose in the areas of managing compliance and risk and managing WHS, with men rating consistently higher in both areas.

In the area of diversity Aboriginal managers rated themselves higher than non-Aboriginal managers, in managing team direction and team diversity.

In deciding to use MYCAT®, what core questions about your overall workforce did you believe MYCAT® data would help you address?

Research has shown an increasing need for organisations to pay more attention to developing employee capability in order to adapt to a rapidly changing and highly turbulent world.

In future training methods need to be re-designed so that they build on existing competence and find ways to enable people to learn, be creative, and use competencies in novel as well as familiar circumstances to develop self-efficacy and resilience.

Due to OEH's large and diverse workforce, any future training plan must be able to leverage off existing skills to reduce cost while maximising outcomes.

MYCAT® was employed to obtain a snapshot in time of overall staff capacity; most importantly, capacity assessment in the areas of customer service, using technology, team behaviour and managing self.

In addition the MYCAT® survey included OEH-specific questions, employed to gain a sense of OEH culture and OEH specific areas of interest, including WHS, Organisational Culture, Project Management, Finance and Information Technology.

In addition the survey would be able to provide a platform for Recognition so that any future upskilling programs could be tailored to meet pre-existing skills.

Overall, what were the broad findings about workforce capability (including strengths) , from the MYCAT® reports?

MYCAT® was completed by approx. 700 staff members of OEH, of which 65.4% were full time and the balance being long term temporary and part-time employees.

Overall the respondents felt that their skills currently meet 84.3% of on the job requirements. In addition they also believe that their current Professional Development meets 63.2% of their needs. MYCAT® analytics show that this cohort have well developed strengths in communication and research skills which is reflected in the high level of undergraduate degrees held within this group (38%). Interestingly, the responders also score highly in Post Graduate qualifications, with 20% of the staff possessing a degree at Masters Level and 11% holding a Post Graduate Diploma.

Literacy and writing skills scored highly as did cross cultural communication and verbal communication skills.

What were some broad areas where improvement in workplace skills are needed?

The weakest capability skillset appears to be in the higher order business skillset areas of Procurement, Project Management and Finance.

The low self-perception of respondents around business skills aligns well with the high level (59%) of responders requesting professional development for general business development.

What also came out strongly was a clear need for occupationally-specific technology skills training; most importantly technology training around finance systems and advanced computer technology.

What steps have you taken to promote discussion and reflection on the results of the two surveys?

We're still in the early stages of developing plans for each division and unit within OEH. A plan however has been mapped out to commence the dissemination of the survey findings.

The steering committees for both MANGECAT® and MYCAT® will be reconvened, to debrief the findings. Customised reports will be developed and presented to each Director, for discussion of the division's results. Then a meeting with the Chief Executive to present the consolidated report will occur. Once the Directors' meetings and the meeting with the Chief Executive have occurred the Training Plan will be developed and approved which will incorporate each Director's discussions and expressed needs for their staff.

We envisage at least a two-year training plan roll out.

What long term benefits or advantages do you believe will emerge for OEH from using the CATs?

Increasing the performance of people in the workplace requires data concerning the skills they possess, which ones they partly possess and which ones they don't currently possess. A complete skills analysis is needed before targeted workforce development.

MANAGECAT® and MYCAT® will provide benefits in three ways for workforce development:

- for the individual to reflect on her or his professional skills and future growth
- for the team to analyse their combined skills and the potential for their increased impact

- for the whole organisation to examine the current skills and the potential for increased business success.

The CAT data is rigorous, mapped to the NSW Public Service Capability Framework and confidential. CAT analytics will be used as a baseline to inform all future work around training and capability development, to inform tender applications and to drive the change in respect of learning and development.

Generally speaking how will you use the MANAGECAT® and MYCAT® data within a 70:20:10 approach to capability development?

That's a good question because both of the CATs were fairly consistent in that they revealed that the 70:20:10 training model already exists within OEH. The CATs demonstrated that OEH is using best practice in the workplace in the area of capability development.

Currently within the training budget the majority of funding is earmarked for the 10% or formal training. In the future, to be more successful, WCD will need to re-orient its efforts away from creating more learning and encouraging more activity and participation. To further enhance the 70:20:10 practice WCD intends to move away from being the learning provider, simply producing and managing training, to becoming a development architect, focusing the organisation on the right learning opportunities and improving the quality of learning.

WCD intends to use the results of the CAT surveys to help place three important critical objectives at the centre of future strategies:

- develop "right sized" training opportunities and enabling employees to access only the most relevant and highest quality learning
- advance the organisation's learning capability by teaching employees how to learn.
- develop a shared ownership for changing the learning environment.

Is there anything else you would like to comment on that I haven't asked about?

The CATs have been a very logical starting point for OEH's Workforce Capability Development Unit.

They are valuable tools to use as a starting point, without which we have no real basis to plan for future development.

The CATs are rigorous, validated and well-tested instruments that we can trust. WCD can leverage off the results of the surveys, developing and customising training to achieve far more than what was possible before the CAT analysis.

I'm looking forward to presenting the findings to the organisation; it will be an exciting training journey.