

final report

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CMA - NTCA Attracting and Retaining Youth Workshop

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Presentation Summary

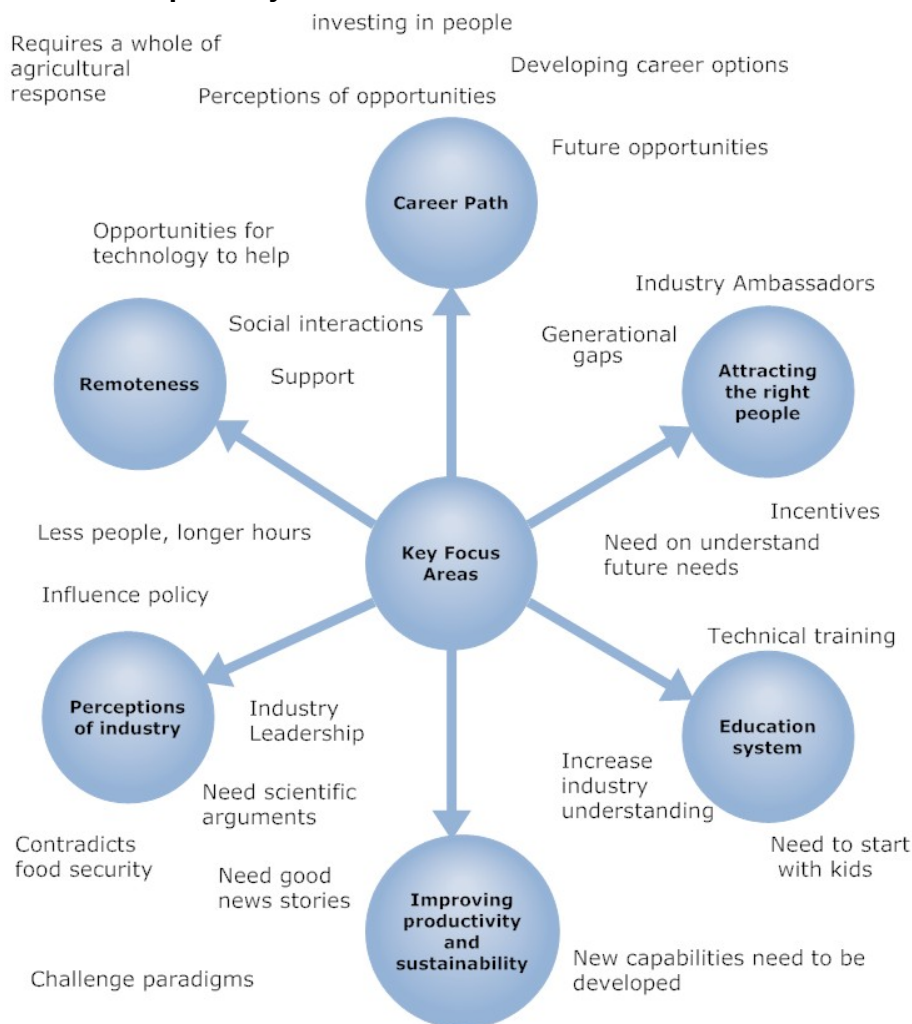
It is widely agreed that the ability to attract young people including future leaders to the red meat industry is a core capability for the future and failure in this respect will impact directly on the industry's long-term competitiveness and sustainability. Clearly, young people today will become the workforce and leaders of the industry in 10-20 years time. It can also be argued that even today, the industry requires access to young people who may be better equipped to assist industry to develop innovative responses to complex challenges such as: climate change and environmental sustainability; changing community attitudes; aggressive competition; and new global agricultural and food production methods based on futuristic technologies.

Our industry is facing an increasingly complex competitive environment and the perceptions of agriculture are not as favourable as they once were. This will significantly impact on our ability to attract the future capabilities we require as an industry to ensure our future viability and success. These capabilities include the skills to lead the industry, to operate our properties and supply chains, to develop new science, technology and solutions and to communicate the benefits of our industry. It is proposed that an industry wide as well as an individual company response will be required to respond to these challenges.

A workshop was held the day before the conference with a group of NTCA members and other invited guests to explore specific challenges and opportunities from a Northern Territory perspective.

The following points illustrate some of the challenges and opportunities identified by the group:

- The need to educate children in a positive manner about agriculture. This will increase demand for our product as well as to assist industry in attracting people to work in our industry
- There are community perceptions of animal welfare concerns regarding the live export industry that requires a strong continued industry response.
- There is a contradiction between food security and community perceptions
- It is often believed there is no future for young people in our industry. Career opportunities are often not well developed and well articulated.
- There is a critical need to provide more data and evidence to the community on agriculture in order to tell positive stories and counteract negative claims
- The shift in community perceptions against agricultural has been a relatively recent one. We need the ability to turn the tide back just as quickly.
- Negative media has a huge impact on the community's perceptions of the industry.
- Retention is a big issue – the northern cattle industry is often not seen as a long term career choice
- All the issues are all linked and therefore the responses need to be linked – it requires the whole system including individuals, companies and industry as a whole to develop strategies and initiatives to meet these challenges

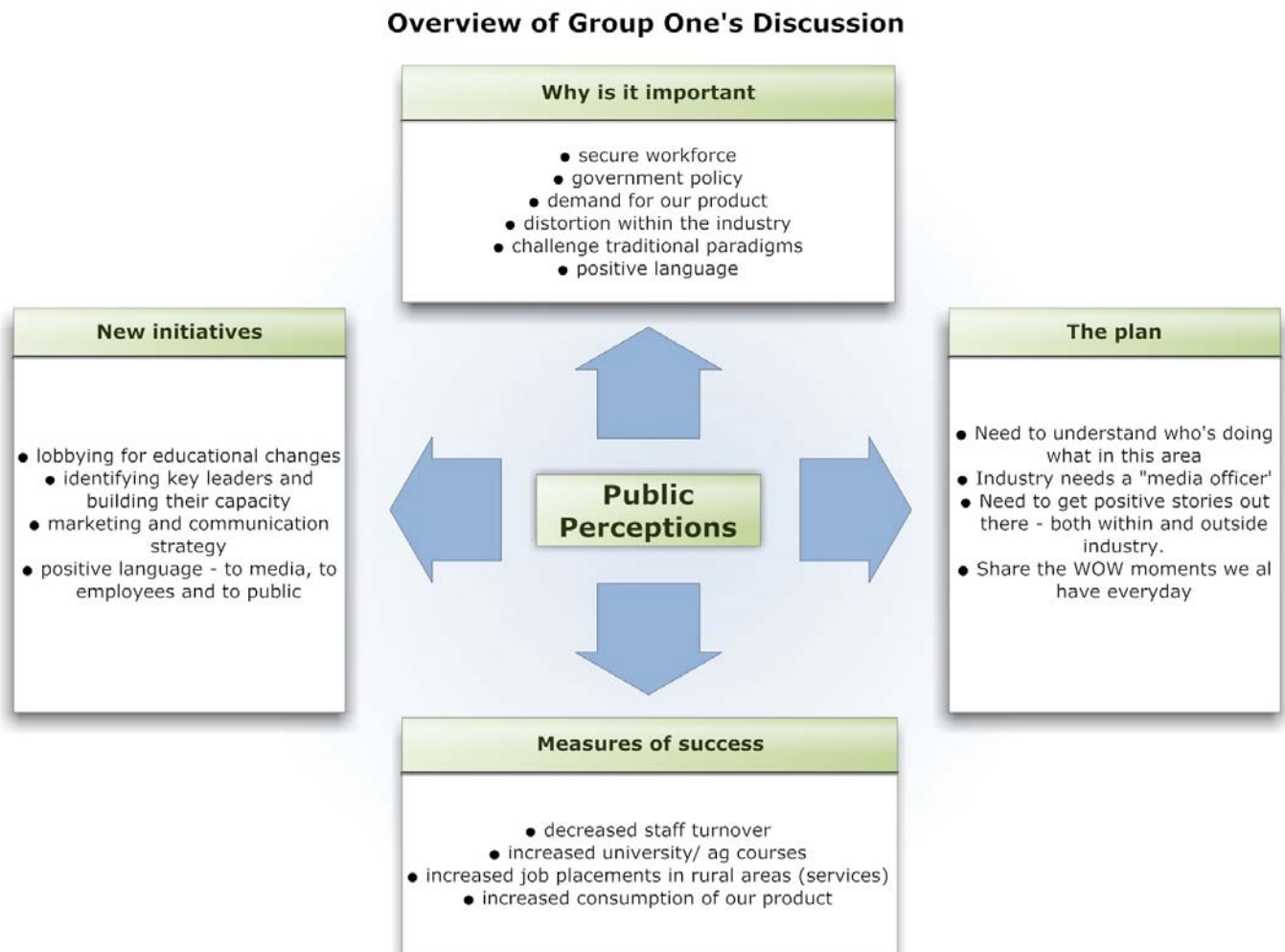
Figure One – Mind Map of Key Focus Areas

The participants in the workshop were divided into groups with each group choosing one key opportunity area and outlining what a response could be from an NTCA perspective.

GROUP 1 - Public Perceptions

This group highlighted the importance of improving the public perception of agriculture as a whole and in particular the northern pastoral community. The ability to attract a workforce, the need to appropriately influence Government policy and the need to maintain a 'license to operate' were all seen as key reasons why agriculture's public profile needs to be enhanced. The education system was seen as a key enabler for this to occur.

It was agreed that there are already many organisations doing great work in this space, however there are opportunities to develop an activity map to clearly show who is doing what, and where industry can achieve greater collaboration on what works. The following diagram shows the concepts and suggestions developed by this group:

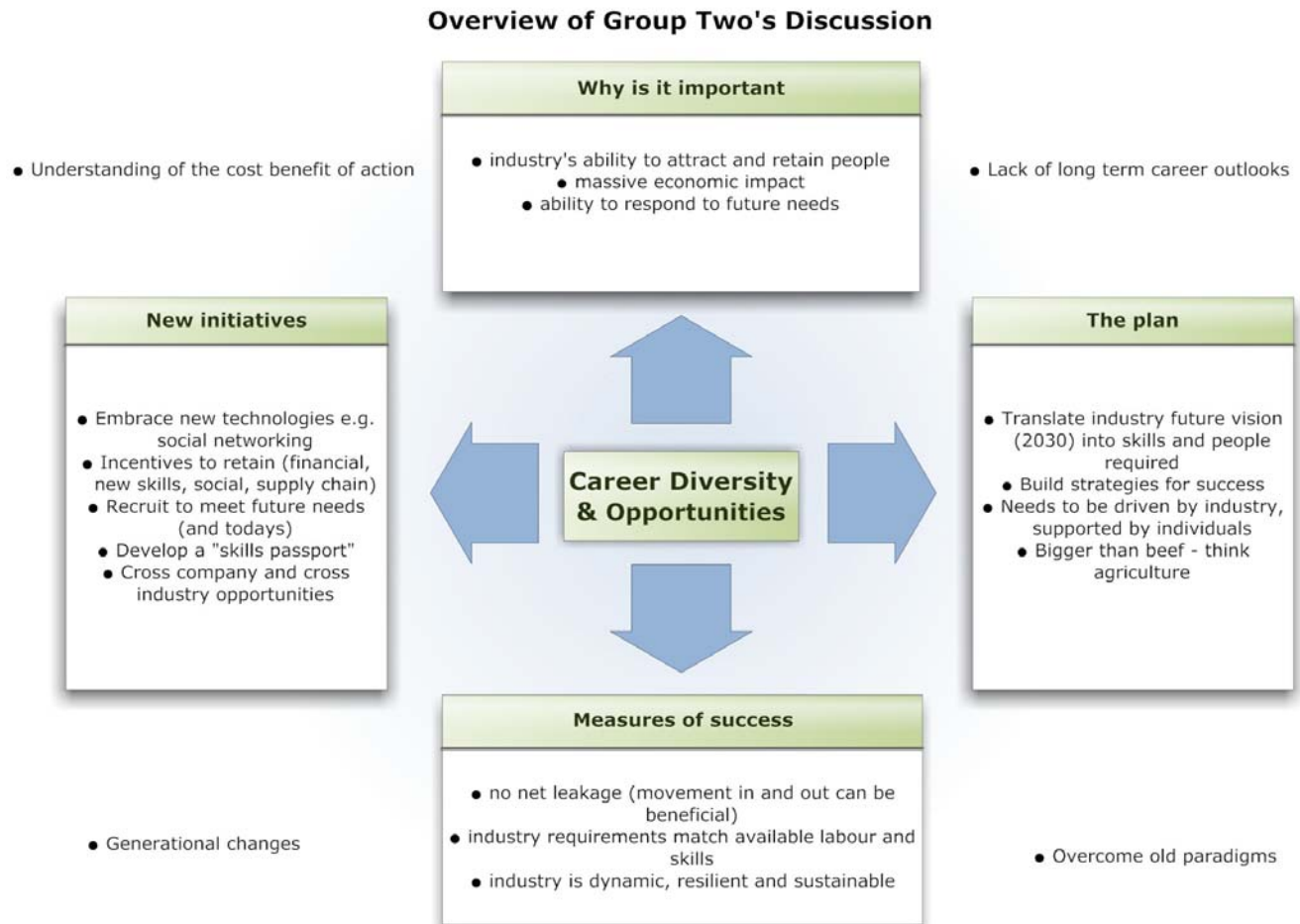
Figure two – Public Perceptions

GROUP 2 - Career Diversity & Opportunity

This group chose the topic of career diversity and opportunity as a key priority to explore during the workshop. The topic was selected as it was thought that this issue is one of the key drivers behind industry's attraction and retention issues. There is a huge economic cost associated with this industry issue.

Opportunities identified by the group include embracing technology including social networking to appeal to younger generations as well as overcoming some of the isolation issues that are inherent with our industry; developing innovative incentives to retain people (not just financial but also new skills, social, supply chain experience); identifying industry's future skills sets and then recruiting to meet these future needs, and the development of intra company and intra sector strategies such as the development of a skills passport. The group proposed that a next step could be to translate the industry future vision into the skills and people required for today and into the future (2030).

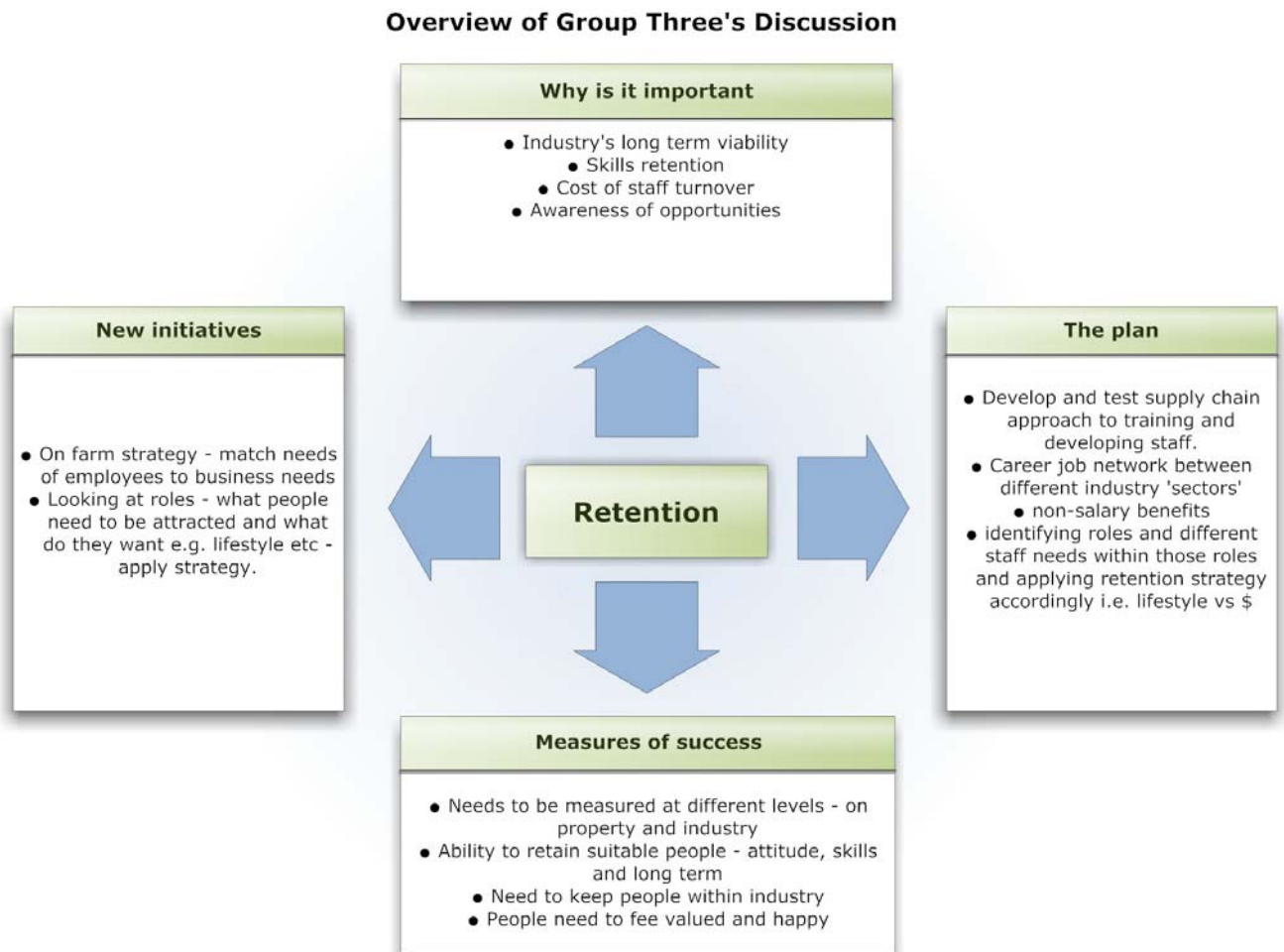
The following diagram shows the concepts and suggestions developed by this group:

Figure three - Career Diversity & Opportunity**Group 3 - Retention**

The third group chose the retention as their focus area and discussed this from an individual property level as well as at an industry level. It was felt that the need to build industry capacity is crucial and the cost of this investment is so significant that industry needs to ensure that these skills are not lost to other industries.

Some of the barriers to the industry having a better track record in the area of retention include a lack of human resource expertise on the properties, the inability to think creatively about how we meet the needs of the employees, the financial limitations of the businesses and the ability to offer targeted packages to employees.

The group identified a number of possible strategies and paths forward which are outlined in the diagram shown below:

Figure four – Retention

The workshop agreed that there may be opportunities for Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and the Northern Territory Cattleman's Association (NTCA) to work together on certain initiatives around Industry Leadership and attraction and retention more generally. A specific project could be to develop the desired future state of the industry and then map the capability gaps that exist between current industry skill sets and those required. A range of strategies could be developed to respond. Opportunities for MLA and NTCA to collaborate will be continued to be explored as a result of the conference presentation.