

# LEADERSHIP MATTERS

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## Leading through CSR

You will have noticed something different in this newsletter. The change in colours and branding is instantly recognisable. What isn't so apparent is that this change also signifies a much deeper transition for me. A transition towards corporate social responsibility and helping business make a positive difference for others.

For those who have followed Leadership Matters over the past couple of years you would have noticed the shift to where we are today. Having made the decision to leave the Police in January this year, I now find myself in a position where I can spend more time doing what I love best which is making a

difference. Now I just get to do that more often and on a bigger scale than before.

### Looking Inwards

Signs of doing things well can come in many forms such as a request for you to expand your operations, growth in your marketshare or greater awareness of who you are and what you do.

Hands was recently approached by different agencies seeking assistance in countries such as Sri Lanka and the Middle East. When people seek you out and ask for your help because they like what you do, it's an endorsement that you are doing things well!

As a result, the Board of Hands and some of its key personnel came together to consider our future direction and discuss these opportunities. We never considered walking away from the work that we are doing in Thailand, it was more a case of should we expand beyond Thailand into another troubled area. Some decisions were quite easy and others took a greater degree of consideration.

Challenges that still exist in Sri Lanka as a result of the Boxing Day Tsunami are alarming and it was very tempting to take Hands into Sri Lanka and start all over again. undoubtedly many children need help, when considering all the

circumstances Hands agreed to remain focused on the situation in Thailand.

The determining factors for us were several including the instability that exists within the country of Sri Lanka, the lack of control that we would have over the internal operations and our inability to ensure what we were asked to embark upon was in the best interests of those children we were aiming to help. Without certainly around the last point, the decision for us became easy. Once again the benefit of having a clarity of purpose shone through.

### Expansion...at what cost?

The decision that the Board was faced with around expansion was not limited to new foreign frontiers. Locations such as the Khlong Toei slums in Bangkok and even Palm Island here in Australia were put on the table.

After some stimulating and thought provoking conversation that comes when you assemble some brilliant minds together we resolved to stay committed for the foreseeable future in developing the kids in our current orphanages.

2009 will see us start construction on the new four storey premises at Baan Nam Khem that will meet many of the community needs in that region around health care, education and other immediate needs. I am heading over to Thailand in a couple of weeks where I will finalise a number of our plans and explore the many exciting opportunities we are now considering.

One of the things our confirmed position has given us is the ability to ensure that the kids we currently support have the opportunity to grow into future leaders of the region of

**The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second-best time is now.**

**African proverb**

Thailand. So rather than spread ourselves across thousands and make a bit of a difference, we believe that in staying focused on what we do well will allow us to make a dramatic and significant difference to hundreds, who can then in turn make a difference themselves to generations that follow.

This thought process is in line with sustainability and engagement. Two of the key elements that are so strong in the work that I am doing with organisations now in Leading through Corporate Social Responsibility.

## HANDS UPDATE

Hands and its growing number of supporters has a number of activities that you might want to be involved in and I welcome any involvement you might like to have.

Chapters - Hands now has a number of chapters throughout Australia who help to promote the work that we are doing and allow those not located in Sydney to be involved in local fundraising activities.

Walkathon - On the 19th of April in Melbourne a Walkathon has been arranged around Princes Park, Pariville. Registrations for adults are \$15 with every cent going to the kids that Hands supports and can be made either online or on the day.

Dinner - On the 7th of May in Sydney there will be a dinner at the Sydney Cricket Ground titled "A Night of Inspiration". The night will have a number of speakers representing the sporting theme and drinks and canapes will be held on the SCG cricket pitch

Bike Ride - Thailand 2010 after the success of the 2009 ride the Hands Board agreed that we would once again ride from Bangkok to Khao Lak. This time we are filled with the knowledge of what a wonderful experience it will be and we will commemorate the five year anniversary of the Tsunami. We will limit the numbers who will join us so if you are interested in riding forward your details to Team at Hands and we will add you to the list - with detailed information going out in July 2009.