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President's Message

President Graham Harris

2020 has continued as a difficult year for not only Australia and New Zealand, but the world at large. The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting everyone in one way or another. It is changing the community at large and how we, as extensionists, are working and engaging with our communities.

Virtual meetings have become the norm and many organisations and individuals have all needed to learn new skills and ways of working. The need for social distancing and the potential for disconnection has not been without difficulty for our communities and for you as extension professionals. There remains much uncertainty around the likely impacts this pandemic will have on employment, travel, trade, the economy, the health system and the most vulnerable in our communities.

In this edition of ExtensionNet, we will be showcasing how members have been responding to our most recent challenges, and what we have learnt. As I stressed in my last message, we have the obligation



Participating in virtual meetings

and opportunity to work with people in our communities - to support and assist them in these challenging times.

I'd like to express my thanks to Roe Currie, the Directors and Regional Co-ordinators for the work they are doing in developing and delivering opportunities to our membership, and the broader extension profession. I thank the ExtensionNet editorial team, Pat, Chrissy, Morag, Adrian and Roe, for capturing and sharing the diversity of APEN's organisation.

Regards, Graham Harris

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ExtensionNet Now Has a Team!

I am full of gratitude to Chrissy Stokes, Morag Anderson, and Adrian Englefield who have joined Roe Currie and me in producing this issue. *A small group of thoughtful, committed extensionists can change the world (apologies to Margaret Mead).*

Welcome to "the times, they are a changin'" [Bob Dylan] or "life is what happens when you are making other plans" [John Lennon].

The Coronavirus [COVID-19] is an unfolding event on many fronts and the health and well-being of our members is important. We have been overwhelmed by people's generosity in offering 'tips' and strategies to look after ourselves. As we navigate through our changing environment, we notice that most of us are not wired to be hermits: "solitude is a wonderful thing – as long as you can talk about it with someone afterwards." [Luis Bunuel]

There are some great thinkers in our network whose research and extension practices encourage us to think outside the square (or the round hole whichever you prefer). In this issue, read how the

Board and Regional Coordinators have adapted to working outside their comfort zone. **Gavin Beever** has assured us working from home can be extremely successful, productive and enjoyable.

Cynthia Mahoney's article provides a great insight into overcoming being overwhelmed by sharing Stephen Covey's Circles of Control and Overwhelm. Our New Zealand members have been busy. **Sandy Scarrow** shares some opportunities which, working from home, offered horticultural extension and training; while, **Chrissy Stokes** has adapted to digital platforms in a most practical way; **Florence Willaert** fills us in on Zespri and how Japan and Korea are coping with COVID-19; **Maria Shanks**, Beef & Lamb NZ, writes about COVID-19 and Chaos; and **Andrew Reid** provides an insight into how DairyNZ is using COVID-19 to

breakdown geographical barriers with stakeholders.

Keep up to date with the **latest news** as we encourage all members to work collaboratively, to share their stories. We are seeking lots of articles, the names of people doing things, photos, upcoming events and your feedback, [send us an email: apeneditor@apen.org.au] making the network an even more vibrant, dynamic place to be. **Listen, Learn. Share.**

"When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: those who let it happen, those who make it happen and those who wonder what happened." (John M Richardson Jr) Which one are you?

Till next time...

Regards, Pat Hamilton, Morag Anderson, Chrissy Stokes, Adrian Englefield, Roe Currie

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Pat Hamilton



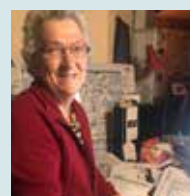
Chrissy Stokes



Adrian Englefield



Morag Anderson



Roe Currie

Life Begins Outside your Comfort Zone

The Editorial Team asked each of the Board Directors and the Company Secretary to respond to three questions:

- 1. What motivates you?*
- 2. Where do you get your energy from?*
- 3. What changes do you need to make over the next three months?*

APEN is an organisation about people and we think you'll see this clearly when you read each of the Directors' responses to these questions. Although each of them has responded in a slightly different way, all of them talk about connections, relationships, and communities.



Graham Harris

I have always been motivated by the need to understand the world and to provide help where possible. I am also motivated by the desire to learn new things and new ways of working – important as an extension professional. The energy to do what I do comes from many sources, principally, a desire to work for a sustainable and profitable agricultural community and the inspiration provided by my family and the people I work with.

I am also keen to promote the benefits of extension to the wider community. Given the changes that are happening as a result of COVID-19 world, there is much more change needed in the future.



Dr Anthony Kachenko

The recent events surrounding COVID-19 have significantly disrupted our way of life. Extension has been thrown on its head with all of us having to rapidly adjust to a new way of working. I am amazed at the way that those practising extension have embraced change and shown resilience.

I have been extremely proud of the connections that have remained, if not deepened, using videoconferencing. These relationships have been instrumental in keeping me

focussed and motivated and in many cases I have seen 'another side' of my colleagues, workmates and stakeholders which has helped to connect and strengthen bonds.

Throughout all this disruption, the farming community have continued to produce the food, fibre and greenlife that keeps us sustained. It has never been more important to maintain a healthy diet and boost our mental health. Access to gardening and greenspace is documented to be restorative and good for the soul - and I personally have enjoyed more time in the backyard as well as bushwalks and in general, getting back into nature.

Going forward, there is no doubt that new digital platforms will emerge to support new ways of working, including in the extension field. More emphasis will be placed on building and maintaining virtual relationships using these tools – resilience and an open mind will be key.



Peter Long

I've worked in the extension field for over half my career and get huge satisfaction from working with people across all facets of the various roles I've held. Supporting farmers, graziers, businesses, community groups, industry organisations to improve their business, relationships and communities has motivated me. This involves listening, attempting to better understand and work with individuals, families and groups to improve and grow. Equally important has been to provide support and allow those working in

extension to grow their skills and confidence whether they be in the same work team, mentees, students and APEN members.

The spread of COVID-19 and the subsequent restrictions has seen little change in my work practices as for the past four years the majority of my work has been from a home office. Emails, phone calls and video conferencing have carried on as usual and Zoom has replaced several planned face-to-face meetings.

As to APEN, as Treasurer, recent priorities have been around budgeting, introducing a new online payment platform for our website, and as a member of the Business Development Committee planning an APEN event and conference program through to 2022. In this changed world, APEN needs to adjust and adapt how we deliver events, support the professional and technical skilling of members, and maintain its relevance and value to members in providing meaningful professional development and networking opportunities.



Les Baxter

Making a difference and helping others to achieve their dreams and goals is what motivates me. Many businesses and organisations have great ideas, but don't know how to operationalise or commercialise them, and I am privileged to work with some of these organisations and individuals to chart out the path forward and remove technical barriers to successful implementation. One of the most fulfilling things for me is when we get a project to successful implementation, and to watch the individuals grow and develop along the way.

I find that working on a wide variety of projects and with a diverse array of individuals is both inspirational and energising. What is really satisfying is the synergy between many of these groups and the way in which they can help each other to succeed.

I have just moved from 42 years of formal employment to working for myself, and the adjustment in terms of prioritisation, balancing promotion/marketing and actually doing the work, spending time managing and building the business and finding time for personal life cannot be overstated. So, if I am going to survive the next 3 months, I will need to get my act together in all these areas.



Dr Heather Collins

What motivates me is life! Being outside, being active, exploring new places, meeting new people. This photo is me in January 2020, in Fernie, Canada, visiting my son and lots of skiing in fresh powder. Heaven!

I get energy from doing what I love: working with groups and rural communities, helping them fulfil their potential to bring about positive change in the world.

I can't think of any changes I'll make in the next three months – life is constantly evolving!



Dr Roy Murray-Prior

Living in a beautiful place and finding (and doing) jobs that are challenging is what motivates me. I get energy from looking at the clouds from bed in the morning or smelling the flowers and observing the birds.

I'm looking forward to being able to go bush and fishing when we are allowed. Another priority will be to improve my chipping - getting back on the golf course is a priority!



Jeanette Gellard

There are a couple of things that really drive me. The first is a never-ending quest for knowledge – I love learning and am fascinated by people, their attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. The second is a desire to make a difference and have an impact on others and the world we live in.

Where do I get my energy from? The short answer is CHOCOLATE! But really, I get my energy from others, collaborating with other people, being able to bounce around ideas. I love that interaction, preferably in person. However, I'm finding Zoom to be

OK as a substitute in these times of social distancing.

As a generalist and someone who loves generating new ideas it can be a challenge to stay focussed on something and do the 'deep diving' that is necessary to really understand and appreciate issues/projects/topics. I'd like to develop more focus around a few key areas of the next few months to enrich my knowledge and experience and consolidate my areas of expertise.



Dr Pat Hamilton

I could write pages about being inspired by the enormous number of people I have met whose talents motivate me to make a difference – hence, 'my story' is a series of pictures which capture part of what motivates me and gives me energy to continue to enrich the lives of others. Being a butterfly allows me to emerge and spread my wings – please don't pin me to a card.



Listening, reading and thinking/planning are constant motivators as I strive to make a difference.

Being positive and sharing this positivity.

My motivation: “every morning, [I] wake up and [I] have a choice. [I] choose to be happy or [I] can choose to be miserable. Today, [I] choose to be happy” (apology to Open your eyes by Daybreaker)

The changes in my life will be trying to do the difficult things while they are easy!



Dr Roe Currie, Company Secretary

I'm motivated by my desire to keep APEN running, ticking along, and progressing; sunshine, the change in seasons – autumn leaves, frost on the ground, hearing kookaburras, welcoming spring; my family.

I get my energy from my daily walk, my family, contact with the Board and Board committee members and hearing all their wonderful ideas for APEN over the 25 years I've been involved. Catching up with members old and new at APEN events

– putting faces to names. Good food, and not so good – I love chocolate! Coffee ... especially if it's with friends.

Over the next three months, I need to eat less chocolate and get back to my pre-treatment weight!

This year, while a Director was on leave, we asked for volunteers to replace them for three months, and Nicole and Lauren stepped in and have done a fantastic job. Thanks both!



Dr Lauren Howard

I'm motivated by building resilient rural communities and being an advocate for change. Rural Australia is a great place to live and work, however it is not without its challenges. Through teaching, research and community work I aim to build community resilience in the face of political, economic, environmental and social challenges.

Where I get my energy from is a hard question to answer because like a lot of people, I feel really deflated at the moment. Working from home whilst home schooling three young children and with a two-year-old in tow has been really difficult and I haven't been able to kick many goals lately. However, things will only get better and I just need to keep my chin up and ride the wave. Over the next three months, I should exercise more, go to bed earlier and drink less wine. But to be quite honest with myself, I probably won't make these changes!



Nicole Sallur

I'm based in Charleville in south west Queensland and have been working for DAF for almost 25 years. I currently manage the FutureBeef program across Northern Australia, which uses online methods to share the latest advice and tools for the beef industry.

I'm motivated by doing a good job and getting things completed. So, for work I do my best and like to be able to tick things off my 'to do' list. Recently I have been participating in some online training and have been dividing my work up into deep work and shallow work and prioritising my deep work in the mornings when I am most energetic. Deep work is work you really need to think about and concentrate with no distractions. I am also a team player and really like to bring everyone along on the journey with me and making sure we are all clear on our purpose and what each of our roles are. Where I get my energy from ties into what motivates me – having a clear work plan and knowing what I need to do for the day and scheduled time to do it. On a more personal note, I am also quite family orientated and love being around my family and spending time with them – so luckily for me the COVID restrictions have been a blessing as I have been able to spend more time with my immediate family.

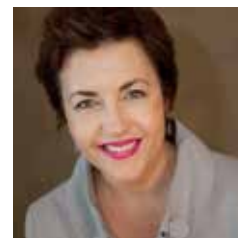
I have already started making some changes with the online training I have been completing about 'thriving at home' so making the most of those and embedding them into my daily work routine, for example ensuring every meeting I organise has a Purpose, Agenda and Outcome (PAO).

Looking at COVID-19 through an Extensionist lens

How to reduce your overwhelm and keep performing during tough times

Cynthia Mahoney

This article originally appeared on Cynthia's website (www.cynthiamahoney.com.au) in March and is reproduced here with her permission.



When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves. (Viktor E. Frankl)

Over Christmas, I stayed in Benalla in north-east Victoria, where I grew up, and watched from afar as raging bushfires wreaked havoc on so many communities, wildlife and landscapes. I was shell-shocked. It was all totally overwhelming. I remember feeling powerless, anxious, concerned, angry, guilty – how do you say Happy New Year when so many are under threat, suffering and traumatised?

Who knew at the time that a few weeks later, our world would be turned upside down again with the emergence of a global pandemic? I noticed similar feelings to those that had come up during the bushfires, in myself and in others in my network.

It can be helpful to understand the brain science of stress in a time like this as it increases our self-awareness and can help us to self-regulate more effectively.

When we're stressed we become focussed on self. Our lens to the world narrows. We're operating out of our reptile brain. It's fight, flight, freeze, appease – as seen by the toilet paper wars and stockpiling at the beginning of lockdown – these people were having a stress response of fight!! As a result, they totally lost the bigger picture of caring about other people, their behaviour didn't seem to make sense. In reality though, it was their brains that were also in lockdown.

Getting more self-aware about the state of mind we are in at different points of our day helps us to get out of auto-pilot or reactive mode, and choose our behaviour so that we can make more productive decisions. If we're not self-aware then we just revert to our default behaviours, which often don't suit the situation we are in, they don't serve us and they don't serve the people who are around us – which at the moment is going to be the people physically closest to you – your family and your workmates, now that some of us are heading back to work.

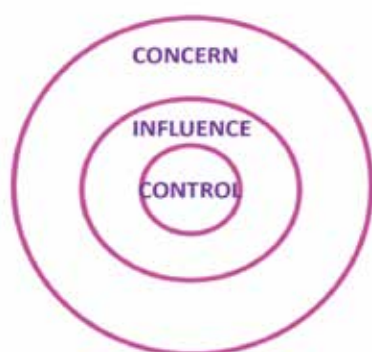
When lockdown was first announced I identified that I was stressed and anxious and that I'd been thinking all about me, me, me! (good self-awareness).

I realised that my lens to the world had narrowed and that staying in this unproductive state was not going to be helpful or lead anywhere – if I didn't interrupt it, it was just a downward spiral.

When we're calm or happy our lens to the world widens and we can see a bigger picture – we see other people, we are more creative, we perform better, we can listen to others, we are able to connect to self and others.

I'd like to share a model with you that can help disrupt your thinking, get you out of autopilot, find a better headspace to be in, feel more hopeful and take positive action.

This model is the great Stephen Covey's Circles of Control and Concern and the concept that what you focus on expands. Some people also add a Circle of Influence which reflects the type of problems we face.



- Circle of Direct Control: about problems involving our own behaviour
- Circle of Indirect Control (Influence): about problems involving other people's behaviour
- Circle of No Control (Concern): about problems we can do nothing about, e.g. our past, or situational realities

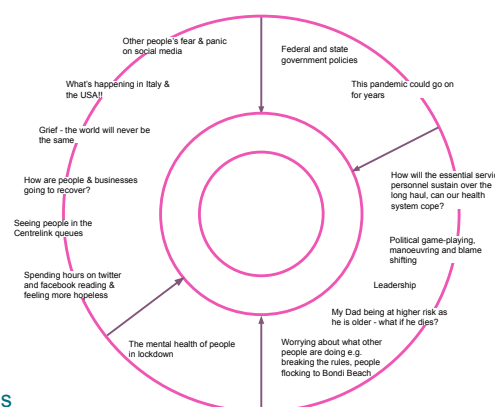
Personal disruption so that we can perform at our best during tough times is a key interest of mine. For higher performance there are many opportunities for us to get ourselves off autopilot and develop the habit of choosing our response rather than simply being in reactive mode. The key skills here are self-awareness, emotional courage and being able to pause in the moment before taking action.

When we are working in our Circle of Concern we have a reactive focus, we are being acted upon and we empower the things within that circle to control us. As Covey says,

“As long as we focus our efforts, attention and energy on those things, we accomplish nothing except to reinforce our own feelings of inadequacy and helplessness.”

When you're operating in your circle of concern your circle of control shrinks so you feel very disempowered.

These are just some of the things I was focusing my time, thoughts, energy and attention on:



When you're being **reactive**, you're focusing your efforts in your Circle of Concern. This results in negative energy, as well as neglecting things you could actually do something about, which causes your Circle of Control to shrink.

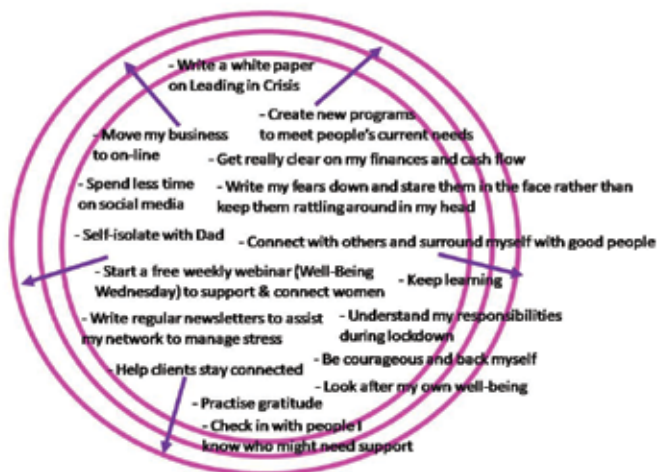
You can recognise when you're in this circle by being more self-aware. Are you focused on the weaknesses of others and circumstances over which you have no control? Are you blaming, accusing, using reactive language and being the victim?

My feelings at the start of lockdown were overwhelm, disempowerment, disbelief, anger, guilt, blame, concern, etc. And what you focus on expands. I wasn't in action at all, I was sitting around in thoughts and fears operating in my Circle of Concern.

When you're being **proactive**, you're operating in your Circle of Control and you work on the things you can do something about. This results in positive energy which results in your Circle of Control enlarging. You have less brain space, time and energy to focus on things you can't do anything about.

By remembering the Circles of Control model, I was able to disrupt myself and get out of reactive mode. It all happened in a moment. My thinking changed from my brain going around in circles contemplating all the issues above to asking myself proactive questions – What is MY response here? What am I going to do? How can I show initiative in this situation? What is within MY control? What sort of person do I want to be in this situation? What will MY behaviour be?

The thoughts now occupying my mind were now around the options I had and the actions I could take such as:



and then I felt clear. I was filled with purpose, I started taking action, I got to work rather than sitting on the sidelines being reactive and doing nothing.

So when you feel overwhelm, whether it be from the challenging conditions we've been facing with the pandemic, something happening in your workplace or at home, do you usually operate out of your Circle of Control or Concern? A positive brain hack you can try to shift you out of your amygdala (the lower functioning part of the brain) and into your pre-frontal cortex

(the higher functioning part of the brain) is to think of these circles.

The process I recommend is to:

1. Write down everything that is occupying your mind.
2. Draw the circles and then put each issue into one of the circles.
3. Then consider, are you operating in a proactive or reactive space?
4. If you are in a reactive space with the majority of your thoughts being in the Circle of Concern, how can you increase number of ideas in the inner Circle of Control?
5. Ask yourself these proactive questions: What is MY response here? What am I going to do? How can I show initiative in this situation? What is within MY control? What sort of person do I want to be in this situation? What will MY behaviour be?
6. Which ones of these can you act upon?
7. What is the first step you will take?

What opportunities are there for you to disrupt yourself? What would be different for you if you operated in a proactive way rather than a reactive way more often? Who else would benefit if you did this? What will the consequences be of doing nothing?

I reckon as we're now emerging out of lockdown and starting to create the next "new normal" it's the perfect time to get your mind into that circle of control and set yourself up for life beyond lockdown by thinking about these three questions:

- What do you want to keep doing?
- What do you want to stop doing?
- What do you want to start doing?

You can ask these three questions through two lenses – life before lockdown and life during lockdown. Let's pause, do some thinking and then press reset by taking the best bits of both and designing a brand new

way of being. How good is that! What an opportunity to mindfully create your new normal rather than letting it happen to you. It's also a great opportunity for you to work with your clients and stakeholders to help set themselves up for success.

What's worked during lockdown? What do you want to keep doing? One of the leaders in a high performing teams program I'm facilitating says she wants to work from home at least three days a week instead of five days in the office.

What do you want to stop doing? One of my coaching clients says she doesn't want to do school pick-ups any more as she finds them super stressful yet hadn't realised until she had a break from them.

What do you want to start doing? Many people in my network have said that the COVID-19 situation has forced them to connect back in with their values, rather than living on auto-pilot, and remember what is truly important to them and that they want to start living more in line with their values going forward.

What about you? If you could press reset and create a new life going forward, what would it look like? What are the stress-busting strategies that work for you? What successes have you had in the past in challenging times that you could bring back now? Who do you want to be over the next few months? How do you want to show up in the world? What is the energy and mindset you will bring?

Continue to look after yourselves and each other. I want to acknowledge it's a really tough time for many at the moment. It's OK to be worried. Be kind. Cut yourself some slack and be compassionate to yourself. Please reach out - you're in my network and I'm here if and when you need me!

Working with Cynthia Mahoney enables leaders and teams to unlock high performance by dialing up their Courage, Connection, Conviction, Curiosity and Creativity. Cynthia is a facilitator, coach, mentor, speaker and author with a passion for personal disruption, neuroscience, positive psychology, courageous conversations, high performance and well-being. Her mantra (taken from the latest research) is that "Happier people are higher performing," and she strives to help leaders and teams achieve this in the workplace. www.cynthiamahoney.com.au cynthia@cynthiamahoney.com.au

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Horticultural Extension and Training in a COVID World

Sandy Scarrow

Fruition Horticulture www.fruition.net.nz

Fruition is a group of three horticultural consultancy and training businesses based in the horticultural hot spots of New Zealand. Our whakapapa (line of descent) has been from the Advisory Services Division of the Ministry of Agriculture to now being privately owned businesses working directly with growers, their service providers and their workers. Although we were working in an essential industry, day to day consultancy and training aren't 'essential work' and so, we couldn't continue as usual throughout Levels 4 and 3 of the COVID-19 response. The urgent requirement to work from home, created some issues but also opportunities for our company. In this article, I discuss a few of these issues focusing mainly on the opportunities.

If it weren't for the millennials

Thankfully, we have continued to employ new graduates who have continued to push us to adopt new methods of working. As a result, we have moved our document library, etc., into cloud storage. We have used video conferencing from our computers to communicate with other Fruition offices. While not proficient, we knew enough about these systems to build on our skills while in lockdown. There were also some good online free courses that we took advantage of. We had access to client data and we could communicate with them via the phone and email. Furthermore, our millennials insisted we trial working from home the week before the announcement of the lockdown. We were able to see what worked and what more we needed to support team members as they worked



from home. Most people took home equipment so they could continue working with two computer screens at home; some took an office chair.

These millennials have continued to progress this use of computer tools within our existing software to facilitate COVID-19 contact tracing and have seen the potential to do so much more for the company using the tools we already subscribe to.

Unforeseen Opportunities

Our team is contracted to deliver education and training to a range of workers throughout the country. As we approached lockdown, we madly delivered tablets and phones to learners to ensure that they could continue learning while at home in their 'bubble'. We topped up data for those without other internet access. As

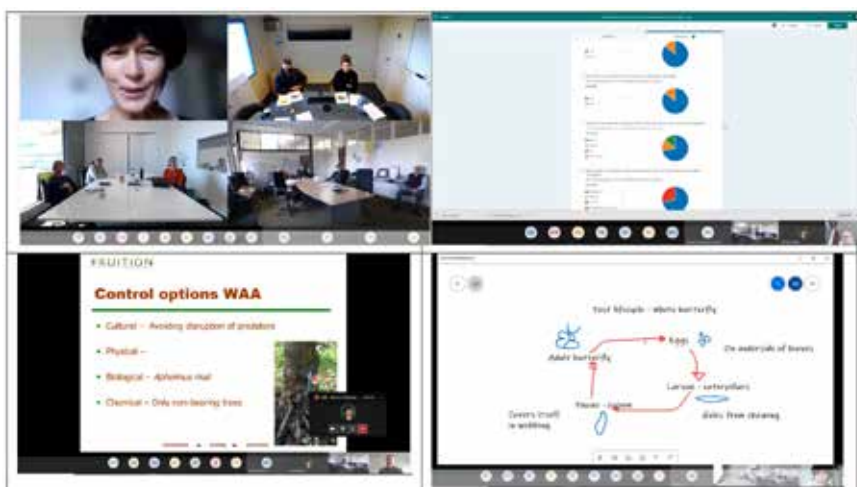
the lockdown progressed, we became confident that we could extend our on-line delivery to other learners. We trialled a class for the Primary Industry Training Organisation where we delivered over a day what we would normally deliver face to face. The feedback was strongly positive. Comments included "I loved it – I didn't have to drive 2.5 hours to sit in a class all day". A key to the success of this, and a subsequent class, was the preparation of the tutor and the learners. A short session was available for learners the day before to iron out any technical problems. The course was reworked into hour-long modules with activities for the learners to do in-between. Another bonus was the ability to bring subject matter experts into the class via video conferencing so our learners gained from their valuable knowledge and insights.

In Summary

I am always a believer that from adversity comes opportunity. The keys things that I have taken from this experience are:

- The need to continue to adopt new technology – you never know when you are going to rely on it
- Recognising that innovation doesn't have to be huge step change – incremental innovation can contribute significant value
- Take the opportunities for on-going professional development
- Prepare to be in a position to respond to opportunities that arise
- Keep in touch, our team and our clients maintained contact using the internet. Despite the physical distance, people felt valued.

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Screen shot of on-line class delivered to learners from the Bay of Plenty, Poverty Bay and Hawkes Bay

Digital platforms – 8 things to think about when presenting

Chrissy Stokes



Learning Knows No Bounds

In 2017, at the Townsville conference, I won the Best Presentation award (partly because of some shameless self-promotion) and wrote an article for ExtensionNet sharing some of my top tips for public speaking.

In this new world, where we've rapidly adjusted face-to-face extension programmes to make use of digital platforms, it's important to think about the skill sets we need, and how they might differ from those we utilise presenting in the field or in a workshop venue. The 3 P's are still just as relevant – planning, preparation, and presenting – but the finer details are a bit different.

Please note we're not tackling on-line facilitation here, but purely presenting.

Planning Before you whip out a PowerPoint template, you'll need to do some work to make sure you know why you're there and whom you'll be speaking to.

Clear purpose Just like any other time you're presenting, you need to start with a clear purpose. Are you trying to motivate your audience to take a particular action, to inform them, or to get them thinking about a particular topic in order to start a discussion? If you don't have a clear purpose, this is where you need to start.

Know your audience When you're delivering content remotely it can sometimes feel like you're flying blind. The subtle physical feedback we're accustomed to guiding us, such as nods, smiles, eye-contact, frowns, crossed arms, etc., from the audience, is for the large part absent in digital platforms. It can be really challenging being confident when you feel like you're speaking into a void and getting nothing back. Scientists we've asked to present at webinars have really struggled with this – how do they know they're pitching their messages at the right level, that people are engaging, and understanding the content, when there is no body language to signal that? If you're not sure about what your audience knows or wants, what about sending them a quick pre-session survey? Use an electronic tool

to gauge understanding of key concepts and ideas.

Preparation Once you're clear on your purpose and your audience, it's time to get brainstorming! What's the journey you're going to take your audience on? How will you use technology and visuals to keep everyone on track?

Use stories People are awful at remembering what they've heard. In a virtual presentation it can be even worse, because of all the other distractions around, and the fact that they can be hiding behind a switched-off camera, or checking emails at the same time. You don't have people physically in the same space as you so keep your messages on target and minimise them to only what's REALLY important for them. Human beings are programmed to respond to stories. They help us to pay attention and to remember things. Use them to your advantage!

Get familiar with the tech Just as you want to make sure you're familiar with a space you're presenting in in person – where the loos are, how the screen's going to be set up – it's important that you're comfortable (or at least familiar) with your digital presentation space. Spend some time getting to know the systems you'll be using. How do you share your screen? Can you see the audience? Is there the possibility to get interaction with your audience, and how does that work? How does the handover from one presenter to the next work? Test it out, get the bugs ironed out and go in confident that you've got the technology nailed.

Avoid distractions "Death by PowerPoint" is just as painful in virtual presentations as it is in person. Use slides wisely. They are more important in a virtual format than in person, so make them work hard. Use good quality images that help you tell the story – if you need to re-create a graph or image to get rid of extra stuff or to emphasise a particular point, do it. Slides should only contain what's important, so don't be afraid to keep words to a minimum. Some of the very best slide

decks have no words at all. If you use animations, keep them simple and only where they help. Building graphs or tables line by line, revealing stages in a process, or highlighting important areas or points are all good reasons to use animations – but don't go overboard. If you're going to use tools like polls, make sure this is purposeful, rather than a gimmick. If you don't need slides at all, get rid of them and use your face and voice to tell the story instead.

Presenting When it all comes together, you'll be grateful for all that planning and preparation. Although nerves can still make an appearance for even the most experienced of presenters, there are a few simple tips for improving virtual presentations that apply to everyone.

Use that voice! Even if your audience can see you, the same lack of body language cues that makes it hard for you to know you're pitching at the right level will keep your audience in the dark. Instead, you need to use your voice to convey emotion, emphasis, energy. It might feel like over-acting, but when people can't see you there's nothing worse than a boring monotone.

Practice Use the technology you have available. Do a practice run, record it, and watch yourself back. Are you using your voice well? Can you chop some content out? What feedback can you get from other people? Use the time you have to refine and improve your delivery. Take opportunities as they come along, and ask for constructive feedback, so you can get even better!

Finally – what about that camera? We all know that a good selfie is taken from above – avoid the double chins and up-the-nose angles – and it's no different when you're on camera to present. If you can, set up the camera so it's a eye level, straight in front of you. Add extra lighting if you need it, so your face is lit from in front. Clean up the background – have a good tidy, find a neutral space or hang a sheet (if you choose a green one you can use it like a green screen!) or simply use the blur feature to hide what's behind you. Try to keep your eyes on the camera rather than the screen to keep the audience engaged, and if you can set it up so your hands can be seen – even better. We trust people more when we can see their hands. Last of all, act as if you're happy to be there. Great posture, a smile, and lots of energy will help keep that audience focused on you rather than that cat video they've just opened.

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How to cope with COVID-19 in Korea and Japan – Zespri true story

Florence Willaert

In Japan and Korea, Zespri-contracted growers produce Hort16A and Gold3 kiwifruit, marketed as Zespri Gold and Sungold. To support all growers, an Extension team is present in both countries. COVID-19 left us wiggling our arms for a few days and then we started to think outside the box.

In Korea, luckily, a lot of growers use smartphones. The Zespri Extension team uses a lot of text messages to share information, but we had never tried sending videos in the past. It was with a little bit of apprehension that the first video link was sent to growers in early April. The video contained a season update and some directions about orchards activities. After a few days, the number of views reached

150, i.e. 70% of our Korean growers. When we closed the video, views overtook our grower numbers, meaning that some growers had watched it several times. We decided to post four other videos – focusing on key orchards activities. They received a little less enthusiasm, but still had an acceptable audience.

In Japan, things are more tricky as 90% of growers – representing 20% of the planted area – are small scale farmers and are not used to technology. So, sending videos is not really possible – basically only a few of those growers are using smartphones or computers. In order to reach them, the Zespri Extension team prepared some printed resources about seasonal orchard activities that we sent to their respective

packhouses. The packhouse technicians then supported us by spreading our advice through phone calls or individual visits when it was still allowed. For the remaining 10%, our large-scale growers, a lot of individual phone calls were made, using video as much as possible. We were also able to visit some orchards for really urgent matters – such as frost damage in one orchard. Strict rules were applied: social distance, wearing mask, only one Zespri member per car, etc.

So while our extension activities were not the same as they normally would have been, we still managed to find a way to get our information out to the growers

ENET



COVID-19 and Chaos

Maria Shanks, Beef & Lamb NZ (B+LNZ)

It may not have been unexpected, but it was still a shock to find ourselves in complete lockdown and trapped in the house. How on earth do we reach out to our farmers to help them through something so unusual, particularly when they are dealing with the twin horrors of COVID-19 and drought?

The first week was a crazy time of cancelling events and getting urgent COVID-19 and drought messages out. But this wasn't going to be over quickly, so some longer-term planning was definitely required. The very first thing was establishing what technology we needed. Cue some hurriedly arranged meetings to check out options, choose one and get it up and running and everyone comfortable using it. B+LNZ has seven regional Farmer Councils so this was a great testing ground to see how farmers adapted to and engaged with Zoom and Teams meetings.

As expected, our farmer leaders were quick to grasp the new technology and get on-line. Early on several different webinars



and events were up and running. This included weekly drought drop in calls and the joys of a Zoom chat bar meant farmers far less comfortable asking a question in public were happy to type something in and get the answers they needed. The topic was all important in getting people to spend even more time in front of their computer with 300 farmers joining B+LNZ and Dairy

NZ's Smart Wintering webinar and many tuning in with partners and family members for the webinar with Dr Ceri Evans.

With drought still the most pressing matter, attention turned to how we could ensure we were reaching everyone, not just those farmers happy to join a webinar. We commissioned a series of articles

from experts and farmers on the current issues and the potential options they could consider. Many of these were turned into podcasts which allows for a more intimate feel than an article and both forms were shared widely on social media. We also took over a local radio station to launch a weekly hour-long rural radio show getting local experts and farmers to talk about a range of topics. Our Lead Extension Manager Mark Harris was also busy pulling strings in high places and in conjunction with MPI, DairyNZ, Federated Farmers, Deer Industry NZ and AgFirst set up a feed resource planning service to help farmers put together a winter feed budget and to support this, B+LNZ commissioned farmer case studies and a helpful supplementary

feed table.

One of the positives from all the changes and frantic reshuffling of events was the level of collaboration. Not just with external organisations but also internally which has built stronger relationships and improved communication. The continual challenge is having topical, timely events that create connections. Collaboration remains essential as all organisations want to remain connected with farmers. Webinars may have been exciting to start with but quality and not quantity is still the most important factor as things don't stay new and exciting for long. An ongoing challenge even as we consider moving back to face to face events.



Adapting to Change – COVID-19

Andrew Reid

Bay of Plenty Regional Leader | DairyNZ field team



DairyNZ is an industry good organisation with the strategic purpose of creating a better future for New Zealand dairy farmers. This purpose is complementary to DairyNZ's role in supporting the New Zealand Dairy industry strategy detailed in www.dairytomorrow.co.nz

A core DairyNZ extension method is through “on-farm” discussion groups which are typically geographically centric. Farmers value these as a means of social networking, sharing farm system information, and discussing industry issues that affect their individual farming businesses. Monthly discussion groups often attract 20-40 people which is dependent on factors such as time of year, who the host is, and what issues are up for discussion.

Autumn 2020 presented an unexpected challenge with COVID-19 restrictions inhibiting the ability to hold any “face to face” meetings. Traditionally a time for making critical on-farm decisions, being unable to attend a DairyNZ event due to COVID-19 was going to be sorely missed.

New Zealand's population was confined to household “bubbles” during the level 4 lockdown, and no face to face interaction was permitted with outsiders unless deemed essential. So, DairyNZ's tried and

tested primary extension medium was off the table from that point until further notice. It was apparent early in the lockdown that a need remained in the community for a “live” networking forum to overcome the already isolated nature of farming and to provide opportunity to assist seasonal decision-making processes. Video conferencing (VC) was really the only alternative to efficiently maintain this valued service to farmers.

After the initial intrigue of VC, maintaining the energy and engagement of the online audience proved to be the biggest challenge for DairyNZ Consulting Officers. Farmers who attended were often new to the online environment and for those more accustomed to working outside, the content needed to be of high relevance to compete with other priorities. We found having two facilitators was initially beneficial to help create a friendly atmosphere and to provide a “backstop” if technology faltered. Groups were confined to familiar audiences and aimed to be no longer than 60 minutes in duration.

Guest speakers such as DairyNZ scientists were featured and introduced to present and discuss their work with farmers. This proved to be a win:win as it gave scientists direct access to farmers who

could then use the discussion to help shape future research, and created a direct line discussion between farmers and scientists that may not otherwise have been available.

Group attendance on VC typically attracted 8 – 15 people, and although numbers were well below what we would have normally expected, the feedback was appreciative of the efforts made to maintain some form of normality during lockdown. It was noted that our VC forums also ensured the opportunity for social connection remained open for rural communities that would not have otherwise had that option available.

From DairyNZ's perspective, we now have a new appreciation of how VC can be used to break down geographical barriers with stakeholders and we look forward to using this technology more in the future where appropriate.



“When we work together, we have the power to tackle problems head on. We can make a difference in the lives of others around us”.

Agricultural Extension – the new normal?

Gavin Beever

extensionAUS™ Relationship Manager



Out of the challenges of COVID-19, we think that there will be some far-reaching consequences for agricultural extension and some key points to think about are provided in this article.

In working with the online, digital platform extensionAUS™ since 2013, we have been at the forefront of online approaches that are now becoming mainstream as a result of dealing with COVID-19. The extensionAUS™ approach focusses on helping transform the way farmers, and the research, development and extension services that support them, provide, source and use information online. Given our experience, we have a somewhat unique perspective on how agricultural extension will evolve.

Key points:

1. A generation of regional Australians have been fast tracked in respect to their capability and capacity to use online tools, in particular, online meetings and webinars. Information transfer and sourcing online, has also seen a dramatic increase in recent weeks. This can continue to be leveraged going forward.
2. A fair percentage of people that have had to use them a lot, are complaining of “Zoom fatigue”. They are missing the opportunity for more personal engagement. As isolation measures are eased, many farmers and regional community members will relish the **opportunity for more direct, personal engagement**, such as that offered by more traditional extension approaches. Extension professionals should plan for that.
3. It is worth noting that the more introverted members of the community, have been enjoying isolation and remote engagement opportunities and good extension programs need to continue to **cater for different learning styles and personalities**. There will be a new normal post COVID-19, that will be different for different people.
4. Having stated the points above, it is worth noting that there will also be a



new normal for **online engagement** through video meetings and webinars, that **the majority of extension audiences will be comfortable** with going forward and these tools will remain a very important means of engagement, far more than pre COVID-19.

5. With the community's greater skill and capacity with online engagement, more advanced online tools such as **Augmented Reality** (<https://extensionaus.com.au/extension-practice/augmented-reality-in-rural-extension/>), **Virtual Reality** (<https://extensionaus.com.au/extension-practice/virtual-reality-and-learning/>) and **E-Learning** will have an increasing and accelerated place in agricultural research, develop and extension programs and such opportunities should be explored by extension professionals. These tools are the new frontier in extension and are likely to become more mainstream, quite quickly. They offer users experiences that are different to video, video conferences and webinars and as such will become attractive alternatives.
6. There will be an increasing opportunity to leverage **real time monitoring and data provision**. This site on extensionAUS™ which provides real time soil moisture information from 51 sites from Agriculture Victoria, is a great example, <https://extensionaus.com.au/soilmoisturemonitoring/>.
7. Many employers and employees are now much more comfortable with **working from home** and **flexible working hours**. So, expect to see

continued development in working from home approaches, over and above what was happening before COVID-19. It is important that in any working from home situation, occupational health and safety requirements and insurances are in place to protect yourself, your colleagues and your clients; just as if you were working from a business premises. It is likely that in the rapid uptake of working from home, these areas may not have been adequately addressed and they need to be, if people are going to continue to work in that way. Even if it is for just some of the time.

8. Some **social distancing requirements** are likely to last for a while. Large gatherings, such as conferences and agricultural field days, are likely to be the last sorts of gatherings to be permitted and a different approach to achieving the outcomes required from such events, are likely to be needed for quite a while.
9. The need for **cyber security** and measures to manage online risks is only going to increase. Things like ransomware will be an ongoing problem and remember it is set up so that the ransom is cheaper to pay than the fix. Having good back-up systems for your data, keeping systems and software up to date, avoidance of phishing messages and having good anti-virus, scanning and filtering security, will all be very important going forward.
10. Long distance travelling and overnight stays are still going to be a challenge for a while and international **travel** is likely to be off the table. So, work around that involve online engagement, will be consolidated as the norm for many months to come. Extension professionals will need to plan and optimise such arrangements.

Change always bring challenges, but it also always brings opportunities. If we can help you with either, please feel free to contact the extensionAUS team – www.extensionaus.com.au



*Experience has taught us that it is best to move forward
when the heart and the head are connected (Elizabeth Broderick)*

Meet the Regional Coordinators Team

Like the rest of us, APEN Regional Coordinators (RCs) have been busy working from home or have experienced travel restrictions within their roles. We hope all APEN members, farmers and community members are going OK under these challenging circumstances. The way extension events are held has changed, with increased use of on-line tools replacing field days and farm walks, and the amount of Zoom meetings we have all attended!!! The RCs participated in two valuable sessions with Director Jeanette Gellard [see summary in Making Connections section].

Extension delivery will continue to change into the future and the APEN RCs would like to share some insights into their drivers for successful extension and observations during the COVID-19 isolation period.



Chrissy Stokes
New Zealand

Chrissy is motivated by getting growers thinking, challenging and most of all changing. As an extension design specialist with Zespri International, taking complicated research and telling an extension story while seeing the flash of understanding on a grower's face is truly rewarding.

"Being on my own for six weeks during isolation helped me to recognise the importance of connecting with people. A grower's phone call was often the highlight of my day. I also love working as part of a team, bringing together unique skills to make a well-rounded and powerful unit to drive practice change."



Adrian Englefield
New South Wales

In March 2020, Adrian started as Hort Innovation Regional Extension (South-Eastern Australia), just in time for COVID-19 isolation. Adrian's role covers diverse horticulture industries across NSW and Victoria including within

Greater Sydney, the Riverina and Goulburn Valley.

Adrian is excited by the challenge of stepping out of his comfort zone and assisting horticultural extension providers adapt to challenges and experiences within the new COVID-19 working environment. Adrian also enjoys being involved with APEN as a NSW Regional Activity Coordinator and a mentoring program mentor.



Callen Thompson
New South Wales

Callen Thompson is passionate about creating outcomes for positive change. Seeing fat steers, good wheat crops and a happy farmer at harvest with knowing you have contributed to this outcome makes it all worthwhile. Callen is a Senior Land Services Officer – mixed farming with the NSW Central-West Local Land Services (LLS).

Since COVID-19, Callen's extension activities have moved from face-to-face to online via webinars, web meetings, videos and social media. "The LLS have embraced new technologies, as have our producers. We can provide our services remotely, often reaching far more producers than we would have when holding a workshop or field day."



Caroline Coppo
Queensland

Caroline is the Sugar Research Australia (SRA) Regional Coordinator in the Herbert River sugarcane growing region of North Queensland. Caroline believes great extension is a mix of so many things including different approaches, understanding your audience, exploring current literature and always thinking "how can we do this better?"

Caroline's main drivers are to make the world a better place for future generations, learning and continually improving her approach to extension and helping others where possible. During COVID-19 restrictions (like most of us in extension can relate to), Caroline has spent a lot of time in front of the computer and over the next three months hopes to increase face-to-face meetings.



Noel Ainsworth
Queensland

Noel enjoys engaging people to collectively embrace change and share ideas and lessons to improve business

and industry sustainability. Through his role as Principal Supply Chain Horticulturist with the Queensland Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, the personal aspect of seeing individuals grasp and run with ideas is rewarding.

Noel finds energy from engaging with people to build commitment and creativity. Noel is keen to understand how southern Queensland APEN members communicate with APEN and fellow members and build on this in the future.



Karen Smith Western Australia

Karen Smith is a mixed enterprise farmer and experienced project management professional. "Time spent on-farm is increasingly important to me, especially with a busy family. An exciting aspect of farm management is improving on-farm efficiency through adoption of technology, now and into the future."

Learning new things to apply within the farm business is something that keeps Karen going, helping to re-energise and meet strategic targets. Karen's COVID-19 situation involved keeping her head down with farm work, some quality family time and Zooming with people and organisations.



Morag Anderson Tasmania

Morag is a consultant with RMCG, based in Hobart. Morag is motivated by working on ideas, with people, but particularly loves working with teams when everyone contributes and when the activities are more than the sum of APEN ExtensionNet

the parts. Morag really loves achieving or producing something that has made things better in some way.

Morag is a lover of the arts and visual communication, including multi-disciplinary approaches. And with the recent COVID-19 changes, Morag found a large number of enriching on-line extension-based resources and is looking to continue attending and learning from on-line resources.



Sandy Gunter South Australia

Sandy is passionate about living with and being connected to nature. Getting her hands dirty and working with her cattle, horses, chickens and dogs has kept her grounded during a 27-year career based in regional South Australia.

Sandy is currently the Leader Communications and Engagement for the Murray-Darling Basin Region with the South Australian Department of Environment and Water. She has been involved in numerous community-engagement activities including managing a large devolved grant scheme, crowdsourcing ideas for environmental problems and supporting a deliberative panel of community representatives to investigate the benefits of NRM levies.



Sarah Hain Northern Territory

As the Australian Mango Industry Association Industry Development Officer for the Northern Territory and Western Australia, Sarah has a competitive and inquisitive nature - identifying links and synergies within

complex agricultural and agribusiness systems. "Being a young person in agriculture and working almost totally autonomously from the rest of my team, there is no better feeling than completing a complex task, producing a professional piece of work or overcoming some tough characters to form professional relationships. During the next three months, the transition to mango season starts. This season, will require a more organised approach to assist producers COVID-19 requirements, compared to previous years extension activities and farm visits."



Shayne Hyman Victoria

As the Rural Drainage Officer with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Shayne's energy comes from three catalysts:

- always having something to look forward to
- loving people, their stories and their uniqueness
- quiet reflective practice that keeps her battery charged and soul full.

Over winter, in Gippsland, landholder engagement focusing on improved rural drainage arrangements becomes the main focus. Shayne is also working on refining the service offering of her startup consulting business 'C4 Impact' - particularly, in regard to collective leadership, connectivism, and industry clusters and their smart specialisations, including positioning and preparing for the world post COVID-19.

Do you have an extension story or experience you would like to share? We would love to hear about APEN members' innovative, interesting and engaging extension activities and develop further networking opportunities.

See the back cover of this issue of ExtensionNet for further information and contact details for each RC OR please visit the Regional Coordinator page of the APEN website.

Making Connections

Relationships are based on four principles: respect, understanding, acceptance and appreciation (Mahatma Gandhi)



2021 APEN Conference Update

Late last year, a group of keen Kiwis got together to start planning the 2021 conference. We had heaps of great ideas and were going through the process of due diligence with another organisation to work with them on delivering a joint conference, when COVID-19 threw a big spanner in the works. In light of likely continued travel restrictions and disruption, probable budget cutbacks for many government departments (and therefore travel for their staff) and the fact we'd need to be out seeking sponsorship now, the decision has been made to call off the New Zealand conference for 2021.

The Board are currently discussing other options. If this crisis has taught us anything, it's that the way we've always done things isn't the only way. What does an APEN conference look like in the future? That's up to us as members – but I'm sure we'd all agree that it could look and feel pretty different from what we experienced in Darwin last year.



APEN's 2020 Virtual Forum instead of a Roadshow... ExtensionChat - APEN Online



APEN's business is well set up for us to work remotely and we encourage you to continue involving our community. Normally, in alternate years, we hold an APEN Roadshow that travels to all the APEN regions. This year, we have decided to make it a Virtual Forum and we're planning to have 6 sessions in August.

Training Regional Coordinators via ZOOM - Jeanette Gellard

It's been great to work with APEN's Regional Coordinators to build and enhance their online engagement skills. Working with Zoom as the main engagement platform, Regional Coordinators gained a better understanding of:

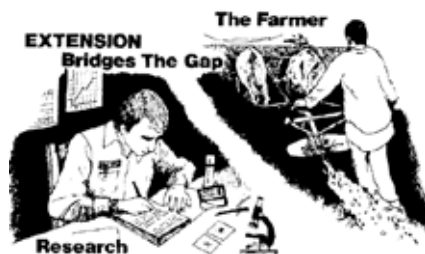
- Zoom as an engagement platform
- How Zoom settings can enhance your scheduling and management of meetings
- Personalising your Zoom appearance – renaming yourself, virtual backgrounds
- Zoom functionality and its uses in engagement activities e.g. chat function, breakout rooms, screen sharing, polls, whiteboard, annotation
- Complementing Zoom with other collaboration tools (e.g. Google Slides, Sli.do) to ensure participant contributions are captured
- Planning online engagement activities

The Regional Coordinators appreciate the generosity of Jeanette's time, experience and engaging presentations. Both sessions were informative and greatly contributed to our confidence in being better prepared to deliver online workshops to our regional members.

Thanks heaps Jeanette from all of us



Sharing your work in the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal (REISJ)



The focus of APEN's Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal (REISJ) is on publishing high-quality articles (not necessarily hard-core scientific papers) on extension theory and practice relevant to Australia, New Zealand and the broader Australasia-Pacific Region to support innovation and practice change by extensionists in primary industries and natural resource management. We encourage APEN members to take the challenge of sharing their work with others, using the journal to enhance their knowledge and skills, and hence, make their work enjoyable and rewarding. We would also welcome offers to help with reviewing articles for the research and practice sections by sending an email to the Editor who is happy to receive articles for publication during the year.

Please contact editor Dr Roy Murray-Prior on reiseditor@apen.org.au

Nine Tips for making Co-innovation work even better



Our APEN members and keen supporters **John James** and **Denise Bewsell** are sharing their thoughts about different topics around enabling change. They focus mainly on agricultural industries and regional communities, but they are always curious about what's happening

in other fields of study too. They've already compiled a long list of topics that they are keen to share with you. Things like co-innovation, peer-to-peer learning, and even pre-mortems!

Working cooperatively and collaboratively are always on the road to success. John and Denise share some tips with us.

1. Take time to understand the problem
2. Be inclusive – is everybody present?
3. Engage and value
4. Learn from each other
5. Keep sight of the shared vision
6. Be honest, open and constructive
7. Be aware of the wider context
8. Be flexible and adaptable
9. Stick with the process

For more useful tools watch a video, read the blog or listen to the podcast <https://enablersofchange.com.au/>



Virtual Field Day - Broadacre Cropping in North Queensland

I'm currently managing a project funded through the CRC Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) and the GRDC with the aim of developing a broadacre cropping sector in northern Queensland - one of several projects in this region. The late start to the wet season, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, has impacted planned field day activities to showcase the on-farm trial sites of these projects. In response, we decided to hold a virtual field day so that the three projects could raise awareness of their current research activities.

The CRCNA provided access to their Zoom account which was used to trial delivery of a presentation by the three projects on the evening of the 22 April 2020 as a Zoom meeting – exactly two weeks before the planned webinar. This trial identified issues for presenters sharing their screens and excessive presentation length. A further trial run was held the following week. As a

result of these, it was decided to run the presentations as a webinar using the Zoom platform on the evening of the 6 May 2020. There were 99 attendees (138 registrants) and the webinar was kept to one hour. A follow-up survey was distributed to attendees to evaluate the webinar experience and provide them with the opportunity to ask further questions of the presenters – we received a 33 percent response.

The advice of APEN member Greg Bath, DAF was invaluable in the preparation and design of the webinar process. The key learnings were:

1. It is essential to test the technology with presenters prior to running the live webinar
2. When running a session with more than one speaker it is important to have a good facilitator (to keep speakers on time and manage questions)
3. It is also good to have someone to provide support to manage the planning and execution of the webinar by managing the technology and reviewing on-line questions during the webinar.

The webinar was recorded and has been uploaded to the CRC Northern Australia's YouTube Channel at https://youtu.be/M81_GPCEx40. A newsletter detailing the aims of the projects together with responses to questions not addressed during the webinar was prepared and distributed to registrants. The project team is considering running individual webinars for each project once results from this season are collected. This will give participants more opportunity to engage with each research project. We are also considering use of Zoom to facilitate meetings of the reference group to review the 2019-20 season and plan activities for 2020-21 if COVID-19 restrictions prevent future face-to face meetings.

If you have stories about your experiences with using on-line engagement during these interesting times, please submit a brief article to the ExtensionNet editorial team.

Graham Harris

Mentoring - the APEN Way



It's been a busy start to the year for APEN's Mentoring Scheme. In addition to kick-starting our usual annual program we wrapped up the Mentoring Program being delivered to the second cohort of QFF Extension Graduates. It was a privilege to be able to attend the QFF Extension Graduates graduation ceremony online at the end of May. Each graduate produced a short video of their journey and their reflections, which often referred to the value of the mentor program in supporting them as they commence their careers as Extension Professionals.

The APEN Mentoring Program was well subscribed this year with 13 mentees commencing the program. Once again, we have been overwhelmed with the generosity of our mentors who put up their hand to participate. As part of the program we provide series of short 'mini-training webinars' to introduce some of the key elements of effective extension. This year we've covered Bennett's Hierarchy, Facilitation Tips & Techniques and Online Engagement.

With our Mentees and Mentors having established their connections, we are looking forward to our mid-program evaluation and further training sessions.

Check out the information on the APEN Mentoring Scheme on the website at: <https://www.apen.org.au/resources/mentoring> and see the information booklet link on the page.

Jeanette Gellard

Put on your thinking cap or Making meetings more productive

A small 'rant'! Having 'sat'/participated in numerous online meetings over the

last 3 months, I have been inspired, motivated and sometimes bored by the variation in presentation where people are less collaborative and more like "siloed panels".

As I am a person who regularly challenges myself, who likes to try something new, who takes calculated risks, I am always open to new experiences. I do know that my comfort zone has tended to shrink as I grow older. However, although video conferences are a great solution to working remotely, they have taxed my brain (inducing 'Zoom fatigue') on several different levels – concentrating on the gallery view (multi-person screens), being aware of the other voices trying to get attention, looking for all the cues (not just the spoken word but the body language – 'great' seeing from the shoulders up) – I do miss the non-verbal cues!

Hence, revisiting de Bono's six hats to make meetings more productive, to ensure my creativity doesn't wane and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to share their skills has reduced my stress level so that I can plan accordingly.



Using Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats Model often makes us step out of our comfort zone. De Bono encourages us to be creative in thinking, risk taking and in lifelong growth and transformation.

Each category identifies with its own coloured metaphorical "thinking hat". As we put on each hat we can mentally focus/switch our thoughts, the conversation – even the outcome – of the meeting.

The **white** hat calls for information, known or needed – **facts**

The **red** hat signifies feelings and intuition - **feelings**

The **black** hat is the 'devil's advocate' or why something might not work – **judgement**

The **yellow** hat symbolises brightness and optimism – **positivity**

The **green** hat focuses on creativity [the possibilities, alternatives and new ideas] – **creativity**

The **blue** hat is used to manage the thinking process – **analysis**

Creative thinking is not a talent; it is a skill that can be learned. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities which improves teamwork, productivity, and where appropriate, profits. (Edward de Bono)

Pat Hamilton

APEN's Membership Directory



APEN produces an annual Membership Directory that is delivered to our members by post every January. It is an invaluable resource for enriching and broadening your network horizons by connecting with like-minded members. It is an excellent opportunity to promote who and what you do.

Exciting News!

We now have an APEN Shop set up on the website and you can pay by credit card on-line through APEN's partnership with eWay! The link is available on your renewal invoice and can be found in various places on the website Become a Member, Shaping Change, Mentoring Scheme and through the member log-in portal.

Feedback on the APEN Webinars

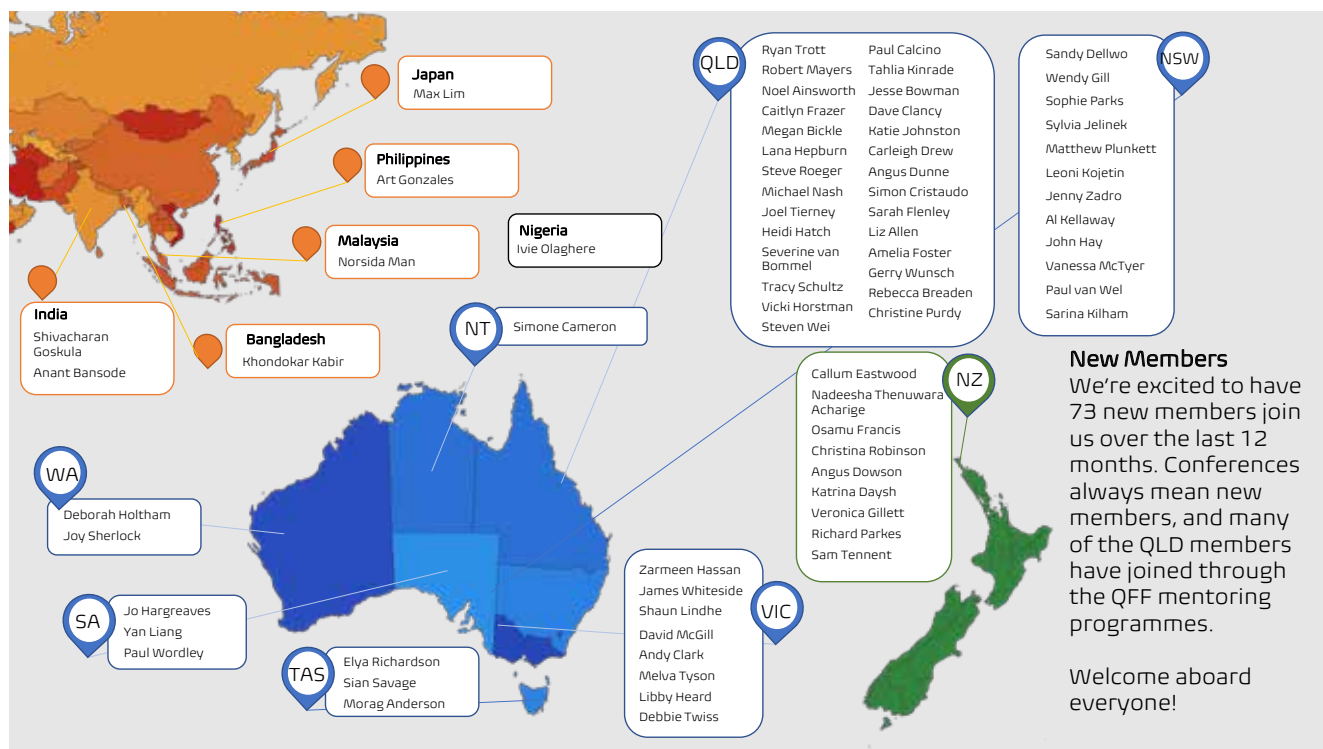
The Board is looking into the APEN Webinars. Do you have any feedback to offer? Send an email to info@apen.org.au. See the webinar page on the APEN website for details of past webinars.

Get in touch [info@apen.org.au] if you have suggestions for a presenter and/or topic. Dates available in this webinar series are 17 August, 19 October, 21 December. We look forward to another year with diverse webinar topics.



A warm welcome to APEN's New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our latest members. Making contact is a great way of sharing our history and the future. We look forward to sharing your knowledge, skills and experiences.



New Members
We're excited to have 73 new members join us over the last 12 months. Conferences always mean new members, and many of the QLD members have joined through the QFF mentoring programmes.
Welcome aboard everyone!

APEN is providing a platform for networking, professional development and representation of members across Australia, New Zealand, Asia, the Pacific and other parts of the world. We welcome the diversity of our networks as we support and include people of different backgrounds and perspectives. We appreciate the openness of all our members to different thoughts, styles and backgrounds as we connect with like-minded people who are interested in extension.

"25 Years & Flourishing"

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RC - Regional Coordinator

Together, we have the power to inspire, connect and deliver on new opportunities and rich experiences that can open doors to innovation and progress while growing global economies and increasing well-being (Tae Yoo)

Guidelines and Deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.

Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.

Editor: Dr Pat Hamilton

Layout: Ross Tasker, Snap Albury Wodonga, Victoria.

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