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‘The teacher is here to ask for your help’: A story of schools, employers and networks.

Abstract

This paper explores the development of the Jobs4Kids (J4K) campaign, a joint initiative of the SGR LLEN Employer Reference Group and the Beacon Foundation. Involving a three-year business plan, the J4K campaign aims to broker young people into employment in local jobs in the region. The campaign is the result of the intersection between an evolving project within the LLEN and the growth of an established program of the Beacon Foundation. The paper will use a Deleuzian lens to explore the ground shifts that have occurred in the process of forming this connection; I am concerned with the intersecting movements of different orders that have created a necessary transitory coordination. Within such a ‘rhizome’ there are only lines: dimensional lines of segmentarity and stratification and lines of flight as ‘the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature’ (Deleuze & Guattari 1987 p.21). My perspective of this metamorphosis is specifically focused on SGR LLEN; I close with a consideration of the possibilities of this change in nature for the continuing work of the LLEN.

Setting the Scene of the Story

Create in your mind the image of a young person in a school, asking the teacher for help. Such an image is the inspiration for the title of this paper: now the teacher is asking the employer for help. In Victoria policy responses to concerns around globalization and risk have focused on references to ‘community building’ and ‘lifelong learning. Since 2001, 31 Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN) have been established across Victoria, Australia following the Ministerial Review into Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways (the Kirby Review). LLEN fit within broader Victorian policies on community building and joined-up government. These policies are ‘based on the premise that a community that takes ownership of and responsibility for local problems is likely to be effective in resolving these problems’ (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2003a, p.1). The perceived success of organic networks to collaboratively engage with youth training, education and employment issues has led to the adoption of networks in a number of policy strategies by the Victorian Labour government since 2000, including school networks and LLEN. While school networks would operate across established institutions, LLEN involved the formation of new entities: incorporated associations with an elected and Chaired Committee of Management. Committee of

Management composition of LLEN is rule-governed to ensure its composition reflects a range of community sectors. The work of the LLEN is undertaken by a small staff often comprising only an Executive Officer and an Administrative Officer thereby ensuring that LLEN 'not become an additional layer of bureaucracy' (Department of Education Employment and Training 2000, p.5).

From the outset the involvement of industry in LLEN was considered crucial to their success. Kirby (2000, p.7) had noted that one of the factors in young people falling 'through the cracks' of the education and training system was the weak linkages between the components of the system, support and industry. The role of LLEN would be to further develop collaborative networks that already existed by developing a local co-operative approach to planning that would include the renewal and strengthening of communities, minimising duplication and wasteful competition and acknowledging community and industry shared responsibility and ownership of post compulsory education and training (Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission 2002). In Geelong, the central involvement of the Chamber of Commerce as the auspicing agency for the SGR LLEN bid had been commended by the Department from the outset. Once established, the Department had reminded LLEN of the need to ensure industry representation on their Committees of Management¹. In its initial stages this representation largely occurred through the active involvement of the Chair of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce who was the initial, and has remained the only, Chair of SGR LLEN. In subsequent elections the Executive Officer of the Geelong Area Consultative Committee (GACC)² also joined the Committee of Management. However, the absence of any 'real employers' on the Committee of Management was challenged by some LLEN members. This perspective was at odds with that of the Executive Officer who, as early as 2002, had come to believe that the appropriate place for employers to be involved in SGR LLEN was in active roles within LLEN Working Parties. As such, for her and those members who conceptualised the LLEN as the network rather than the entity, there had always been a level of industry involvement which reached well beyond the LLEN through the bridging networks that worked within industry. In 2003 the LLEN commissioned Geelong Business Network (GBN)³ to research and recommend ways in which the LLEN could move to an active partnership between the education and training sector, industry and other community stakeholders. As a result of this review (Geelong Business Network 2004), the major drive to broaden industry involvement for SGR LLEN commenced: the establishment of the SGR

¹ Here 'industry' refers to industry – employers and employees - beyond the education, training and employment industries that were the central members of the Committee of Management. It was also notable that some employers did not consider the involvement of their industry organisations as sufficient.

² The Geelong Area Consultative Committee is one of 56 community based organisations across Australia funded by the Federal government. Area Consultative Committees work in partnership with the Federal government's Department of Transport and Regional Services to identify opportunities, priorities and development strategies for their regions thereby promoting employment and training opportunities, growth of the business sector and regional development.

³ The Geelong Business Network (GBN), a community based and supported organisation that was established in 1985 by the City of Greater Geelong, is also active. It acts as a broker of business networks for small to medium enterprises to promote cooperation, partnerships, alliances and joint commercial action. GBN staff had been closely involved with the LLEN since inception and in 2004 the benefits of working network – to – network lead to a strengthening of this connection.

LLEN Employer Reference Group (ERG)⁴. Here I am going to tell the story thus far of the SGR LLEN ERG and, in particular, its establishment of a Jobs 4 Kids (J4K) campaign in connection with the Beacon Foundation. Specifically I intend a rhizomatic portrayal of this project, recognising that any part of a rhizome can, and must be, connected to anything other; that its traits are not necessarily linked to similar traits (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21) and that this has consequences that must be worked through.

Establishing the SGR LLEN Employer Reference Group

I'm a bit nervous about this actually but I'll just have to get my head around it . . . we've scheduled the first meeting of the ERG. There will be a meeting on 11 February 2004 at 3.30 over at the Bank of. . . Now we've got a 25 member group and at that first meeting [the Geelong Business Network] is going to convene . . . and then he hands it back over to the LLEN and, ah, this first meeting is going to be so important to be able to pull out enough issues that the employers can see that they've got something to say about these things but also doesn't make this Reference Group seem onerous or any of those kinds of things.⁵

The purpose of the ERG was to ensure that education and training in SGR LLEN region addressed the realities of the workplace, both currently and into the future, in ways that would optimize the employability skills of young people in the region (Geelong Business Network 2004). It was one of six projects that had been initiated and coordinated by the SGR LLEN Employment Issues Working Party. The group would act as an advisory group to the LLEN Committee of Management through the Executive Officer and secretariat services would be provided by her. Protocols were established for the operation of the group under which any new projects or requests for information from the group by external parties would be approved by and initiated through the LLEN Executive Officer; the group itself was encouraged to communicate directly with interested others on their projects while retaining an obligation to consult with the LLEN should any issues of protocol or confidentiality arise. Under a direction of its Chair and Deputy Chair the group would have two roles: firstly to enable employers from a broad cross section of industries⁶ within the region to input to the on-going development and implementation of education and training in the region; secondly to help transform information from the education sector into industry on education initiatives and issues.

The last time we had an employer forum I was questioning in my own mind whether the right focus for the LLEN is to be talking about structured workplace learning where if we go about this idea of the LLEN as a space, and where my head is at, I would rather be creating a vision. . . . I don't think it's the right question for an employer to say 'What's in it for me?' I think we should be saying to the employers 'What are you going to contribute to growing this region? Because if you can identify your contribution then all the other things we can help you put in place.' . . . I can see that going down like a lead balloon, you know?

⁴ SGR LLEN was the first LLEN to implement an Employer Reference Group.

⁵ Unless indicated otherwise, all quotes are from interviews with SGR LLEN staff.

⁶ The inaugural meeting was attended by a range of employers representing the following industries: retail, hospitality, telecommunications, sport and leisure, manufacturing, recruitment, building and construction, financial services, education and agriculture. It was also attended by representatives for the Geelong and Victorian Chambers of Commerce, GBN, GACC, SGN and the Committee for Geelong (CFG, a non-political lobby group of individuals and organisations with a demonstrated commitment to improving through strategic advocacy the quality of life for all citizens of Geelong).

Shortly after the inaugural meeting of the ERG, LLEN staff met with the elected Chair of the group to discuss how best to recruit employers for an active role with the LLEN. Each of the staff outlined their respective roles and the challenges they were encountering in connecting with employers. For instance, as a result of the surge of vocational education policy there had been a massive increase in the numbers of students experiencing structured workplace learning within their schools experience. However, the demand for opportunities was well in excess of the supply. More employers needed to be recruited but even when they were able to be recruited a fundamental problem existed in reconciling 'business time' with the periods, days and semesters of 'school time'. From the perspective of the LLEN the resolution lay in establishing long term relationships between schools, students and employers rather than ad hoc work placements. The response of the ERG Chair to these comments was unexpected. Rather than focusing on how the LLEN could promote itself and its work to employers he suggested that the idea should be to 'reverse engineer' the plan into something employers could quite simply connect to through use of their own discourse including a formal business plan. For him, the idea of 'the LLEN' was meaningless and could safely remain so. In communicating with industry what would matter to was 'the call to action': this was a group working to get jobs for kids. Within this call to action there would have to be recognition that one barrier in gaining employer commitment could be an inability to see disengagement with school reflecting the inadequacy of the structure of education for current times: employers who themselves had not particularly enjoyed school but had persevered would be looking to see some willingness to 'stick at it' by young people. In this conversation lay the seeds of what would connect to become the J4K campaign in conjunction with the Beacon Foundation. It is to an overview of each of dimensions to which we must now turn.

Making an Assemblage

Initially the focus of the ERG was to provide input into the ongoing development and implementation of post-compulsory education and training in the Geelong region. However, by the second half of 2004 the Group was challenging the LLEN: having provided input they wanted to know what was going to be done with their input to improve opportunities for young people. During 2004 SGR LLEN had contracted a local public relations organisation to investigate options for the development of a 'Jobs for Youth' program to reverse the youth unemployment figure in the region through the development of appropriate programs and links between education and industry. That investigation looked towards work undertaken by another LLEN⁷ who had established a one-stop shop for youth employment services along with a youth employment media campaign (O'Dowd 2004). The idea of a one-stop shop for youth had also been identified by the G21 Lifelong Learning Pillar⁸.

⁷ Highlands LLEN, Ballarat.

⁸ The name G21 brings together notions of Groups, Geelong and Goals (G) and the 21st Century (21) (Geelong Regional Alliance n.d.). G21 is led by volunteers from local business and the public sector and formed, according to then State Treasurer and Minister for State and Regional Development John Brumby, the 'biggest regional development undertaken by councils in Victoria... a truly unique partnership between the State government, the council ... all of the key local players, economic, social and environmental' (Bishop 2003). The Lifelong Learning Pillar is one of nine pillars of activity within G21.

In August 2004 the findings of the investigation were presented to the ERG meeting. At that meeting presentations were also made by the Wurreker⁹ Broker on the seemingly intractable issues surrounding Koorie training; the Local Community Partnership¹⁰ also presented information on the federal Department of Education, Science and Training initiative 'Adopt a School'. Both of these presentations generated discussion along with recognition that whilst important work was being undertaken it was splintered, inadequate to the scope of the problems and did not engage with awareness that the issues were multi-faceted and interrelated. For instance, while employers had been involved in earlier initiatives linking industry with schools they felt only so much could be achieved by their commitment when schools were so hard to connect with given their operational structures remained unchanged. Meanwhile, school staff commented that it came down to a resourcing issue: teachers were under pressure to respond to the diverse needs of the increasing numbers of students remaining in school: the priority for teachers was to work with their senior students and ensure their success in the Victorian senior school certificate, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). This was the outcome that parents, and society, still demanded of schools. There was a high level of engagement in the meeting and the issues were widely canvassed, the result of which was that by the end of the meeting it had become clear that a multi-faceted approach was required. This was probably not about collecting information or knowing about best practice; the required response was not one that had the LLEN, or a one-stop shop established by the LLEN, at the centre. Rather, a commitment to youth would be at the centre and all other initiatives would contribute to this commitment. The J4K campaign was reformatted on the basis of this recognition of complexity. When the ERG reconvened in December 2004 the focus was firmly on partnership from five different and interconnected dimensions: state and federal initiatives - including the establishment of an Australian Technical College¹¹ - integrated with the work of G21, SGR LLEN, the LCP and Beacon Geelong. All of these dimensions would form an assemblage that would be known as the J4K Campaign. Before moving to outline that campaign I need to portray the new partner in this assemblage: the Beacon Foundation.

Introducing Beacon

So Beacon set up a new Steering Group and I'm a member of it as is GACC and some others and just over sheer time and everyone feeling a bit worn down by the whole thing and all of that they've agreed the have to work inside the regional thing. Now they have got quite excited about it and when we started talking about the J4K campaign and how they really are an element of that whole thing, Geelong Beacon could really see how that could happen and stopped competing with me. . . . They started to see how much everybody knew about what was going on and rang me one day and said, 'Oh those contacts are so helpful, they understood what we want to do and thank you, thank you, thank you.' And then we had the

⁹ Wurreker is one of the major Koorie communities in the Geelong region; the other major community is the Wathaurong people.

¹⁰ Local Community Partnerships (LCP) are funded and managed by the Australian government and are locally managed by a Board including representatives from education, industry and the community.

¹¹ In 2004 the federal government announced the establishment of 24 Australian Technical Colleges, intended to become operational in 2006. Geelong was one area nominated for the establishment of an Australian Technical College; the collaborative tender facilitated by SGR LLEN being the successful bid.

conversation around ‘This can’t get out of hand, the employers shouldn’t feel they are being approached by thousands of people’ and so on. So that all culminated in a meeting where the CEO of Beacon came down, the Geelong schools were there and some of the industry sponsors of Beacon were there.

The Beacon Foundation is a national, non-profit organisation that was initiated in the southernmost Australia state of Tasmania and has since been replicated around Australia. The Foundation initiates innovative projects to youth unemployment. The implementation of these projects relies on the support of local communities and the employer community at both the local and national level; employers contribute funding, in-kind services and time. In the Geelong region, the Beacon Foundation project that came to the attention of SGR LLEN was the ‘No Dole¹² Program’. This program within schools had originated in 1995 and involves senior school students making a public commitment by way of a pledge to reject any ambition to go ‘on the dole’ and to pursue further education, training or employment. Businesses are involved in the program through providing opportunities for students to experience workplaces; a series of strategies have been designed to stimulate students’ understanding of the world of work. Importantly, the No Dole Program is complemented by another Beacon program, ‘Real Jobs’, which has its focus on the creation of wholly commercially independent and sustainable jobs. This latter program had not been introduced in Geelong. Two local secondary schools in Geelong, each in a Neighbourhood Renewal Area, had joined Beacon and introduced the No Dole Program and Beacon was keen to expand the program within the Geelong community.

The schools could see that you can’t just get kids signing No Dole pledges and going on to work because of how at-risk these kids are, you need all sorts of things going on that fit into a kind of integrated plan . . . But when Beacon came down here and saw that everyone in the room was talking about this regional model, we’ve got multiple pathways that are all part of the J4K strategy and the No Dole thing is a part of that, but it isn’t the full story.

Up to this point, SGR LLEN had made overtures to the Beacon Foundation, recognising that there was potential to connect the Program with the core business of the LLEN while supporting Beacon’s desire to expand into other schools. This offer had not been taken up: Beacon was resistant to having the Project become part of the LLEN’s regional strategy as it was important to their strategy that they maintain control over school recruitment and selection; they also wanted their programs clearly badged. In contrast, the LLEN strategy involved schools self-identifying and becoming part of the network; the LLEN was however keen to connect with Beacon for a number of reasons. Firstly, it didn’t want employers being targeted by Beacon people for workplace learning opportunities when the LCP whom the LLEN contracted to handle the provision of structured workplace learning opportunities for senior school students was already unable to meet the current demand for schools offering VCAL. Secondly, while Beacon couldn’t provide financial resources they could provide access to multi-national employers; they also had political clout and a strong reputation with employers. Furthermore there were concerns about students signing a No Dole Pledge in the absence of the complementary Beacon program to create job opportunities in the area, an aspect of work that schools did not have the

¹² ‘Dole’ is a colloquialism for social support payments.

capacity to undertake without their LLEN. In talking through these issues both parties came to see that the common core business was getting jobs for kids and that the expansion of the No Dole Project could contribute to and be managed not by the LLEN but within the specific context of the J4K Campaign. Just as employers had not needed to know about 'the LLEN' but had heeded the call to action 'jobs for kids' so too the Beacon Foundation did not want to be absorbed by 'the LLEN' but were willing to attempt to work within the J4K Campaign. The Geelong Beacon team became members of the LLEN's Vocational and Applied Learning Working Party which supports the ERG; the LLEN Executive Officer joined the Management Committee of the Geelong Beacon program.

Connection and Consequence

This is synchronistic, this is just extraordinary. The ERG got to the point of challenging me about 'Well, we've given you input. What are you going to do with it.' And I said, 'We are going to do a Business Plan'. Lie, lie, lie because yes, we are going to do a business plan. But I don't know how to do a business plan! I went the following day to the Beacon meeting . . . I took them through the entire kit and caboodle, everyone was so supportive of the model, they all understood it. The CEO of Beacon said, 'What do you need us to do?' And I said, 'We need you to give us access to a business person who will do a business plan for us for the J4K campaign.' He said, 'Okay . . . what is the timeline?' . . . He said, 'Done.' How about that for the universe working?

Once the connection had been established between the work of the Beacon Foundation and the work of the ERG the flow began. Most importantly the LLEN immediately gained access to the skills to place the 'concept in the mind' that was the J4K Campaign into the discourse of industry: a 2005-2007 Business Plan with six strategic priority areas and associated targets¹³. This was a piece of work that the Executive Officer, in providing secretariat services to the ERG, knew had to be undertaken but could not resource. Once the commitment was made to work collaboratively the Beacon Foundation immediately provided this resource through their network. Access to this Business Plan was also of benefit to the Beacon Foundation. They had not worked in this form of collaboration previously and the Business Plan 'helped them see who they were in this context.' The six strategic priorities for the period were: build strong partnerships between industry and the education and training sector to meet local employment and skills needs; the 'Adopt a School' initiative is included in this priority. The second priority is to expand the range of school to work pathways available within the region; initiatives here include the range of structured workplace learning opportunities already underway. Thirdly, a priority interest in improving employability skills and job awareness of Geelong kids; it is here that the No Dole program is included alongside four other initiatives. The fourth priority is to update teachers' awareness of the needs of industry; this includes industry placements for teachers employed by schools involved with Beacon; it also includes opportunities for employers to be 'Principal for a Day'. Fifthly, there is a priority to raise parents' awareness of the value and range of vocational pathways leading to jobs for their children; here the initiatives include industry tours for parents and students and careers sample programs for parents and their children. The final strategic priority is to raise the profile of vocational and applied learning pathways in

¹³ This document was the only 'glossy' document produced by SGR LLEN in 2005. During the same year the Annual Report was produced as a photocopy whereas in earlier years it had been printed. The Executive Officer had come to regard such conventions as a waste of limited resources.

the region; the initiatives under this priority area include a media campaign for the J4K strategy, an Employer Recognition Program promoting the achievements of students in workplace learning programs, regional Training Awards and so on. In all the J4K campaign contained over thirty interrelated initiatives to actively involve industry in the work of SGR LLEN.

You were obviously happy with the Jobs 4 Kids launch.

Um, no I wasn't.

You weren't?

No, I was very unhappy with it. And the reason for that was that not one of the Beacon people mentioned Jobs 4 Kids or the LLEN one single time. Not once. And yet [the LLEN representatives] all very generously put Beacon right up there when they were talking about what we were trying to do in the region.'

15 March 2005 was set down as the date when the J4K Campaign would be collectively launched by SGR LLEN and Beacon Geelong. The Beacon Foundation, in conjunction with SGR LLEN, issued a broad cross-section of the community with invitations to a breakfast at which Peter Kirby, whom had chaired the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria that had led to the establishment of LLEN, would launch the SGR LLEN Jobs 4 Kids Campaign. The venue was a large room in the Sheraton Hotel in Geelong and it was full to capacity: the ERG members were in attendance as were other representatives from the business community, city councillors, LLEN members, education bureaucrats, the media and so on. The meeting was opened by the SGR LLEN ERG Chair who then handed to the ERG Deputy Chair who spoke on the employment and education of young people in the Geelong Region. The meeting was then addressed by the local Beacon representative, the CEO of the Beacon Foundation and the Patron of Beacon Geelong. After breakfast, Peter Kirby gave his address in which he reminded those present that in a 'golden period' in Australia's economy there were at any point in time some 130,000 15-19 year olds seeking work in a context of increasing youth unemployment within the labour market of the risk society. Further, in areas of disadvantage, this challenge was aggravated by a lack of economic and cultural capital. After his keynote address, Mrs Andrews¹⁴, a local Principal, explained that in her school 60% of parents were not a part of the paid labour market; some of her students would, without work, become the third generation of unemployed in the family. For her students, a frequent goal was simply to find out about work and they would ask her, 'How do I go about that Mrs Andrews?' It was the involvement with Beacon Foundation that enabled her school to respond. Having thus set the context, the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign was officially launched in the final 15 minutes of the morning's program. This formal and public launch of the J4K Campaign had been identified as a significant opportunity for the LLEN to foster understanding of its strategic work within the broader Geelong community. And yet in my field notes I have written, 'How does this go? The LLEN is invisible, was this low profile deliberate?'

I was watching [our local Principals] and thinking, 'Oh, this is a huge mistake to have let this go in this way.' I was appalled, all of the conversation about the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign and I

¹⁴ Here a pseudonym has been used.

mean Beacon even helped us with a consultant to put that together and still they didn't refer to it. You know, that blew me away. Um however other people asked me what I thought of it and I said exactly what I've just said to you and they said, 'Well you know as members of the COM we didn't hear it like that.' But they were also co-developers of the Jobs 4 Kids Campaign so they probably firmly in their minds knew how it all sat so they didn't hear this as being all Beacon Beacon Beacon.

As this quote indicates, the culmination of the connection with the Beacon Foundation was problematic for the Executive Officer. On one level, the day was a success and, subsequently, new connections were made between local employers and schools: the Beacon Geelong program was successfully promoted. On the other level, the full J4K Campaign, one of the central platforms for the LLEN's pursuit of a post compulsory education training and employment sector was rendered invisible to those who did not already have an understanding of it. In fact, the reverse occurred: for some attendees the J4K Campaign 'was' the No Dole Program.

Thinking Rhizome

In their innovative work *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) Deleuze and Guattari introduce us to the idea of the rhizome. In accordance with its botanical reference, a rhizome is a type of stem that expands underground horizontally, sending down roots and pushing up shoots that arise and proliferate not from a single core or trunk, but from a network. The rhizome has no centre, it expands endlessly in any number of directions resulting in haphazard and temporary intersections from which no unity appears. The 'multiplicity' of a rhizome is part of its nature; Deleuze and Guattari's multiplicity is not numeric; it is a qualitative multiplicity – an 'event' that cannot be divided up. Multiplicities connect to other multiplicities by superficial underground stems in such a way as to form or extend a rhizome. Within a rhizome there are only lines: dimensional lines of segmentarity and stratification and lines of flight as 'the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.21). Deleuze & Guattari use the term 'deterritorialization' to explain this process of metamorphosis: deterritorialization is, quite literally, the process by which one leaves the territory or moves out of segmentarity and stratification. While deterritorialization can occur, so can 'reterritorialization': a compensation that obstructs or segments the line of flight beyond the territory. Anything can reterritorialize, that is, 'stand for' the lost territory.

We can use these ideas of deterritorialization and reterritorialization to think about the consequences of the connection between the SGR LLEN ERG and the Beacon Foundation. Here, the J4K Campaign is the line of deterritorialization – a line intended to break away from segmentary initiatives in expanding the active involvement of industry in the emerging post compulsory education training and employment sector that was the strategic imperative of SGR LLEN. At the point of the launch the Campaign was reterritorialized: not only captured by the signifier 'No Dole Program' but captured by a signifier that, in isolation, could become a deficit approach to youth-at-risk which firmly, and publicly, placed responsibility for avoiding social support payments on the shoulders of youth regardless of the 'social landscapes' of their lives (Ball, Maguire and Macrae 2000). Thus the line of flight

was segmented, divided into successive proceedings with the risk that the deterritorialization sank into a black hole (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). According to Deleuze and Guattari, there is no way to know in advance if such a reterritorialization will occur and this is why an approach of ‘alogical consistencies’ is the only way to proceed:

The reason is simple. It is because no one, not even God, can say in advance whether two borderlines will string together or form a fiber, whether a given multiplicity will or will not cross over into another given multiplicity, or even if given heterogeneous elements will enter symbiosis, will form a consistent, or cofunctioning, multiplicity susceptible to transformation. No one can say where the line of flight will pass. . . . We are all too familiar with the dangers of the line of flight, and with its ambiguities. The risks are ever-present, but it is always possible to have the good fortune of avoiding them. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.250)

For the Executive Officer the decision take toward the end of 2004 to add Promotions to the core work of the LLEN would become underscored as the means to engage with the dangers of the line of flight and its ambiguities. With the evolution of the J4K Campaign it had become imperative to find mechanisms to reconnect ‘real employers’ with the SGR LLEN approach of making ‘multiplicities’ – lines of intensity which would draw on and build their desire to work towards ‘jobs for kids’. This had been reinforced by the consultant who had worked on the J4K Campaign Business Plan who declared that ‘this LLEN is a big light hiding under a bushel. And it’s time we lifted the bushel.’ The response was what Deleuze and Guattari would refer to as one of ‘alogical consistency’: the LLEN would promote itself by not promoting itself. Thus the glossy Annual Report of previous years was replaced with a photocopied approach and the money saved invested in a range of promotional activities for industry – not about the LLEN but about the J4K Campaign. The intent of these promotions would be to generate a greater understanding of the need for a post compulsory education, training and employment sector and a trust about how it could contribute to the creation of jobs for kids.

So I am also saying to other key people what I have just said to you. Because they need to help me manage this now around the message that gets out there. And I’ve said that I don’t care if I never hear ‘LLEN’ but the rallying thing is Jobs 4 Kids and that’s what has to control it.

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