



## Intework Strategic Plan

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Key Strategies to 2012

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October 2007

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## 1 Introduction

Building on Intework's success after a period of rapid organisational change and facing potential regulatory amendments, it was timely to review the strategic direction and set the course for the next five years.

A collaborative approach was taken in preparing the plan with interviews with stakeholders, staff, management, Board members, clients and carers. The acquittal of the previous strategic plan was analysed and used as a basis for the Board and Executive discussions. A Board and Executive Workshop was held on 17 July 2007. The outcomes of the workshop are encompassed in this Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan contains Intework's Purpose, Vision and Five Year Goal. It outlines Intework's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and identifies the organisation's Strategic Issues. The Plan also states the Strategies Intework will put in place to resolve its Strategic Issues and achieve its Five Year Goal.

The intent is for this plan to be a living document that is referred to, reviewed and built on throughout the years. It is also an embodiment of the clear, common commitment of the Board and Executive to the organisation.

## 2 Intework Overview

### 2.1 Background

Intework was established in January 1991 to assist new school leavers with the transition from school to work. In early 1998, Intework also implemented a community access program, now referred to as the LifeSkills Program.

Intework's employment programs offer supported employment services assisting people with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment in the regular workforce. There are two employment directed programs. The Business Services Program offers opportunities for clients to work under supervision within enclaves undertaking various work activities. The Open Employment Program offers supported entry into paid employment in the open labour market. The LifeSkills Program provides a range of skill development activities involving community integration and assisting people with disabilities to develop pre-vocational and general life skills.

Since its inception, Intework has grown from assisting 20 clients out of a single office in Osborne Park, to more than 627 clients operating out of 4 regional offices. Following the establishment of Intework in 1991, 1992 saw the creation of a second office in Fremantle, followed by the setting up of a Midland Branch in 1994, Kelmscott in 1997 and Joondalup in 1998. Intework's Fremantle branch formed a separate agency in 1995.

In acknowledgement of the increasing complexity associated with these developments Intework resolved to make a transition from an Executive Team structure involving regional managers and two Board members, to a traditional CEO structure. A Chief Executive Officer was appointed in 2005 supported by a management team which reports to the Board each month.

The Board is responsible for and oversees all policy and planning, financial matters, legal issues, and appoints and manages the CEO. The Board delegates day-to-day operation of Intework to the CEO. Board members have been targeted to enhance the spread of skills available to Intework, but continues the tradition of strong input from the family members of clients.

### 2.2 Our Present Situation

As at 30 June 2007, Intework was providing support to 627 clients in our employment and LifeSkills programs. 246 clients were in the Open Employment Program, 175 in the Business Services program and 186 in the LifeSkills program. Clients were assisted in the following regions:

- Central Metropolitan 146 (Stirling/Osborne Park)
- East Metropolitan 155 (Midland/Midvale)
- South East Metropolitan 145 (Gosnells)
- North Metropolitan 147 (Joondalup)
- South West Regional 7 (Peel / Busselton)

The full range of the 3 Programs is offered at Stirling, Midland, Joondalup and Gosnells with Stirling's Open Employment being based at Osborne Park. The South West operation is currently restricted to only providing LifeSkills.

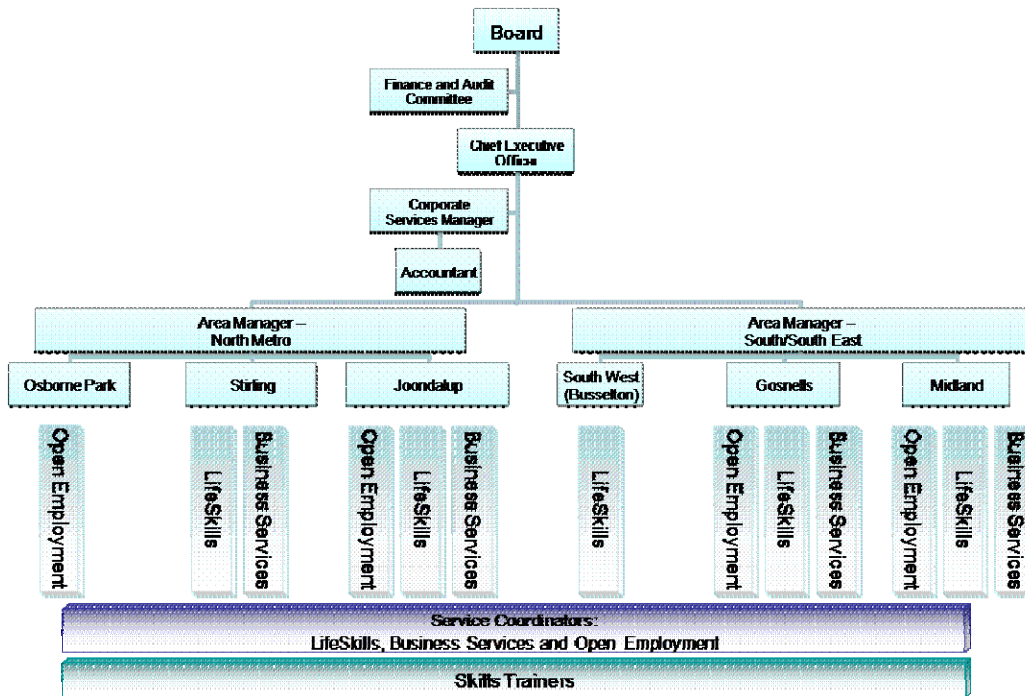
At 30 June 2007, Intework had 49 full-time, 44 part-time and 43 casual support staff and an operating budget of \$6.7 million.

The 3 Programs offered by Intework are funded by separate state and federal departments. Business Services is funded by the federal Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. This Department previously funded the Open Employment Program but this was taken up by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations in late 2004. The LifeSkills Program is funded by the state through the Disability Services Commission.

**2.3 Acquittal of Previous Strategic Plan**

Attached as an Appendix to this report is an acquittal against Intework's last Strategic Plan (2001-06). It demonstrates relatively high levels of achievement against key elements of that Plan. However, in the intervening period there have been a number of significant developments which were not anticipated in its formulation. Most significant of these is the transition in management structure and the involvement of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations as a funding body with a strong policy emphasis in the disability area.

**2.4 Organisational Structure**



**3 Purpose**

A Purpose defines the organisation's reason for being. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to the Purpose of the agency as previously formulated. In the course of the research for this Plan (2007-12) no input was received suggesting that the existing Purpose, Mission and Values of Intework required fundamental review.

However, in order to guide the delivery of this Plan the Board distilled the meaning of the previous Purpose into a more succinct and energetic phrase.

***“We develop and promote each of our clients as valued members of the community through life skills development, including employment.”***

At Intework, the client interest is paramount and we recognise that our clients will be with us over the longer term. As part of this long term partnership with our clients, we strive to assist them not only in meeting their immediate needs but also their goals and aspirations. We seek to assist them to be recognised as valued members of the community through individualised personal development.

Intework's point of difference is our emphasis on developing and promoting each client, regardless of individual personal challenges.

Intework has two Key Performance Indicators outlined in the table below.

Key Performance Indicators	Measures
1. Sustainable level of individual client service meeting funders minimum benchmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Percentage of clients meeting or exceeding benchmark. (Specific to each funded program)</li> </ul>
2. Client satisfaction level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Percentage of clients satisfied with level of service</li> <li>▪ Number of client complaints</li> </ul>

## 4 Values

Intework has a strong commitment to clients, families and carers, working together in a professional and caring manner. In doing so, Intework aspires to act in accordance with the following values in all of its decisions and actions.

### 1. Our clients' interests are paramount

We respect our clients' rights and interests above all else. We focus on the person and not on the disability. We respect and acknowledge the unique qualities of each individual and believe that diversity is a valuable community asset.

We are committed to working with our clients to explore and attain their goals and aspirations. As emphasised in our Purpose, we are committed to promoting the value of people with disabilities and the many valued social roles that are in our community.

### 2. We are inspired by challenges

For Intework, this means that we work towards meeting changing needs of clients, government and community.

We welcome clients who require substantial assistance and support to participate in the programs of their choice and to meet their aspirations.

### 3. We believe in the value of partnerships

We recognise that in meeting the interests of our clients, we need to work in partnership with families, carers, funders, government agencies, other service providers and the business community.

### 4. We are accountable for service delivery

We maintain a high standard of service throughout all the areas of our business. Our clients can expect the same range of services and a consistent standard of delivery in all the different regions in which we operate.

### 5. We strive for continuous improvement

We continually seek ways to improve our services and standards. We strive for improvement through staff development, innovative practices and increased professionalism.

5 Vision

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to Intework’s overarching Vision as previously formulated:

***“The ideal world we are working towards is one of an inclusive society where individuals are valued for their unique contribution.”***

The Board also set a five year stretch goal to assist Intework in moving in a demonstrable way towards its ideal world. By 2012, Intework is aiming:

***“To be the recognised provider of choice of responsive services by offering high quality support and assistance whilst continuing to grow with diversity and strength.”***

Intework is seeking to be recognised by its clients and potential clients, government, funders, the business community and the industry as being a provider of choice of tailored services. Intework will work to achieve this through evolving and growing to meet clients’ and employers’ needs in a rapidly changing environment for disability services delivery. A key area of our success in this area will be based upon the Quality and Continuous improvement of our services. To this end all levels of the organisation will be encouraged to be proactive in generating, evaluating and developing ideas for new services and/or processes.

The achievement of the five year stretch goal will be explicitly measured by the following performance indicators. The goal will have been met when the following targets have been achieved.

Performance Indicator	Measure
<b>Responsiveness and Quality of Service</b>	
High quality of responsive service	Meet or exceed local, state, Commonwealth government or industry standards, Accreditations or registrations
	Continuous Improvement measures introduced by Board, Management or Staff are acquitted within set timeframes
<b>Reputation and Recognition</b>	
Increased recognition as being a provider of choice	Growth of non-restricted (Capped) Programs (New Funded Positions (Registrations))
	Number of negative client exits
	Annual client satisfaction levels and result against benchmarks
	Satisfaction levels of business / employers
<b>Organisational Responsibility and Responsiveness</b>	
Due to a changing and competitive environment, Intework seeks to ensure, through responsible corporate development, the best use of available resources	Set a financial budget with an operating surplus each year
	Maintain cash reserves to meet working capital requirements
	Percentage staff with tertiary qualifications and/or Structured Program undertaken
	Percentage income expended on training.
Encourage and maintain the organisation’s ability to respond effectively to change and maximise opportunities for Innovation	Total Staff hours of training (inclusive of completed structured training / Acting / Development)
	Client/Stakeholder Interests and needs are regularly monitored and widely reviewed.
	Research and Development is encouraged by ensuring finance is always available to explore and further develop innovative ideas
	Supportive infrastructure

## 6 Situational Analysis

Intework's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified by the Executive. This was informed by interviews with the Board, Executive, clients, carers, staff and funders. The resulting SWOT was refined at the 17 July 2007 Board and Executive Strategic Planning Workshop and used to define the Strategic Issues and Strategies for Intework.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Value Base of Board, management and staff</li> <li>▪ Willing to service and commitment to clients with significant support needs</li> <li>▪ Reputation of Intework with funders, clients and industry</li> <li>▪ Financial management</li> <li>▪ Diversity of Programs with 3 different funders. Eggs not all in one basket.</li> <li>▪ Regional programs base / coverage (5 metro regions)</li> <li>▪ Range and diversity of services</li> <li>▪ Integrated employment – both Open and Business Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funders control the funds and set the rules. Constant battle for dollars from the funders.</li> <li>▪ Difficulty in recruiting and retaining quality staff</li> <li>▪ Cost pressures leading to operational restrictions</li> <li>▪ Lack of succession planning – Board and staff</li> <li>▪ Potential "silo effects" within the organisation</li> <li>▪ Lack of self-promotion/ well recognised image</li> <li>▪ Burnout and lack of skills in high support areas</li> <li>▪ Lack of targeted training</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Niche market – as other agencies are not willing or able to support clients with significant needs</li> <li>▪ Become the agency of choice for 'values based' staff</li> <li>▪ Obtain funds from outside sources or sponsors</li> <li>▪ Environmentally responsible agency</li> <li>▪ Business Services – monies available from grants</li> <li>▪ Profile opportunities – in the past Intework has been low key</li> <li>▪ Labour needs – opportunities for more enclaves to fill labour shortages</li> <li>▪ Increased Regional service delivery options</li> <li>▪ Flexibility of employment (family friendly staffing)</li> <li>▪ Respite development (e.g. Intensive Family Support Development)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All our funding is from Government and funders. No outside sources of funding.</li> <li>▪ Governments push for such things as Welfare to Work and Mutual Obligation</li> <li>▪ Continuing tight labour market</li> <li>▪ Funding shortfalls – indexation, capital replacement</li> <li>▪ Competitive tender process in Open Employment</li> </ul>

Intework's commitment and willingness to service clients who require substantial assistance to access opportunities in the community draws on its strong value base throughout the organisation and is embodied in the range and diversity of services provided. Intework provides employment support both in the Open Employment and Business Services programs, enabling clients to integrate more freely into their community. This commitment to challenges and to its clients has been translated into its reputation with funders, clients and the industry. Intework is well managed financially and has diversified its funding risks through the range of the programs offered.

While Intework has a diversity of funding through different Government bodies, all of its funding comes from Government, which is undesirable given the potential for rapid changes. Also there is substantial risk of funding decisions being made on policy grounds inconsistent with Intework's identified Purpose and Vision. The current funding availability is also leading to operational restrictions due to cost pressures and difficulty in attracting and retaining quality staff. It is recognised that there is the potential for burnout and lack of specialised skills among staff required to support clients with substantial support needs in pursuit of their agreed goals, as well as a more general need for targeted training of staff. Succession planning is required across the organisation and more work needs to be undertaken to avoid a blinkered divisional focus and to address it where it exists. Intework also lacks a clear, recognised image in the broader public and a defined marketing program.

Intework's strong values and its commitment to clients who require substantial input/support to participate in the programs of their choice may be leveraged to take advantage of its niche market and to attract employees. Opportunities to attract staff may also be found through offering flexible working arrangements. Intework could diversify its funding sources through corporate sponsorships or other grants. Due to its ageing client and carer base, Intework could also offer additional respite type products. Due to general labour shortages, businesses may outsource work, creating opportunities for our service.

Potential threats faced by Intework include changes to Government policy, a continuing tight labour market, affecting staff attraction and turnover; and, the introduction of a competitive tendering process in the Open Employment program in 2009.

## 7 Resolving Strategic Issues

Intework must address five Strategic Issues to achieve the Five Year Goal identified on page 6 and ultimately achieve its overarching Vision:

Strategic Issues	
1	Maintain an appropriate and effective workforce
2	Prepare for increased competition
3	Ensure organisation aligned with the strategic direction
4	Increase specialist recognition to be easily identifiable
5	Develop new services and sources of funds for improved delivery of existing services and programs

Strategies are presented to address each of these Strategic Issues. Performance indicators are also presented for each Strategic Issue.

## 8 Strategic Program

Intework's strategies have been developed over three planning horizons extending out to 2012. The three horizons are:

### Horizon 1 (2008): *Get Fit*

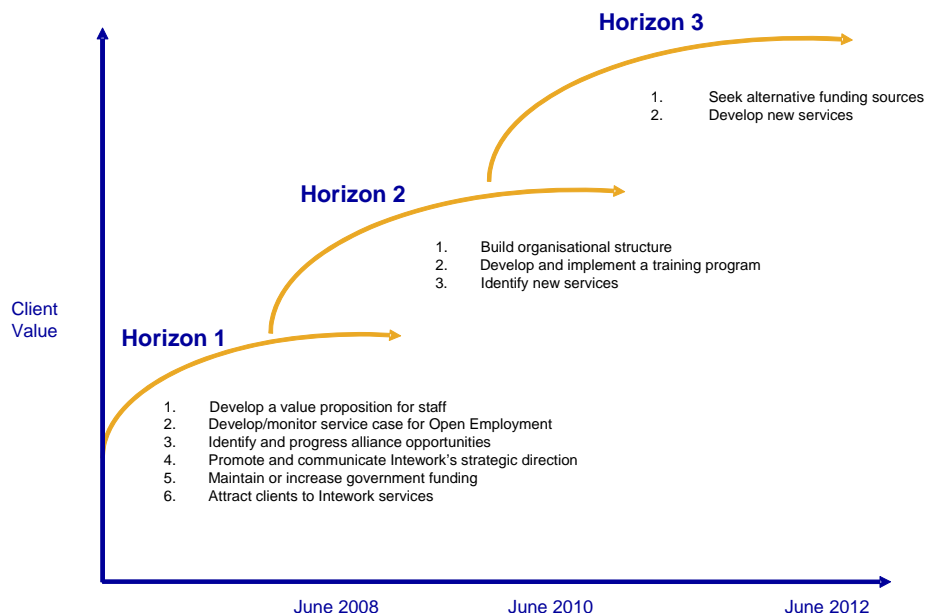
The first horizon establishes a foundation for growth based on aligning Intework's activities to its Purpose, Vision and Five Year Goal. As part of the alignment, Intework will concentrate on embedding its organisational structure, creating a values and lifestyle based environment for staff, and preparing for increased competition.

### Horizon 2 (2010): *Extend*

Horizon 2 will build on its reputation and services base. Intework will seek to develop services appropriate to the changing needs of clients and funding bodies. As part of this development, Intework will aim to increase its links with stakeholders and the community. Intework will also seek to diversify its funding base .

### Horizon 3 (2012): *Create Options*

The emphasis of Horizon 3 is to create options for Intework's future. This may include a re-evaluation of its core business to find new services, new methods of delivery and new partnerships.



**8.1 Maintain an appropriate and effective workforce**

The need to maintain an appropriate and effective workforce is increasingly becoming an issue with labour shortages and the rapidly changing IR/HR legislation and reforms. Intework will need to develop an appealing value proposition for staff both in terms of attracting and retaining them. This may include lifestyle and value considerations, training and other mechanisms.

**8.2 Prepare for Increased Competition and Opportunities**

Changes are underway which will see Intework competing with other providers for new clients and services. Intework will need to consider what is required to compete and if services should continue, change or expand.

The Open Employment program in particular will be exposed to significant competition in 2009 with Competitive Tendering. This may also be an opportunity for other mainstream employment providers to purchase Intework's services or to partner with Intework on projects which offer services to Intework clients and/or generate additional income streams.

The LifeSkills and Business Services Programs also face competition and need to consider the competition posed by centre based programs and reduced integration options as provided by other services in the community.

**8.3 Ensure the organisation is aligned with the strategic direction**

After considerable changes over the previous year, it is necessary to consolidate and embed the new organisational structure and strategic direction and as such it will be essential to communicate the strategic direction and the reasons for the changes to the organisational structure both internally and externally.

Intework's values, culture and history place a strong emphasis on clients with significant requirements for assistance and support in achieving program outcomes. However, the funding available, with underlying policy imperatives from government, and case management issues have necessitated Intework to take a more holistic approach to servicing clients across the spectrum of disability support levels. This to be achieved whilst maintaining our niche in the high support end of the spectrum.

Additionally, a number of key decisions still need to be made relating to the way the organisation conducts its business, which will affect parts of the organisational design such as the regional or program focus.

**8.4 Increase specialist recognition to be easily identifiable**

While Intework has had a long and distinguished history, it is not necessarily recognised by potential clients, funders, industry and the community. The name "Intework" is currently not clearly recognised or representative of the range of services that the organisation has to offer and this is affecting potential client referrals and growth. The corporate image is difficult to promote and communicate without a clear and consistent identity being available.

Additionally, attraction and retention of clients is an important issue for Intework. With the state only referral system influencing one of our programs (Post School Options Program) and the others being adversely affected by inconsistent referral systems such as Centrelink, Schools etc, it is essential to identify and secure new clients through alternative pathways. Thereby complementing the traditional referral sources.

To become the provider of choice, it is important to improve the image and recognition of Intework.

**8.5 Develop new services and alternative sources of funds for improved delivery of existing services and programs**

To maintain its relevance and to continue fulfilling the needs of its clients, Intework may need to consider developing other services. With longer life spans and ageing clients and carers, there is an opportunity to consider alternative services which Intework might offer.

## Appendix 1: Acquittal of 2001-2006 Strategic Plan

**Organisational Integrity:** *To ensure that our vision and values remain the foundation of service practice and delivery*

**Outcome Indicators: Putting people first**

- ✓ **Our success in retaining localised services**  
Services have remained localised. The Osborne park office was opened to assist with congestion at Stirling office. Midland and Kelmscott offices moved location to better meets needs of clients and staff.
- ✓ **The degree to which our clients and their families feel that our services are personalised and empowering**  
Client feedback surveys indicate a general level of satisfaction with services. Clients (and their families) meet with Coordinators to develop individualised service plans. Coordinator Caseloads remain manageable and appointing Program Managers has ensured Management know clients and their families personally.

**Outcome Indicator: Staying true to our client group**

- ✓ **The proportion of our clients with high support needs**  
For the purposes of this acquittal the average funding level per client has been taken as an indication of support need trends: **2001/2:** \$9,896 **2002/3:** \$10,045 **2003/4:** \$10,400 **2004/5:** \$11,254 **2005/6:** \$11,254. At the close of this reporting period client with high support needs are well represented in Lifeskills (30% of total client numbers) and Business Services (97% of clients are funded at level 3 or 4) but are underrepresented in Open Employment (65% are funded at level 3 or 4).

**Forward work plan**

The Board will need to keep a watching brief on the Open Employment program to ensure it is reflecting the mission of the organisation.

Feedback during the course of stakeholder consultation has revealed disruption to clients programs due to staff feeling ill equipped to meet the needs of clients with 1:1 support requirements feedback has also indicated variability between standards and operating arrangements between regional offices.

**Organisational Vitality:** *To be an organisation that meets individual needs, is responsive and pro-active to environmental change and maintains efficient and effective practices*

**Outcome Indicators: Structures**

- ✓ **Our Success in becoming a quality assured organisation**  
Intework's employment programs became Quality Assured in November 2003
- ✓ **The degree to which our Board and staff are satisfied that our internal practices allow the organisation to function in a unified and pro-active manner**  
The restructure of the Organisation in 2005 has seen it function in a more unified manner. Several acting opportunities have been filled with staff outside of the region; staff training and social functions have been arranged on a whole of organisation basis. We have also made inroads into standardising some functions such as the development of Controlled Documents, staff procedure manuals and the Intranet. The staff survey conducted in 2006 showed that staff are generally satisfied with the structures and workings of the organisation.

**Outcome Indicators: Staff Development**

- ✓ **The degree to which our staff are satisfied with the support and opportunities offered to them and management feel that staff involvement in the organisation is efficient and appropriate.**  
The restructure has not only provided a more effective Management to staff support ratio it has also given greater opportunities to staff for career development. The 2006 staff satisfaction survey has revealed staff are generally satisfied with the organisation's supervision practices and the confidence, encouragement and support shown to staff. The small team approach to project work has also provided for greater staff involvement in the organisation.
- ✓ **The degree to which staff are equipped with the necessary skills to perform their various duties effectively**  
Intework has heavily invested in staff training. Training has included external and internal courses and training, conferences, seminars and workshops. Training has been spread amongst all staff within the Organisation and has covered a breadth of areas.

**Forward work plan:**

Through stakeholder consultation in preparation for the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan one of the main issues raised by staff was training. There is a general level of frustration that there is not the access to, and funding for quality staff training which is in turn impacting on staff morale and retention.

**Outcome Indicators: Partnerships and Alliances**

- ✓ **The degree to which we maintain positive and effective contact with prospective clients, our funders and other organisations in the disability services sector**  
Intework has shown leadership in the way we have maintained strong working relationships with stakeholders in the disability services sector. There is strong representation in peak bodies and working parties, we have also provided training and advise to other DEN providers. All regions have good working relationships with staff in referral departments such as Centrelink and PSO.
- ✓ **The organisation determines whether to pursue income producing partnerships and strategies.**  
Staff working party determined a trading arm and training and development arm was not feasible. All Business Service work crews have business plans in place to work towards economic independence in the competitive market place. Grants have been received through lotteries west.

**Program Responsiveness:** *To strive for continuous improvement and ensure that services are individualised, professional and responsiveness*

**Outcome Indicators: Employment Program**

- ✓ **The percentage of employer contacts converted into employment outcomes and the number of clients employed.**  
High employment outcomes have been maintained: 2001/2: 80%, 2002/3: 77%, 2003/4: 82%, 2004/5: 79%, 2005/6: 62%
- ✓ **Our success in ensuring that our supported employment model remains an appropriate and effective area of our employment programme.**  
Supported employment (Business Services) has remained an integral part of Intework's core business. As a result of the restructure Business Services Managers were appointed at each region and for the 2005/6 reporting period 37% of total Intework clients were in the business services stream.

**Outcome Indicators: Lifeskills Program**

- ✓ **The extent to which our staff and clients feel that our programme is flexible and appropriate to meeting individual goals**  
The review found that overall the program met the expectations of clients and families. Clients have individualised plans with specific and measurable training goals. The program has resisted the cost saving option of centre based activities.

**Forward work plan**

Through consultation meetings there has been some feedback from parents that the structure of the Lifeskills program could benefit from more flexibility to allow for individualised programming.

- ✓ **The degree to which staff and other stakeholders view the program as a valued and important option for people with disabilities**  
The LifeSkills program has undergone significant diversification and strengthening over this period. It has grown at the same rate as the employment programs. It has a specific manager appointed at each region. Its excellent reputation has seen the organisation successful in tendering for the Learning for Work Pilot and becoming an endorsed Intensive Family Support program

**Outcome Indicators: Research and Development**

- ✓ **The number of research and development projects undertaken and incorporated into programs and services between 2001 – 2006**  
Monies for research and development are set aside when budgeting.  
A number of projects were undertaken and implemented in this period including:
  - Development of an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for clients in Business Services
  - The establishment of an Osborne Park office
  - Successful tender for uncapped employment places