

# CPAs find the Correct Balance



**When** professional association CPA Australia was planning their annual management conference, they were looking for solid business outcomes and not just talk.

With over 102,000 members worldwide, CPA Australia is Australia's largest professional body and the sixth largest accounting body in the world. Its diverse membership represents every type of business from sole trader to multinational, and its staff have a similarly diverse range of knowledge.

CEO Greg Larsen and Business Planning Manager Patrick McDermott were looking for something genuinely different, on-subject, fun and effective to drive the whole Conference. Both senior executives were very familiar with the usual team-building games, conference activities and conference session facilitation that was available and were looking for something better.

Some 50 delegates arrived on a Sunday evening at a country retreat about two hours' drive from Melbourne. A Team Results senior facilitator and their team were waiting to greet them. Once the group was settled in, they were immediately posed with a challenging problem that accurately simulated some of the challenges they would need to face at CPA Australia – both during the conference itself, and afterward when they returned to work.

Combining the indoors and the outdoors, the project – which lasted for 1½ days of the 3½ day conference – was entirely under the management of the CPA Australia team. Every member was actively engaged in planning, strategising and then testing their own personal and team strategies to help CPA Australia become "the choice" organisation for all its stakeholders.

Managing both high and low technology, big planning challenges and state-of-the art feedback systems, staff combined great fun with Team Results' proprietary Simulation, Reflection and Facilitation techniques and were each able to participate to the level that gave highest benefit to them and to the team.

"It was life-changing," reflected one participant. "We were already good operators, but now we're unstoppable."

"It was the best conference we've ever had," added another participant. "I wanted specific results, not tree-hugging, and frankly I had low expectations. What happened just blew me away."

"It exceeded all my expectations as well," concludes Patrick McDermott. "We had a terrific conference, and I'm delighted we took a chance on Team Results – who we had not worked with before – to run something really innovative, relevant and effective."