

The Kellogg Journey



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Executive summary

The New Zealand Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme (KRLP) is a highly respected industry leadership programme which develops emerging agribusiness leaders to help shape the future of New Zealand's primary industry.

The purpose of this study was to get feedback from Kellogg Alumni, looking at their expectations of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme and success since they have completed the programme. This was done by interviewing past participants and asking them to evaluate different phases of the program and think about how that has impacted their careers.

The skills expected to be gained and developed by the participants were finance, industry and business skills, leadership development, confidence and self-awareness development, presentation and public speaking, communication and organisational skills. Most of the participants said skills they were expecting to learn were taught or developed further.

Kellogg Rural Leaders Program has helped to make most participants aware of wider networks, through exposure to different industries within the primary sector and gaining confidence to utilise the networks, including using technology and social media sites such as Twitter.

The program has built confidence for these Kelloggers interviewed, enhanced leadership skills, developed networks and opportunities to step up and have a say; to contribute and grow within our Primary sector. The program has hugely influenced personal and professional growth. The learning style within the program is of great benefit. There were learnings from all parts of the program, especially where recommendations have been made for improvement to speakers and workshops. This highlights to the participants what not to do.

Every person who I interviewed remains in the primary industry and has adopted new roles or opportunities within the wider primary sector and local community since participating in the Kelloggs Rural Leadership Programme. The Programme has met and exceeded expectations and 100% of interviewees said the Kellogg Rural Leadership program has positively impacted their career.

1.0 Introduction

The New Zealand Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme (KRLP) is a highly respected industry leadership programme which develops emerging agribusiness leaders to help shape the future of New Zealand's primary industry.

The Programme started at Lincoln University in 1979 and has had over 600 participants. Each year, up to 24 men and women who live and work in rural New Zealand are selected (from application).

The programme is split into three phases. Phase one is a 10 day block course at Lincoln University, where the participants are exposed to an array of industry leaders, who give presentations regarding their industry and take part in many different workshops. Phase two is where the participants remain in their own environment and over 10 months they study a topic of personal choice (this is the 'project'). A report is prepared and a presentation is delivered to the Kellogg group in phase three. Phase three is a week together again. Half of the week is in Christchurch, at Lincoln University presenting the 'projects' and half the week in Wellington, meeting and interviewing industry leaders.

The aim of this programme is to

- develop robust leadership skills
- learn how political, cultural, social, economic and physical forces impact on New Zealand agribusiness; and
- Establish networks with leaders from New Zealand and beyond.

The purpose of this study was to get feedback from Kellogg Alumni, looking at their expectations of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme and success since they have completed the programme.

For my project, I interviewed past participants of KRLP as I believed it would help me to put into practice some of my learnings of phase 1 and to challenge my comfort zone on a professional level.

Throughout Phase one I identified that I was lacking confidence, which has been inhibiting my networking potential. I am very passionate about people; especially influencing change and inspiring people I wanted my project to be people based – Human resources are so precious. There is a lot of innovation and technology which is changing our world. More computers and devices which are creating efficiencies, in my opinion, we cannot lose sight

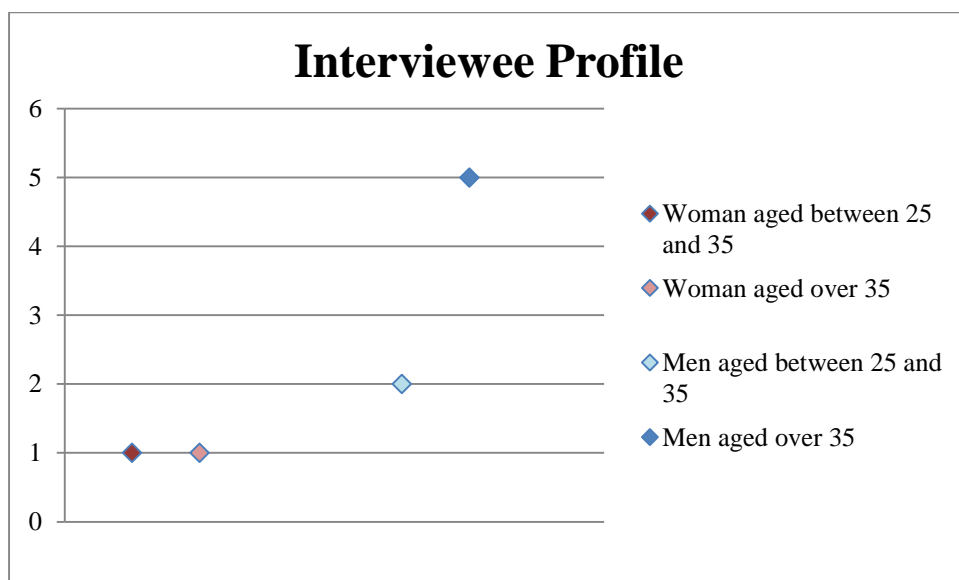
of growing and developing human capability.. I explored many people related topics, such as the mental wellbeing of rural New Zealand, the changing role of woman in the agricultural sector etc., however I chose to look at the value the KRLP has had on past participants. Due to my own experience at Outward Bound, I am very aware that my life has changed beyond any expectations I had from my Outward Bound experience. Outward Bound pushed my comfort zone both physically and mentally. I chose to apply for the KRLP to push my comfort zone professionally. I have referred to the KRLP as the Outward Bound for my career. By doing this study, I was able to talk to past participants of the programme and hear their challenges and experiences. This has been great for helping me lift my confidence and extend my networking skills. , which I struggled with in phase one.

Please note: Confidentiality of each interview has been preserved. There is no referencing to any of the interviewees to any comments of experiences.

2.0 Method

Through phone meetings and emails, I worked with Patrick H. B. Aldwell, Academic Director of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme to design a questionnaire that would be of benefit for my needs of the survey and would be useful information to Lincoln University as the interviewees were selected from the Kellogg Alumni book and matched the following criteria

- All except one had to have completed the course within the last 10 years
- A mix of men and woman
- A variety of years attended
- Have varying positions within the agriculture industry and varying sectors, including at least 1 high profile person



*note: Age when attended Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme

Each interview was conducted in person and where possible in their home or place of work. I was the interviewer each time. Three interviews were carried out at my home due to convenience of travel and time constraints.

The interview time ranged from 45 minutes to 1hr, 45 min. I had the same questions for each interview and I wrote the answers where possible word for word. I had a voice recorder recording the interview for referencing at a later date if required. I also made notes of any interesting points beyond the questions being asked.

Three case studies have been written up as an insight to the range of the participants interviewed and the difference in the way that individuals valued different aspects of the programme.

A summary of each section has been written, based on the questionnaire and learnings from the interview process, and reported as findings of the interviews.

3.0 Case studies

After interviewing nine previous Kellogg Participants, I have written up three interviews. The interviews were chosen randomly from the interviewees.

3.1 Case Study 1

Completed KRLP in 2008

Position when doing KLRP:

Day to day sheep and beef farming

Current position:

Financial & strategy position of sheep and beef farming operation and actively farming

Community involvement (Rural community) in 2008:

Trustee on Lake Taupo Protection Trust

Previously had a role with **Taupo Lake Care** Group (farmer group, conservation variation 5)

Current community involvement (Rural community)

Deputy Chair of Lake Taupo protection trust

Trustee on QEII National trust

Chair of catchment liaison committee

Qualified hearings commissioner

Case study 1 (CS1) had known of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme (KRLP) for years through friends, colleagues and previous Kelloggers. CS1 had wanted to apply eight years previous to attending; however they were not able to with too many home commitments. CS1 applied to KRLP as they wished to upskill. CS1 wanted to contribute more to the local community and had aspirations to spread the message of nutrient loss from paddock to lake. CS1 wanted to be growing - preparing themselves for a challenge. To be better skilled and better informed. To be prepared. To have the ability to take on and deliver a project to a high level.

On a professional basis CS1 was looking for direction, networking and growth skills, however CS1 was expecting to examine current skills as opposed to obtain new skills.

The skills that were expected to be examined or gained by applying for KRLP were public speaking and industry exposure. This was well delivered by the programme. On a scale of one to five, one being not delivered and five being delivered well, CS1 has said five out of five on delivery of skills expected, with the comment of "Kellogg was just the start"

The biggest 'Step up' for CS1 is the recognition that they can contribute at a board table. The valuable set of skills gained on KRLP that are hard to quantify however, largely comes from the confidence gained.

The phase one section of the programme helped CS1 to improve self-awareness. It was a great experience to learn how to cope under pressure & have confidence to contribute. The VARK ¹ during phase one was also very valuable to improve self-awareness.

Phase one was the most influential in awareness of other industries within the Agricultural industry and the broader rural economy of New Zealand. The industry presentations & fellow Kelloggers were a catalyst in gaining awareness.

KRLP helped to build CS1's networks through exposure to different industries and a range of jobs, especially people who they would have never met. Many of these networks have been used for sources of information and friendship and are continuously a 'work in progress'. They are continuously evolving.

The most useful part of the course for CS1 was the opportunity to do the research project. KRLP gave the framework and assistance to complete the project. The single most valuable outcome of KRLP is the opportunity to work and grow as an individual, in a group, in a safe environment.

The expectations of KRLP were the more you put in, the more you will get out, to be exposed to an interesting array of people to work with and to recognise where personal growth is needed. Throughout my interview with CS1 and discussions about their experiences as a 2008 Kellogger, I believe all these expectations have been met. CS1 commented that they were exceeded, during and post KRLP. The level of pressure was underestimated, however commented there were a few gems in KRLP.

¹ VARK is a questionnaire that provides respondents with a profile of their learning and communication preferences. Visual, Aural, Read/Write, Kinesthetic

3.2 Case Study 2

Completed KRLP in 2006

Position when doing KRLP:

Hawkes Bay farmer

Current position:

Hawkes Bay farmer/director

Community involvement (Rural community) in 2006:

Current community involvement (Rural community)

- Chairman: New Zealand Poplar and Willow Research Trust
- East Coast Chairman: Ballance Farm Environmental Awards
- Trustee: Todd Charitable Trust Foundation
- Trustee: Motu Research

Case study 2 (CS2) had known of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme (KRLP) through a farming magazine. Although CS2 was sheep and beef farming with a rural upbringing, they had been in banking for 20 years prior. CS2 was excited about the politics of the Ag industry and wanted to 'step up'.

CS2 expected to gain skills in leadership, confidence to step up and have an opinion, and to learn more about themselves (self-awareness). On a scale of one to five, one being not delivered and five being delivered well, CS2 said the delivery of these skills from KRLP was four to four and a half

The biggest step up CS2 has made since starting the Kellogg journey has been becoming the National President of Federated Farmers NZ

The self-analysis and the high ropes course is what helped CS2 to improve self-awareness. It was seeing people dynamics during the high ropes which contributed to this.

Phase three was the most influential in awareness of other industries within the Agricultural industry and the broader rural economy of New Zealand. It was the trip to Wellington where they learnt the importance of networking and realising that so many people are linked.

CS2's networks have been developed by the KRLP by learning how small New Zealand is in phase one, seeing the range of industry speakers. Also in Wellington at phase three, CS2 saw the collaboration and how all the networks of many people. So many people were linked.

Having being a shy and private person, the most useful part of the KRLP is they have now conquered their biggest fear. They will now step up and have a say.

This has not only been through the skills and awareness taught on the KRLP but also through the journey post Kellogg

CS2 had very little expectation of the programme, they had no idea what to expect, however it was a very worthwhile journey and is happy to have completed the programme.

3.3 Case study 3

Completed KRLP in 2012

Position when doing KRLP:

Policy Analyst at MAF when applied to Kellogg

Beef and Lamb extension manager when attending Kellogg

Current position:

Environment Extension Manager at Beef + Lamb New Zealand

Community involvement (Rural community) in 2012

- Vice Chairman Waikato & B.O.P Young Farmers
- Comitee member for canoe polo – Hamilton
- Public speaking with kids in schools regarding Agriculture

Current community involvement (Rural community)

- Trustee: TeAraroa (Waikato)
- Public speaking with kids in schools regarding Agriculture

Case Study 3 (CS3) learnt of Kellogg Rural Leaders Programme (KRLP) through their father, who had completed the programme in 1992. CS3 has also had consistent exposure to the programme through other Kelloggers.

CS3 was at a stage where they needed something to reconnect them with the agriculture industry, more than what they were getting from the work position they held. KRLP became the next growth step for professional and personal development.

CS3 had expectations of further developing leadership skills, as opposed to new skills and skills around governance. On a scale of one to five, one being not delivered and five being delivered well, CS3 commented that the leadership skills were five out of five and governance was three out of five.

The biggest step up for CS3 has been identifying the need for, and creating a new role within their target industry. The project that CS3 completed helped them to achieve this, and the programme itself provided the ability to gain the confidence and awareness to apply for the position, in which they are the successor of.

The part of the course which helped to improve self-awareness for CS3 was the critical thinking session. Becoming aware of how others perceive them and adjusting their presentation and communication styles to suit the audience, especially in their new role. The media reviews each morning were helpful to appreciate how different people interpret and respond. CS3 became very aware of how not to respond if they wanted to build credibility for becoming an influential person in the agricultural industry. For example, during phase one, a high profile speaker demonstrated unpleasantness through being abrupt and dismissive to questions.

Phase one was the most influential in awareness of other industries within the Agricultural industry and the broader rural economy of New Zealand. It was the industry updates which opened their eyes to the whole industry rather than the sector they were working in.

CS3 found that by being a student of KRLP, it acted as a door opener for many networks. Being a Kellogger meant that there was a common respect.

There is no doubt for CS3 that they would not be where they are today, both professionally and personally if it was not for the KRLP. KRLP has been the pivotal point for creating their own brand, rather than just a name in a company.

4.0 Findings of all interviews

The interview questions were broken into sections of

1. Reasons for doing KRLP
2. Skills
3. Confidence
4. Awareness
5. Networks
6. Impact of Kellogg Rural Leadership Program on career
7. Value of the programme

4.1 Reasons for doing Kellogg Rural Leadership Program

When asking interviewees to think back to the time before they applied to attend KRLP and how they had heard of it. One person had 'always known' of KRLP. Two had read about it in a farming publication and six had heard of it from previous Kelloggers.

With only two interviewees having heard of the KRLP through farmer magazines, and seven knowing essentially by word of mouth, primarily from past participants, this indicates that the best marketing tool for KRLP is the Kellogg Alumni.

The reasons for applying and attending the KRLP were for professional and personal development. Some were wanting to progress in the industry, some wanted to 'step up' and needed the skills and confidence to do so. One interviewee was participating as they wanted to get a better understanding of the program, what it offers and decide if the program was fit for funding from the board that he sat on. All other participants applied and attended the course for the above reasons.

Some interviewees did not know what to expect from the programme, except for hard work and to be exposed to an interesting array of people. Others were looking for presentation skills, development of leadership skills, confidence and self-awareness. Eight out of nine said that the programme exceeded their expectations. Skills other than those expected were gained as well as experiences.

4.2 Skills

There are many important skills and characteristics a leader should possess to be a successful leader. The skills expected to be gained by doing the KRLP from the participants were:

Skill	Number of people who expected the skill to be taught
Finance	1
Industry & business skills	1
Leadership skill development	3
Presentation & Public speaking	2
Confidence and self-awareness development	2
Communication and organisation skills	2

When asked on a scale of one to five, one being not delivered and five being delivered well, the average was four and a half with the range being from three to five. Many of the interviewees had continued on to do other development courses, with the most popular being the Escalator course through the Agri Woman's Development Trust (some men had attended the course).

Completion of the KRLP has meant that the participants have gained enough insight to leadership to continue to develop themselves. Although the skills gained exceeded expectations, there is still a desire to up skill, as well as a requirement from some companies to ensure consistency among their leadership team.

Some other skills that had been developed in phase one were the ability learn to adapt to new environments, active learning skills; listening and giving feedback to speakers. Critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and soft (Emotional Quotient) skills These are all important skills for leadership; skills required for a large portion of the activities in which leaders are engaged.

4.3 Confidence

'Because a leader is anyone willing to help, we can celebrate the fact that the world has an abundance of leaders'². Building confidence within individuals is enormously important, for the individual to learn that they have value to add.

When asked 'In what ways did the KRLP improve your confidence' three men responded that they had confidence and it was not something that they needed to improve on. One of those men acknowledged that if anything he was too 'cocky' and this helped him to become aware of it. All of the men who believed they had enough confidence were all over 30 years old.

Two interviewees said that the programme helped them as they realised they were normal – seeing others struggle with confidence helped them to build their own confidence.

The programme helped others build confidence in public speaking, realising that they had a lot to offer and knowledge that was useful, preparation is essential. Confidence was built for these individuals through mixing with others and providing skills. The morning media reviews, having to chair sessions and the feedback with the 'CRC' approach (Commend, Recommend and Commend) were good for this.

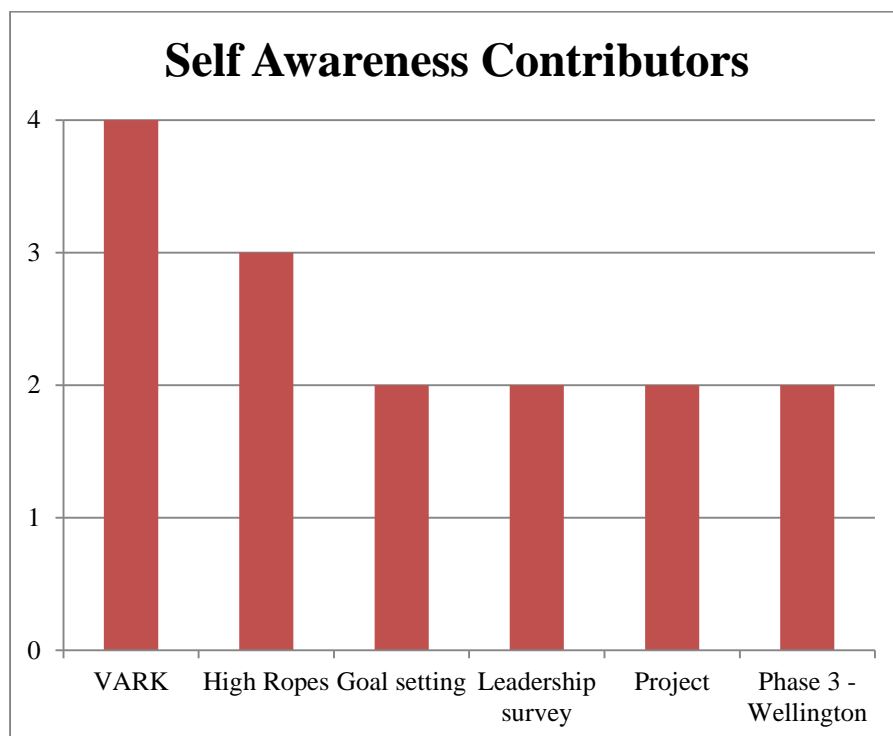
Every person interviewed had all adopted new roles or opportunities since participating. The farmer based interviewees had advanced their business considerably and acknowledged it was the confidence gained while in the KRLP and the opportunities and experiences since. Others had taken on board or committee roles.

Confidence has to firstly come from within the individual. Once the individual has confidence in themselves, it will show to others, and that is where others can begin to trust the person. Confidence and trust are vital components to a leadership role.

² Taken from 'what leaders do, getting the Best from People' - Thought Partners

4.4 Awareness

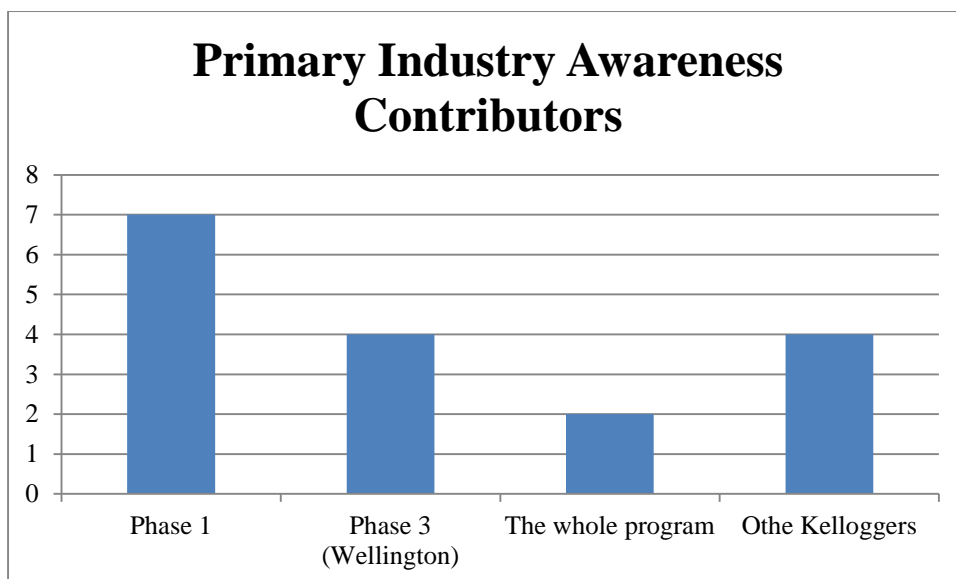
The graph below outlines what parts of the course helped to improve self-awareness.



When asked how this has been used since KRLP, one interviewee quoted “most of us underestimate our own ability Especially farmers’. The interviewee was a farmer themselves. I found that to be a very powerful message of self-awareness.

To be informed and aware of your surroundings, industry and related topics is fundamental to be a successful leader. To be aware is to not only know your own strengths and weaknesses but to ensure that you are employing and engaging others around you to maximise the skill base and to achieve the desired outcome. It is to know your resources, industry and networks.

I asked over the whole year what parts of the programme most improved the awareness of other industries and the broader rural economy of NZ. Seven out of nine thought that the industry leaders in phase one were great for this, and again phase 3, going to Wellington and talking with other leaders, however, there were many comments of the whole programme and fellow Kelloggers. The interesting part for me was watching all of the interviewees answer this question. As they were answering the question, facial expressions lightened and it seemed that they would experience an appreciation for the programme and fellow Kelloggers all over again.



4.5 Networks

There were a lot of comments from participants throughout the interview regarding networks. In every interview, the interviewee had mentioned the value of networking and the networks that they have established or created since beginning KRLP. Networking is a constant work in progress. It was very hard for the interviewees to name their two most important networks. Five of the nine interviewed named their fellow Kelloggers and Kellogg Alumni as one of their most important networks. Networking is essential to effective leadership in today's organizations, to have access to people, information, and resources, to help solve problems and create opportunities. Networks are being used by the interviewees as information sharing, "cutting to the chase", further networking, friendships, travelling, seeking advice and to gain credibility and respect. KRLP has helped to make some people aware of wider networks, through exposure to different industries and gaining confidence to utilise the networks. There was some discussion around the change in technology and networking with some interviewees joining 'twitter', to remain in contact, be contactable and to be informed on what is happening within the industry.

There is a huge sense of pride among the interviewees as a Kellogger. Each person interviewed was happy to help out another Kellogger (take part in the interview) and throughout all interviews there was a sense of pride and common ground. I was invited into

their homes and accepted without them knowing much about me. I have had follow up emails from interviewees offering help and 'checking in'. I have had Kelloggers lend me their written report to help me with my layout. The support amongst the Kellogg network is immense.

There has been endless advice from other influential people (previous KRLP participants) within the wider agriculture industry, just through mentioning that I am doing the KRLP, a common ground is established and the help and conversations, smiles and advice flow.

4.6 Impact of Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme

KRLP has had a significant and positive impact on every interviewee's career. I received a lot of one word answers when I asked how the program has influenced your career. Hugely, significant, massive were all given as answers, and much the same when asked how it has influenced personal growth. The program has built confidence for these Kelloggers, enhanced leadership skills, developed networks and opportunities to step up and have a say; to contribute and grow within our Primary sector, all of which are objectives of the program. One interviewee said "We don't know what we don't know. Kelloggs helped me to see things in different dimensions." It has also acted as a time for reflection to evaluate and realise what is important on a personal level. Another interviewee said the KRLP helped them to realise that they did not want to become a CEO, they are happy being an good employee, having the energy to be a good parent, and contributing to two boards as a board member. The trip to Wellington in phase three opened their eyes to the commitment and responsibilities of a high profile leader.

4.7 Value of Kellogg Rural Leadership Program

The value of the KRLP was very high to each interviewee. When asked what was the least helpful part of the program, five out of nine started to say it was the industry leaders in phase

1, however they all followed it up with the realisation that they learnt a lot about how to not present, therefore learning from the poor presentation, so it still added value. Two interviewees said that it was the pressure of the program and especially the project, however, a similar realisation to above, they realised that that is what pushed their comfort zone. One interviewee said the VARK workshop was the least helpful, however they have been in industry professional roles for many years and it has become common among many companies to do this profiling.

The most distinctive question throughout the whole survey was

'What was of greater benefit.... The programme itself or the journey post KRLP?'

Seven out of nine responded with "both". They could not choose either. You can't have one without the other. One responded the program and one other responded with the journey post Kellogg, and neither of those two had any other comment.

5.0 Conclusion

It was a very positive experience doing the interviews. There were no ground breaking suggestions or comments when I asked in the interviews if there were any suggestions for improvements to the programme. There were comments that we all need to be shoulder tapping and spreading the word of KRLP. Ensuring we are developing the primary industry with diverse and inspirational leaders is vital to the health of our rural economy.

There was one suggestion that your role as a 'Kellogg graduate' should be to network with the following years Kelloggers. I recommend that a the KRLP management look at putting together a networking evening for the phase one and three and your Kellogg duties are to attend one of the evening.

Every person who I interviewed is still in the primary industry. All the farmers interviewed are still farming, however each of them identified that their business has changed and grown in a positive respect since doing the KRLP. Four of the four farmers are or have been until very recently on boards and adding value to the rural community. 88% of interviewees said the KRLP met and exceeded expectations and 100% said it has been impacting on their career.

It was a wonderful experience to have met the Kellogg Alumni and I think it was a good exercise of reflection for some of the interviewees.

The challenge of writing a report on this project certainly has tested my ability and confidence. One of my biggest learnings has been to not assume that other people out there don't want to help or participate. A lot of people want to share their experiences in order to help someone grow – at least that is what I received within the Kellogg Alumni network.

This comment from an interview stood out to me, and made me proud to be a Kellogger. To see, hear and experience so much passion for our primary industry and to now have these people in my network.

"It is absolutely vital and essential that rural New Zealand develop leaders who can articulate issues and stuff that is important to keeping New Zealand Inc flowing"

References

Papers:

- 'What leaders do, getting the Best from People' - Thought Partners (Study notes from Kellogg Rural Leadership Program Folder)
- The leadership skills strataplex: Leadership skill requirements across organizational levels
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Websites

- Peter Barron Stark Companies
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- Lincoln University website

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People

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