



WENDY RAPANA

International Credentialing Task Force

1. Tell us about yourself (your background/journey/experience):

I have been a member of the Association of Administrative Professionals Inc (AAPNZ) for over 10 years now, latterly in a governance role for 6 years, initially as a member of the Limited Liability Company and latterly as the Chair. I was then the President of AAPNZ for a two-year term. In that time, I connected with Lucy Brazier at a WASummit in Papua New Guinea. She invited me to attend one of her training events in South Africa where Eth Lloyd was speaking, and the rest as they say is history because Lucy then came to New Zealand in Auckland and is now a regular event on the Australasian Calendar.

2. What inspired you to support the WASummit?

The WASummit is an opportunity to meet administrative professionals from all over the world and to work together for a common goal. Whilst the WASummit has been around since 1992, it lacked traction and too few voices at the table, in order to give a truly international perspective. That's what is happening now, we have many voices and those administrators are proud and excited at this opportunity to make a difference in the lives of administrative professionals, all around the world.

3. What do you see as the key aspects of your involvement with the WASummit?

My role has been to focus on the area that is my expertise, workplace assessment. Having spent over 15 years as a workplace assessor under the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) accreditation, I saw my role as championing the administrative professional. This involved being on the panel for regular review of our qualifications and the unit standards that make up those qualifications.

3. Which Task Force are you working with/leading?

I am leading the International Credentialing Task Force and using the New Zealand experience of nationally recognised qualifications for Business Administration have listed similar qualifications from 10 other countries in the world. The delight was to find at least 9 other countries had similar or the same type of qualifications.

Our team, led by Cathy Harris, is also looking at non-NQF training, meaning training that is not aligned to national qualifications. There are many of these in many countries, so the intent is to list that different training available against others around the world, so administrators can determine which will suit their needs. It's ensuring we are all working towards that common goal I mentioned before.

For the upcoming 11th WASummit in New Zealand next year, my task force is working on increasing the list of countries with nationally recognised qualifications both NQF and non-NQF. This also overlaps with the team looking at developing a Skills Set Matrix, so we can all agree on the titles of administrative jobs, in order to get a shared international perspective across our work/careers.

4. How do you plan on using your experience/platform to assist Administrators, and what would you personally like to achieve for the WASummit?

My experience/platform is to encourage all administrative professionals to attain a qualification that showcases their experience and work ethic. Having a nationally recognised qualification gives people the confidence that they have the knowledge to be extremely good at their job. It encourages them to step outside the administrative support roles, to enhance/advance their careers in a management or advisory role. But whether a qualification is involved or not, it's having confidence and a love of your role that really makes a difference to any administrative professional – as a career choice, it's fantastic!

5. If there is one piece of information regarding WASummit that you want everyone to understand, what would it be?

WASummit is a place where the spotlight is on administrative professionals and their careers. The focus is to encourage lifelong learning and not to be complacent about your career, to ensure you are doing something every year to keep focusing on yourself and your career. Administrative professionals often have low self-esteem. What I have experienced with WASummit in Frankfurt, was an awakening of this group of (mainly) women, but men as well, to direct the spotlight on themselves and focus on learning. It's also about the work we do and giving it the important focus it deserves. We often discuss what would happen if businesses, companies lost their administrative staff, things would not get done, productivity would be lost. The challenge is to move into those leadership/management roles and encourage change from within. We need to grow the administrative profession, starting with ensuring that administrative professionals have a high opinion of their roles, and themselves.