



## 60 Seconds with...

ANDREW TOD



**You've had a lot of experience in the resources, energy and infrastructure sectors. Are there any lessons that companies in other sectors can learn from leadership in these sectors?**

One thing is that in these sectors – I'm thinking energy and resources specifically – you are leading a very diverse workforce. This is partly a matter of the diverse job roles, that include anything from apprentices, fitter and turners, geologists and surveyors, to executives.

There's also gender diversity. The role of women in mining has changed dramatically over the last 10 years. Now, for example, as well as women CEOs, there are a lot of female truck drivers – and they do really well.

**Oh, this is interesting. I was going to ask you a question about gender diversity, and I realise now that I was coming from a biased position, assuming that these sectors would need more gender diversity! I've learnt something here.**

It's also about cultural diversity. These are global industries, and companies employ people with expertise from everywhere. So you might get Brazilians working on a project in the Pilbara or you might have an opportunity to work in Mongolia or Indonesia.

So there's definitely something other sectors and companies can learn about leading diversity, and also about leading teams in remote locations. And then there's project management. Energy and Resources companies are expert in project management where there's not a defined outcome. We're dealing with the Earth, so we have to respond to changing, unexpected and sometimes difficult conditions.

To effectively lead and manage people in remote locations, you need highly effective communication skills, and also an understanding of what it's actually like to work in a remote location.

**Have you worked in remote locations?**

Yes, I've worked in remote WA, S-W Queensland and N-W Queensland. I've also worked in South and Central America.

**Where exactly?**

In the Amazon Basin of Bolivia, in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic around the border with Haiti. Also in Guatemala, on the Yucatan Peninsula.

**You are very understated about all this. This is exciting!**

I was in my late '20's - wide-eyed and absorbing everything around me. I learnt about dealing with people from different cultures, and about communicating where English was not the dominant language. I learnt a lot, and made lots of mistakes.

**Name one.**

My main mistake when I first got there was to be too Australian! This was my first trip overseas. I learnt about communication and about being more open to different cultures.

**What was it like, working in the jungle?**

Very challenging, but exciting at the same time. In some remote locations we had a machete team who would hack a small pathway through virgin jungle just so we could carry equipment through, and occasionally we'd get a patch cleared for a helicopter. We came across plenty of anacondas and piranhas!

**I've heard that you like trekking. Favourite treks? And three words for each?**

Kokoda Trail – confronting, exhilarating, muddy; Vietnam – people, scenery, food; and Kimberley – magic, captivating, beautiful.

I've also done 6 fundraising 100km treks with Oxfam: from the Brooklyn Bridge to Mosman in Sydney, and also in Melbourne and Brisbane plus a 50km trek in the Blue Mountains - all both physically and mentally challenging. I find trekking invigorating. It gives me a chance to reflect, and I always come back full of ideas.

**I also heard that you love cooking. Killer dish?**

A slow-roasted lamb shoulder, washed down with a good pinot noir.