

The Upskill Project

*A model for upskilling existing workers in the
plastics and chemicals industries*

Final Report
November 2007



Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Any organisation is only as strong as its people who contribute towards the final product it delivers. In this day and age to survive both locally and internationally, training your staff becomes mandatory.

For the Australian process manufacturing sector to maintain a global advantage, it must ensure that its people are prepared for new challenges forced on them by new technologies.

The Upskill Project has prepared an Employer Pack that participating companies found extremely valuable to clarify business needs and identify skill gaps. The case studies developed for each participating company provide examples of how the companies addressed their identified skill gaps.

This Upskill Project has highlighted a number of issues, while at the same time providing a number of indicators that may lead to significant changes in the way we train staff in the future.

Some of these indicators are:

- The need for a highly skilled work force
- The need to recognise existing skills within the current workforce
- The need for the industry to be structurally, financially and legislatively sound
- The need to upskill existing staff
- The need for responsive, flexible, innovative training service provision
- The need to focus strategically on the needs of employers.

The seven case studies in this Upskill Project highlight many opportunities for future developments within each company.

The case studies clearly demonstrate that a relatively small investment in targeted seed funding, combined with responsive, flexible and innovative training service provision focused on the strategic needs of the employer, can effectively address identified business needs whilst also cultivating an ongoing commitment to sustainable enterprise based upskilling.

This project has only scratched the surface. A roll out of the program on a large scale would encourage a more demand driven approach empowering companies to work effectively with training providers to identify and address skill gaps aligned to business needs rather than the current supply driven approach with a focus on the promotion of full qualifications that may not address the identified skill gaps.

This report proposes a number of recommendations to address skill gaps in the process manufacturing industries. In summary these recommendations are:

Recommendation 1: Format the Employer Pack and Program Guidelines as a professional tool, market it through government agencies and industry associations and provide copies to employers.

Recommendation 2: Identify a state by state resource that is able to promote upskilling and work with companies to clarify business needs, identify skill gaps, prepare programs to address skill gaps and assist in accessing the training provision most relevant to address the business needs.

Recommendation 3: Implement the Upskill Project as an ongoing funding program to support the upskilling of existing workers aligned to strategic business needs that includes ongoing evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.

Recommendation 4: Implement a project to review support available to small and medium sized businesses by government and private agencies and evaluate the ease of employer access to this support.

Introduction

This is the final report for the Department of Education, Science and Training funded project “A model for upskilling existing workers in the plastics and chemicals industries”.

A Plastics and Chemicals Industries Upskill Project Steering Committee was established by the Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association (PACIA) to oversee the project.

The Steering Committee for this project consisted of the following members:

- Paul Beerworth, Program Director, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Michael Catchpole, Chief Executive, Plastics and Chemical Industries Association (PACIA)
- Trevor Lange, Curriculum Maintenance Manager – General Manufacturing, Victorian Office of Training and Tertiary Education
- David Graham, Training and Development, Huntsman Chemical Company
- Cheryl Richards, Training and Development, Cryovac Sealed Air
- Graeme Churchward, Education Committee, Society of Plastics Engineers
- John Roberts, Quality Manager, NCI Packaging

The Manufacturing and Engineering Skills Advisory Body (MESAB) was responsible for project management and implementation in accordance with the agreed project plan.

The MESAB Project Team for this project consisted of the following members:

- John Molenaar, Project Manager, responsible for managing the project plan, sourcing and allocating resources, managing the budget, managing the contractual requirements and liaising with stakeholders
- Tina Berghella, Project Officer responsible for preparing reports, researching and preparing program guidelines, researching and preparing needs analysis templates, researching and preparing training specification templates, designing pilots, monitoring training and documenting case studies
- Sue Ritson, Administration, responsible for meeting minutes and distribution and auditing.

Rationale

The background to this project was based on a report prepared by Manufacturing Learning Victoria in partnership with the Australian Chamber of Commerce (ACCI) and the Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association (PACIA) in 2005 titled "Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association Skills Needs Research Project". This report which arose from the recommendations of the Plastics and Chemical Action Agenda (2000) quantitatively and qualitatively investigated reports of skill shortages in the plastics and chemical industries. The report found overwhelmingly that the challenges faced by employers are that of skill gaps and recruitment difficulties not skill shortages in relation to process workers and plant operators.

The Australian Government's National Industry Skills Initiative (DEST, 2002) provides the following definition of skill gaps: "skill gaps occur where existing employees do not have the required qualifications, experience and/or specialised skills to meet the firm's skill needs for an occupation. Workers may not be adequately trained or qualified to perform tasks, or may not have up-skilled to emerging skill needs".

Skill gaps identified in the plastics and chemical industries relate specifically to

- workers recruited with generic employability skills and not specific job task skills with the intention of skilling them up
- workplace changes that place significant demands on existing worker skills and performance such as new technology, increasing compliance requirements, global pressures to increase productivity and new work practices.

Current skill gaps highlighted in the report and likely to become more pronounced in the future include:

- specialised processes such as blow moulding, die setting, extrusion, injection moulding, printing, thermoforming, vacuum moulding
- mechanical such as hydraulics, pneumatics, maintenance, tool set up, fault finding
- electrical such as electrical control systems, PLCs, electronics
- knowledge such as plastics processes, chemical processes, chemical interaction, chemical handling, polymer processing
- management such as supervision, project management, quality management
- generic such as planning, problem solving, time management, team skills
- logistics such as forklift licence, warehousing, stock control
- language and literacy such as reading, writing and speaking English
- numeracy
- using new technology such as keyboard skills
- compliance such as safety, quality, environmental, food safety
- safety awareness such as hazardous substances, dangerous goods, manual handling, waste management

- skills that contribute to the development of good work ethics.

Whilst statistics show a low uptake of formal training in these industries, stakeholders report a high level of informal in-house training suggesting that current formal training arrangements are not meeting the needs of industry despite generous government incentives. Employers reported that gap training linked specifically to business needs, rather than whole qualifications, would better meet the needs of industry.

One of the key messages from the report was the need for skill gap training of non professional workers in the plastics and chemical industries.

The report found that the most effective working model to achieve skill gap training was the WELL Programme except that it is limited by its focus on language, literacy and numeracy and the requirement to have a trainer with language and literacy qualifications to deliver the training.

This project trialled a similar model to the WELL Programme model tailored to vocational skill gaps training. The model trialled was similar to the WELL Programme with respect to:

- application and reporting processes (excluding the National Reporting System-NRS)
- funding levels (75% in first year then 50% in second and third years, allocated by work site, 12 month contract)
- training priority (Meeting identified enterprise needs over qualification or unit of competency outcomes).

The critical differences from the WELL Programme were:

- focused on meeting skill gaps aligned to business needs
- requires trainer to have Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training, direct industry experience and business management qualifications or experience
- includes action learning projects, a delivery mode requirement to ensure that training activities are used to help drive the business forward.

Project aims

The purpose of the project was to develop an “Upskill Project” modelled on the WELL Programme to help fund skill gap training linked firstly to business skills needs and then secondly to competencies that articulate to qualifications.

This project established a Plastics and Chemicals Industries Upskill Project Steering Committee to oversee the development of the Upskill Project.

The project aimed to:

- assist employers with the upskilling of non professional level workers in the plastics and chemical industries to meet business needs
- support the user choice delivery of skill gap training to meet business needs.

The program achieved this through:

- addressing the enterprise based skills gap training priorities as identified by the enterprise according to their business needs
- focussing on meeting skill needs aligned to business needs
- selecting trainers who will be required to have the Certificate IV TAA, industry experience and business management qualifications and/or experience
- developing a learning methodology which included an action learning approach
- selecting enterprise identified skills needs that take priority over achievement of a qualification or unit of competency outcome.

Methodology

The project consisted of the following steps:

1. Appointment of a Steering Committee to oversee the development of the model for upskilling existing workers in the plastics and chemicals industries
2. Appointment of a Project Team to develop the model for upskilling existing workers in the plastics and chemicals industries
3. Development of program guidelines and application process
4. Selection of pilot companies
5. Monitoring and evaluating the pilot programs
6. Evaluation of the model for upskilling existing workers in the plastics and chemicals industries

Project outcomes

A project report detailing:

- the methodology and rationale for the project
- the sampling strategy utilised to identify the participating companies
- an explanation of the skills assessment process
- an explanation of how skills gap were addressed for each individual participant
- a minimum of five case studies of the pilot program including background, outcome, what worked well and what didn't work well
- a description and explanation of how case studies' outcomes can be measured
- an evaluation of the pilot based on stakeholder feedback and outcomes from the pilot
- recommendation of a model to be used for the continuation of an upskilling program.

Program guidelines including:

- details of all required skills including Training Package competencies and extra skills
- process for assessing employee skills
- identifying trainer skills requirements
- designing and carrying out an evaluation process
- promoting enterprise benefits and advice on how they can be measured
- funding application and reporting processes.

The program guidelines recommend strategies for:

- communicating the benefits of training to all employers in the plastics and chemicals industry
- identifying and defining skills gaps linked to business needs and business strategy
- sourcing appropriate training providers
- clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the training provider
- clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the employer
- trainer/assessor skills requirements and selection criteria
- delivering/assessing the training
- evaluating a skills gap training program and measuring outcomes
- best practice examples

Sampling strategy utilised to identify participating companies

To access the funding made available to pilot participants through the Upskill Project, a three stage application process was developed.

The first stage asked interested employers to complete an Expression of Interest describing their business and training needs. The aim of the first stage was to screen possible candidates for participation in the pilot programs. We received seven expressions of interest and all progressed to the second stage.

The second stage asked participants to prepare a funding submission in application for pilot program funds. The submission asked companies to further clarify their business and training needs by completing a training specification and to seek proposals from one or more training providers for the delivery of the training. The documentation included tools for screening training providers and tips on what needed to be included in a training proposal. The aim of this second stage was to encourage companies to clearly articulate their business and training needs to training providers and empower them to think critically about the sort of service they expect from their training provider. We received seven submissions and all progressed to the third stage.

The third stage asked participants to sign an agreement describing both their obligations and MESAB's obligations in the pilot programs and sought consent for the development of case studies and the publication of photographs. All seven selected pilot participants signed and returned their agreements.

The following is a summary of the employers selected to participate in the pilot program, the RTOs they selected for the pilot programs and the funds they requested:

Employer	Employer location	Industry	RTO	Registered Training Provider	Money requested
Atlas Speciality Metals	Metropolitan	Metals	The Management Edge	Private	\$10,000
Australian Country Spinners	Regional	Textiles	Texskill Australia	Regional private	\$13,200
Australian Vinyls	Metropolitan	Chemicals	Frank Busch Inspection & Rawetech Technologies	Private	\$9,340
Barfell Industries	Metropolitan	Plastics	Australian Management Academy	Private	\$12,000
Huntsman Chemicals	Metropolitan	Chemicals	Safety Results	Private	\$18,000
Mackay Consolidated Industries	Metropolitan	Rubber	Australian Management Academy	Private	\$13,200
NCI Packaging	Metropolitan	Plastics	National Safety Training Council	Private	\$14,570

The project fully supported user choice and each employer independently selected their own preferred RTO to deliver the upskill training.

Although our intention was to represent a range of different training providers including public, private, ACE and enterprise based RTOs, all participating companies selected private RTOs. A possible explanation for this outcome may be the challenge inherent in addressing enterprise identified skill gaps that demand specialised skills and knowledge and high levels of responsiveness and flexibility available from a smaller provider.

An explanation of the skills need assessment process

A skills need assessment process was developed for the program called the Employer Pack.

The Employer Pack included the three stage application process described above and included a range of tools designed to:

- identify the business needs that drive the training activities to drive the business forward
- support user choice delivery of skill gaps training to meet business needs
- focus on addressing enterprise based skill gaps training priorities as identified by the enterprise according to their business needs
- focus on meeting skill needs aligned to business needs
- prioritise enterprise identified skill needs over the achievement of a qualification or a unit of competency.

The Employer Pack is provided in Attachment A.

Program Guidelines were also developed and reviewed by the Steering Committee. The Program Guidelines provide a comprehensive strategy for identifying and addressing skill gaps in the context of meeting identified business needs.

The Program Guidelines are provided in Attachment D.

An explanation of how skill gaps were addressed for each individual participant

Atlas Speciality Metals

The Atlas Speciality Metals' worksite in Brooklyn, Melbourne has been in operation for 65 years and includes a wire drawing mill and a warehouse distributing speciality metals and stainless steel.

The identification of skill gaps at Atlas Speciality Metals was driven by two key events in 2006. The first event was the forced closure of a sector of the business as a result of a risk assessment which drew attention to the critical need for a greater focus on safety. The second event was the subsequent recruitment of a Group OH&S Coordinator to drive the new focus on safety.

The Group OH&S Coordinator identified a need to transform the existing safety culture that was based on historic attitudes dating back to the 1940s and reinforced by long term employees with entrenched ideas and attitudes. He found that whilst all workers received safety induction training on recruitment most had been recruited more than ten years ago and had not received any safety refresher training.

The Group OH&S Coordinator selected private RTO, The Management Edge, because he had attended safety training delivered by the Director previously and knew him to be a dynamic and fearless trainer. Together they selected four competencies from the Certificate IV in Occupational Health and Safety to deliver to a group of twelve supervisors and safety representatives with the aim of developing a highly functioning team of safety leaders to champion the safety effort. Training concentrated specifically on raising awareness of safety legislation, hazard identification and risk assessment and incident reporting and was delivered through a combination of workshops, one on one support and action learning projects.

Australian Country Spinners

The Australian Country Spinners' mill in Wangaratta spins yarn and employs over 230 people.

The identification of skill gaps at Australian Country Spinners was driven by a critical insufficiency of maintenance personnel with the skills and knowledge necessary for fault diagnosis, servicing and repair of industry specific winding equipment from Murata Machinery in Japan.

Upskilling other personnel in maintaining the Murata winders was critical to improving production flexibility as production planning was restricted to only those shifts when skilled labour was available regardless of customer demands. Upskilling would also address labour flexibility in the maintenance area where working arrangements and leave logistics were restricted by the limited coverage of skilled labour.

Since the demise of specialist training for textile technicians in Australia, the specialist training had to be sourced directly from the manufacturer in Japan. Australian Country Spinners partnered with three organisations for the delivery of this training. Murata Machinery sent their specialist trainer to Australia to deliver the specialist training. Texskill Australia auspiced the specialist training and delivered supporting safety training and Goulburn Ovens TAFE administered the pilot.

The participants consisted of six textile mechanics across three shifts and training was delivered through a combination of workshops and action learning projects.

Australian Vinyls

Australian Vinyls is a major hazard facility in Laverton producing PVC resins.

The identification of skill gaps at Australian Vinyls was driven by an increase in unmanned boiler incidents resulting in unsafe situations, increased downtime and additional cost to the business. Root cause investigations resulted in a four stage plan to address the problem through changes to equipment and work practices.

The Training Manager selected Frank Busch Inspection to deliver unaccredited training in unmanned boiler maintenance and independent consultants, Rawtech Technologies, to conduct the assessments. With a team of experienced operators they conducted a full review of all unmanned boiler resources including reference materials, work instructions and training materials prior to training delivery. The review highlighted inconsistencies that were resolved prior to training delivery. The team also developed an unaccredited unit of competency relevant to the training outcomes required that assessments were conducted against.

The training was delivered to a total of 42 employees including plant operators, shift managers, mechanical fitters and engineers via a one day workshop involving 8-10 participants.

Barfell Industries

Barfell Industries in Mordialloc manufactures PVC hoses and employs over 50 staff.

The identification of skill gaps at Barfell Industries was driven by a constant need to improve productivity to survive in a highly competitive global market. The Operations Manager noticed that the machine set up time was taking longer than expected, different operators were following different work practices and some operators were doing some things that didn't make sense.

The Operations Manager selected private RTO, The Australian Management Academy, to deliver the training. Two competencies from the Competitive Manufacturing Training Package were selected and delivered using a combination of workshops and one on one support to a group of 25 operators and supervisors.

The training addressed work practice inconsistency by providing a forum for the participants to demonstrate and negotiate differences in work practices. The training resulted in lists of suggested improvements to work organisation and work practices generated by the training participants that are currently being implemented or considered for implementation to improve productivity.

Huntsman Chemical Company Australia

Huntsman Chemical Company Australia in West Footscray is a Major Hazard Facility that manufactures and distributes a diverse range of petrochemicals, resins and plastics.

The identification of skill gaps at Huntsman Chemical Company Australia was driven by safety concerns for employees and contractors involved in working at heights. The need to do the training had been on the agenda for two years but other training

and production needs had taken priority. The funds provided through this project helped seed the training.

The Learning and Development Manager selected private RTO, Safety Results to deliver the training because he was impressed with the quality of service their trainers had delivered in the past. The competency, MNMG237A Work safely at heights, was delivered in one day workshops to 98 employees and contractors.

The training developed participants' knowledge of working at heights and risk management and provided training in the correct use of equipment used when working at heights.

Mackay Consolidated Industries

Mackay Consolidated Industries manufactures and distributes rubber and metal products and employs 200 people in Moorabbin.

The identification of skill gaps at Mackay Consolidated Industries was driven by a need to continuously improve labour productivity in a labour intensive operation that must be globally competitive to survive. A recent organisational restructure that significantly flattened reporting structures resulted in an identified need to upskill support workers with the skills and initiative to drive the continuous improvement process.

The Manufacturing Manager selected private RTO, The Australian Management Academy, to deliver four units of competency from the Competitive Manufacturing Training Package. The training was delivered to a group of fifteen participants through a combination of workshops, one on one support and action learning projects.

NCI Packaging

NCI Packaging in Tullamarine manufactures plastic packaging and employs 65 people.

The identification of skills gaps at NCI Packaging was driven by a desire to improve safety performance by lifting the safety effort to the next level through the creation of a team of safety leaders to drive safety directly from the shop floor.

The Quality Manager selected the National Safety Council of Australia to deliver three competencies from the Diploma of Occupational Health and Safety. Training was delivered to a group of eight employees comprising Team Leaders, Safety Representatives and Managers through a combination of workshops, self paced learning and action learning projects.

The case studies

A detailed case study was prepared for each pilot program including background information about the business and training needs, a description of what was delivered including what worked well and what did not work well and the outcomes.

These case studies are provided in Attachment B

A description and explanation of how the case studies' outcomes can be measured

All companies participating in the pilot programs were required to outline the expected outcomes, how the outcome would be measured and the target they were striving for as a result of the training. In all cases quantitative results were sought but insufficient time had elapsed between the completion of the training and the evaluation of the pilots. However the participants were able to report positive outcomes anecdotally.

Atlas Speciality Metals

On completion of the training and assessment nine out of twelve of the participants achieved competency in the four units and the Group OH&S Coordinator is satisfied with outcome.

He reported that as a result of the training there has been a significant improvement in safety attitude evidenced by an increase in the number of near miss and incident reports and Job Safety Analysis reports submitted.

The Management Edge is now rolling out this training nationally at Atlas Speciality Metals' 22 worksites around Australia and New Zealand.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Group OH&S Coordinator is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Competence and Understanding ohs inceptions and monitoring	All staff	Reduction in MTI and LTI and first aid	Reduction achieved.	We need at least a year to measure if the transfer of intellect is a permanent result or not.

Australian Country Spinners

Since training delivery, the Engineering Manager reports an increase in production flexibility due to full coverage of specialist maintenance skills across all shifts allowing the Murata to operate across all shifts, and an increase in labour flexibility in maintenance.

He also hopes to see a reduction in downtime through more accurate fault diagnosis but there has been insufficient time since the training was completed to collect

reliable data. Over the next twelve months the Engineering Manager shall collect data and compare the downtime performance of the Murata winders to historical results. A preliminary quantitative outcome shall be available mid 2008.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Engineering Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Competency in LMTEMGN-01A Install and commission process and machine control programs; and BSBCM211A Maintain workplace safety by all participants	6 participants assessed as "Competent" in the two nominated units of competency	Outcome of assessments conducted by Texskill Ltd.	6 participants gained competency in LMTEMGN-01A Install and commission process and machine control programs on 13 th July 2007 and BSBCM211A Maintain workplace safety on 20 th August 2007	As part of the assessment process, participants completed two workplace projects based on internal production issues
Reduction in downtime of Murata Winding Machine due to maintenance / diagnosis requirements	80% reduction in winding spindles out of operation that are carried over to the next shift	Maintenance records of the number of winding spindles inoperative per shift	Current production demands requires a reduction in operating time for the Murata Winding Machine – Sufficient data is not yet available to determine the reduction in winding spindles outage	A snapshot of figures available indicates that there has been a reduction in spindle outage time
Increase in quantity of production	Improved production flexibility and times when the Murata winding can be run with technical support	Trained maintenance support staff on each production shift	The training will allow extended operation of the Murata Winding Machine during peak operating times. Fully supported by competent maintenance personnel	This will allow Australian Country Spinners to respond to customer demand more effectively

Australian Vinyls

Whilst it is too soon to judge the quantitative outcomes of the training, the Training Manager is confident that the operators now have the skills to do their jobs more effectively and safely as a result of the training.

Australian Vinyls is now considering moving forward with qualifying operators with the Intermediate Boiler Operator Certificate.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Training Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Update the Boiler Operations documentation	Training Manager 1 Shift Manager	Improvements to the boiler reference material, work instructions and training modules	Completed	Documentation is all up to date and now uses language consistent with industry
Applying knowledge for operating unmanned boilers to meet statutory and business requirements	25 Operators 7 Shift Managers	Completed AV Boiler Training Module Reduction in boiler incidents with skill root causes All contractor monthly checks witnessed	Completed None in the last 3 months Last 3 were witnessed	100% Need to monitor this over the next 9 months too Need to monitor this over the next 9 months too
Applying knowledge for basic maintenance of unmanned boilers	4 Fitters	Observe basic boiler maintenance tasks using JCCs, eg change gauge glass, change steam system gasket Increased boiler uptime eg: less gauge glass replacements	Two fitters now change gauge glasses the same way, and we use correct length glass Boiler uptime has slowly improved in 2007	Training corrected different understandings Too many variables impact on this measure

Barfell Industries

Insufficient time has passed since the training was completed to comment on the contribution of the training to the productivity of the operation. Over the next six months the performance of the operation shall be monitored and quantitative results shall be available mid 2008 aggregated for the whole site.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the General Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Reduction in average set up time for extrusion lines	10% reduction in average	Log of times for each set up measured over several months	Detailed observations of set up steps for 3 extrusion lines completed. These were reviewed and actions identified.	The six sessions were too short to have time for follow up actions to be implemented.
Reduction in waste	Identifiable reduction in recorded waste	Record 7 wastes for several weeks to obtain base line	7 wastes recorded by participants which highlighted opportunities.	Identified actions will need to be implemented in order to achieve expected outcomes.

Huntsman Chemicals

Training is continuing at Huntsman Chemicals. Those employees who have completed the training have been observed taking more care, interest and ownership, inspecting equipment and initiating risk assessments when working at heights.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Learning and Development Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
				All outcomes exceeded as per the case study write up

Mackay Consolidated Industries

It is too soon to see improvements yet but the Manufacturing Manager is confident that the skill foundation has been established.

In 2008 the support staff shall use their new skills to drive the continuous improvement process and identify and eliminate waste. The results of this initiative shall be monitored closely on a month to month basis and initial results shall be available mid 2008.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Human Resources Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Reduction in Costs	3-6 months for all outcomes	Feedback gained through training validation form	Unknown at this stage as too early to measure	
Increasing productivity				

through improved processes				
Decreasing internal quality rejects				
Improving mould set up times and recovering lost time due to inadequate workplace organization				

NCI Packaging

Training is still in progress at NCI Packaging and therefore it is too soon to measure the quantitative impact. The company is continuing with the full Advance Diploma and therefore the training will be ongoing throughout 2008.

The Quality Manager reports that the action learning projects have had a positive impact on further developing the safety culture within the organisation and that the safety performance shall continue to be monitored closely. Preliminary results shall be available mid 2008.

An evaluation of the outcomes as provided by the Quality Manager is:

Expected outcomes	Target	How measured	Outcome	Comment
Awareness of legal obligations and regulations, and codes of practice	More focused awareness of responsibilities	Work practice and culture change	Workplace procedures followed with attention to regulatory requirements	Permits such as hot work and working at height are completed more responsibly
Improve the quality and effectiveness of Risk Hazard assessment	Higher level of confidence and professional quality of documentation	Evidenced by improved documentation and detail of evaluation	A demonstrated improved detail in the risk assessments	As a result of research a JSA format is also being used for some applications, as it is more suitable
Promote a safer and more focused workplace through interaction on the shop floor	More pro-active interaction with personnel on the shop floor Assess changed work practices or conditions	Work practices of personnel	Particular improvement from the maintenance fitter (also OHS Rep) in the interaction with management	Higher awareness and promotion of procedure such as Near Miss reporting

Reduced MTI's & LTI's	50% reduction over 12 month period following training	Compare to existing and historical performance data	To soon to review	50% is a very challenging target
Reduced first aid treatment through promotion of safer work practices	50% reduction over 12 month period following training	Compare to existing and historical performance data	To soon to review	During the research some good information and ideas have developed Self motivated personnel have now joined adding drive
More effective OH&S meetings	Demonstrate more effective follow up on issues and develop awareness programs	Improvements within the plant	OHS members are taking a more pro active role A process of role ownership is taking place The Near Miss report and corrective actions are now being reviewed and followed up by volunteered members Further tasks are to be delegated	

An evaluation of the pilot based on stakeholder feedback and outcomes from the pilot

The pilots were evaluated using information collected through:

- the Expression of Interest
- the Submission
- progress reports from companies
- final reports from companies
- stakeholder review including trainers, training mangers, employers and learners.

The Evaluation Process is provided in Attachment C.

General Upskill Project Feedback

(waiting for final reports)

Employer	Feedback
Atlas Speciality Metals	None provided
Australian Country Spinners	<p>We are grateful to MESAB for the opportunity to apply for this funding and appreciate the assistance received from Kerry Andison of Goulburn Ovens TAFE with the application.</p> <p>Overall the process was well executed, although there seemed to be a double up on some of the paperwork. Some of the evaluation questions were difficult to interpret and also repeated.</p> <p>Again, thank you and we look forward to further opportunities to work with MESAB.</p>
Australian Vinyls	<p>The Upskill project should not require national qualifications as an outcome.</p> <p>The documentation for the funding should be streamlined – focus on the need, the plan, the costs and outcomes.</p>
Barfell Industries	<p>The six sessions was too short to have time for follow up actions to be implemented.</p> <p>Identified actions will need to be implemented in order to achieve expected outcomes.</p>
Huntsman Chemicals	<p>If you were not fully aware of the training system, the forms could be daunting. Maybe some assistance from the ITABS in completing the paperwork would help.</p>
Mackay Consolidated Industries	<p>A Case Study was carried out upon completion of training. This document includes an assessment of learning achieved, including direct quotes from some of the key participants.</p> <p>Once sufficient time has lapsed all participants will be asked to complete a feedback form to measure knowledge transfer.</p>
NCI Packaging	<p>I believe that the program has been exceptionally well set up and established. The process for application required a very well detailed submission and the case study review was well conducted and detailed.</p> <p>Being able to provide this level of funded training in an area as important as OH&S can only be of benefit.</p>

The application process

Participating companies were asked to provide feedback on the application process.

All employers reported that the application process involved too much paperwork and that the information required for stages 1 and 2 was repeated and unnecessary.

Stage one was only ever designed to screen multiple candidates for the pilot process and is superfluous to an ongoing program. It is therefore recommended that any on going Upskill Project include stages 2 and 3 only and eliminate stage 1 from the process.

The tools

Participating companies were asked to provide feedback on the tools they used to identify business and training needs and select training providers.

Different pilot projects approached the application process differently. Some employers such as NCI Packaging, Australian Vinyls and Huntsman Chemicals completed their own applications and reported that whilst the process of documenting the link between the identified business needs and the training need required an investment in time and effort, it was very beneficial in helping to clarify what they wanted to achieve before they approached training providers. These companies also reported that they found the tool for screening RTOs valuable and would refer to it in the future when dealing with training providers irrespective of whether their relationship with the training provider was new or pre-existing.

The applications from the other employers were completed by their training providers with input from employers ranging from minimal (eg short briefing and sign off) to very involved (eg a series of meetings and redrafting of the documentation before sign off). These companies were grateful for the help provided by their training providers in completing what they saw only as an administrative task for the purpose of accessing the pilot program funding. In these cases the training provider also completed the tool for screening training providers themselves. The training providers saw their role in completing the administrative requirements as a way of value adding to the service they were offering and as a way of eliminating the risk of losing the work because the paperwork was not completed on time.

This combined feedback suggests that the tools developed through this project have been beneficial in supporting employers to clarify their training needs linked to their business needs.

The employers who derived the greatest benefit from the tools were those that invested the time and effort to use the tools strategically rather than relying on their training provider to fill them in on their behalf. These employers reflected on their business needs to justify their proposed training solution and specified clear and measurable business related outcomes. This in turn empowered them to negotiate effectively with their training provider and with internal stakeholders including the learners and the decision makers. Unfortunately only three pilot participants derived the full strategic benefit of the tools. The other four pilot participants saw the tools as administrative only and, because they did not fill in the tools themselves, this raises concerns about how accurately the documentation reflected the needs of the employer.

The monitoring and evaluation

Participating companies were asked to provide feedback on the reporting processes and the case study evaluation.

Originally all pilot program participants were asked to submit a progress report and a final report. Half way through the program this was reassessed and the requirement was simplified to a final report only due to the short duration of the pilot programs. Participants were asked to provide an informal email update on progress and only one participant, Australian Vinyls, provided feedback and therefore only one employer received their progress payment on time.

Towards the end of each pilot program the Project Officer visited each worksite in the pilot program and interviewed employer and training provider stakeholders in preparation for the case study. John Roberts from NCI Packaging reported that knowing the pilot was to be independently evaluated in the form of a case study helped motivate him to ensure the project was focused and on track.

The benefits

(waiting for final reports to complete)

Employer	Benefits to employer	Benefits to employees
Atlas Speciality Metals	A greater understanding of legislation and the requirements of them by the organization and its employees thereby achieving a reduction in the reported incidents.	Same as for employer benefits. They have gained a competency that is measurable and therefore now speak from an area of expertise.
Australian Country Spinners	Several of the benefits Australian Country Spinners' gained as a result of the upskill training are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to respond to customer demands through increased quantity of production by improved flexibility and times • Increased flexibility with respect to the staffing of the maintenance area. No longer are leave arrangements restricted by the limited technical resources for the Murata winders • Improved product quality. 	Maintenance personnel have gained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better understanding of the technical aspects of the Murata Winding Machine • Learnt improved methods of problem solving using techniques demonstrated by the Murata trainer • The ability to predict breakdowns using the Murata's data recording / retrieval systems • The knowledge to pre-empt quality problems using Murata Winding Machine's diagnostic systems.
Australian Vinyls	More reliable boilers and less boiler operation incidents.	Improved understanding and therefore better operation and basic maintenance of the boilers. This increased knowledge and skill will be recognised if the operators want to attain the boiler intermediate licence.
Barfell Industries	Greater understanding of line set up procedures on Extrusion Lines 1, 2 and D by a wide group. Improved communication and sharing of issues within each shift team. Shift teams generated actions which when implemented will yield measurable improvements in set up times.	Opportunity to review their approaches. Listening to and learning from other team members Greater understanding of the importance of first right time and minimising waste and through preparation before set up. Greater confidence in sharing their views and recognising their and other's expertise.

Huntsman Chemicals	A far greater awareness of the legislation in relation to “working at height” and a change in behaviour in relation to thinking about what could go wrong by not wearing the correct safety equipment.	More aware of what equipment is available and both their and the company’s role in ensuring the job is safe.
Mackay Consolidated Industries	The training has effectively increased the qualifications of 12 of our key manufacturing employees. Effectively, the foundation for supervisors, team leaders and engineers has been provided for them to use their new skills to drive the continuous improvement process.	By completing Certificate IV in Competitive Manufacturing, our employees have gained relevant skills and knowledge that will in turn assist the company in its’ endeavour to increase competitiveness within current markets. As individuals our employees have each achieved a qualification which is recognized nationally and effectively have become more valuable to the company.

<p>NCI Packaging</p>	<p>The most notable area is the improved awareness of the different tools and methods available to Risk Assess, which has come from the required research. An example is the use of the JSA which provides a step by step review of the process being a far more detailed approach. A more focussed assessment is completed at each step in the process being reviewed.</p> <p>This is achieving a higher level of Risk Assessment and awareness of the process related tasks. This can also add more complexity to the thought and detail of the corrective actions.</p> <p>During the first module participants gained a far greater appreciation of the planning and implementation of OHS strategies. They were also required to review existing policy and procedure and review the effectiveness. A number of significant improvements and strategies have been suggested. These have been submitted to management in a report which has been accepted for follow up.</p> <p>There have been substantial improvements in the functional operation of the OHS committee but still expecting continual improvement as strategies are continually implemented. An example is to develop teams within the committee to manage and drive projects and programs so that the load is shared. There is growing involvement so that all members have a role to play and the meetings are not just a formality of review.</p>	<p>It has improved their awareness of the infrastructure that underpins the OHS system and the legislation relevant to the projects they have been and still are involved in. An example being the Team leader on night shift is now extremely conversant with the fork lift requirements after researching the information brochures from Worksafe. Improved SOP's, signage, and review of the maintenance procedures resulted from this project.</p> <p>An improved skill level and confidence in Risk Assessment. A broader knowledge of the tools and formats available to perform these tasks, and the awareness that one method may not be the best for all tasks. A broader perspective is developing.</p> <p>As they are still completing the final module I feel a greater impact will be achieved when the work now being completed is reviewed. This will stimulate and regenerate the ideas and initiatives they have been researching and reviewing.</p> <p>Three of the participants are most likely to continue the Diploma training which may be funded by the company if further funding is not available.</p>
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Company contributions

(waiting for final reports to complete)

Employer	Cash contribution	In kind contribution estimation	Total company contribution	Upskill Project funding contribution	Percentage company contribution
Atlas Speciality Metals	Approx \$2,000 to training provider	\$2,400 based on 20 odd personnel undertaking 4 hours training	\$4,400	\$10,000	31%
Australian Country Spinners	\$0	\$5,686 Participants wages \$4,256 Project/case study \$336 Staff transfer costs (shift allowance etc) \$600 Coordination (management) \$494	\$5,686	\$13,200	30%
Australian Vinyls	\$0	\$5,410 15 x 2hr assessments by Shift Managers, updating training documentation by Shift Managers (16 hrs), updating and preparing training materials by Training Manager (16 hrs), co-ordinating training and assessment by Training Manager (5 hrs), evaluation by Training Manager (5 hrs)	\$5,410	\$9,340	63%
Barfell Industries	\$4,000	\$10,600 - employee release \$8600 liaison with training provider and coordination of training provider \$2,000	\$14,600	\$12,000	55%

Employer	Cash contribution	In kind contribution estimation	Total company contribution	Upskill Project funding contribution	Percentage company contribution
Huntsman Chemicals	\$25,000 The funding only covered the first six training sessions from a total of 15 we will be running across the site. We also included all permanent and semi permanent contractors working at the site and plan to have a refresher every 2 to 3 years.	\$60,000 - employee release, liaison with training provider and coordination of training provider	\$85,000	\$18,000	83%
Mackay Consolidated Industries	\$72,930 paid to the training provider	\$6,000	\$78,930	\$13,200	86%
NCI Packaging	\$0	\$3,000 All overtime was paid without restriction. Over 200 hours has been allocated to training during normal working hours which have been absorbed by other personnel. Some equipment has been purchased as a result and request of the participants.	\$3,000	\$14,570	17%

Recommended model for the continuation of an up-skilling program

The evaluation of the Upskill Project identified a number of areas that would be valuable to follow up on. These include the following.

Recommendation 1: Format the Employer Pack and Program Guidelines as a professional tool, market it through government agencies and industry associations and provide copies to employers.

Participating companies valued the process for identifying business needs and determining skill gaps as much as the actual programs implemented to address the skill gaps. This 'process' involved a number of tools which were provided in an Employer Pack. It would therefore be beneficial if the Employer Pack (Appendix A) and the Program Guidelines (Appendix D) were prepared as a professional kit and made available to companies on request.

The communication strategy to raise awareness of the availability and benefits of the tool and facilitate its distribution to industry could include a ministerial launch of the tool followed by targeted promotion and distribution of the tool electronically through the internet and in hardcover upon request.

The tool is designed for use by employers and therefore the target audience of the communications strategy should be employers. However the evaluation of the pilot programs indicated that some companies choose to work in close, dependent partnerships with a preferred training provider and other companies choose to work independently and selectively with a range of training providers depending on the nature of the business and training need. Therefore an effective communication strategy will need to include industry channels to reach companies directly (eg PACIA, ACCI, direct newsletters to companies such as the MESAB newsletters) and VET sector distribution channels to reach companies indirectly via their training providers (eg www.training.com.au, Fast Facts, Skills Councils, state training authorities).

Recommendation 2: Identify a state by state resource that is able to promote upskilling and work with companies to clarify business needs, identify skill gaps, prepare programs to address skill gaps and assist in accessing the training provision most relevant to address the business needs.

Companies also valued the support provided to them in the identification of business needs, related skill gaps and training interventions to address these gaps. An identified resource that is able to work with companies through this process would greatly assist in the uptake of skill gap training.

Recommendation 3: Implement the Upskill Project as an ongoing funding program to support the upskilling of existing workers aligned to strategic business needs that includes ongoing evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.

Companies used the funds provided through the Upskill Project to seed critical training initiatives to address identified business needs and support the development

of a training culture. A government funded upskill initiative could support companies that need to upskill their existing workers on a 50% employer and 50% government contribution basis. The service could include provision for assistance with the development of standard operating procedures and worker friendly operation manuals for specialised equipment and work practices to support the training.

Recommendation 4: Implement a project to review support available to small and medium sized businesses by government and private agencies and evaluate the ease of employer access to this support.

The Upskill Project provided funding to contribute to the costs of the training delivery to address identified skill gaps. Most of the programs implemented by the seven trial companies could, in theory, be funded through government funded programs. However companies are unaware that funding exists or find it too difficult to work with the relevant organisations to access the funding and therefore do not further pursue this. A project that clearly identifies the sources of government funding to support skill gap training and the processes of accessing this funding would greatly assist companies to access the financial support that is available but unknown to companies. A review of the accessibility of these support areas and an evaluation of the ease of employer access to this support would provide valuable information on the user friendliness of these support services.

Appendix A – The Employer Pack

Refer separate file

Appendix B – The Case Studies

Refer separate file

Appendix C The Evaluation Process

Aim

To conduct an evaluation of five pilot Upskill Project projects to explore what was achieved including what worked well and what didn't work well.

Methodology

Review Upskill Project project documentation including the expression of interest, the employer package, RTO package and stakeholder evaluation reports.

Identify key stakeholders in project including worksite manager, RTO manager, trainer, learners etc.

Conduct face to face or telephone interviews.

Outputs

Five case studies.

Case study content:

- overview of worksite
- determination of business needs and skill gaps
- overview of RTO, trainer and proposed training program
- implementation of training program
- outcomes achieved
- what worked well
- what didn't work well and what was done to fix it during the pilot
- what can we learn from this pilot that can be applied to other pilots.

Inputs

Employer Progress Report

Employer Final Report

Stakeholder Review Questions

Upskill trial project evaluation and questioning guide for case study evaluations

RTO manager questions

- Describe this Upskill pilot? (aims, client, learners, training activities, assessment activities)
- What did the client want to achieve from the pilot?
- Describe your role in the pilot?
- How did the pilot start?
- How did the pilot progress?
- How did the pilot end?
- What the project achieved?
- What the project did not achieved?
- How important was the choice of trainer to this project? In what way?
- What worked well and why do you think it worked well?
- Were the things that worked well sustained? How?
- What didn't work well, why do you think it didn't work well?
- What did you learn from this project that is useful to other Upskill projects?
- What do you like least about working on this Upskill Project? Why?
- What did you like most about working on this Upskill Project? Why?

Trainer questions

- Describe this Upskill project? (aims, client, learners, training activities, assessment activities)
- What did the client want to achieve from the Upskill Project?
- How did the project start?
- How did the project progress?
- How did the project end?
- What the project achieved?
- What the project did not achieved?
- What worked well and why do you think it worked well?
- Were the things that worked well sustained? How?
- What didn't work well, why do you think it didn't work well?
- When things didn't work well, what was done about it and was the solution effective? Why, why not?
- What did you learn from this project that is useful to other Upskill Projects?
- What do you like least about working on this Upskill Project? Why?

- What did you like most about working on this Upskill Project? Why?

Worksite manager questions

- Describe your role in the organisation?
- What did you want to achieve from this Upskill Project? Why?
- What do you think was actually achieved through the project?
- Are you satisfied with these outcomes?
- How would you describe RTO's level of commitment to your organisation?
- How would you describe your level of commitment to the project?
- Describe your role in the project?
- How did the project start?
- How did the project progress?
- How did the project end?
- How satisfied are you with level of service provided by the trainer? Please explain
- How satisfied are you with level of service provided by RTO Manager? Please explain
- What worked well and why do you think it worked well?
- Were the things that worked well sustained? How?
- What didn't work well, why do you think they didn't work well?
- When things didn't work well, what was done about it and was the solution effective? Why, why not?
- What advice to do have that can help us to improve Upskill Projects?
- Overall do you think that your Upskill Project was worthwhile? Why?

Learners questions

- Describe your role in the organisation?
- What do you think you got out of the Upskill Project?
- How did the project start?
- How did the project progress?
- How did the project end?
- What worked well and why do you think it worked well?
- Were the things that worked well sustained? How?
- What didn't work well, why do you think they didn't work well?
- When things didn't work well, what was done about it and was the solution effective? Why, why not?
- What advice to do have that can help us to improve Upskill projects?

Appendix D- Program guidelines

Introduction

Who is this guide for?

This guide has been developed to help employers identify skill gaps and access government funding through the Upskill Project to address those needs.

The Upskill Project is a pilot program funded by the Department of Education, Science and Training supporting the delivery of skill gap training linked to business needs in the workplace.

Addressing skills gaps linked to identified business needs helps organisations to stay ahead of competitors and respond efficiently and effectively to change.

What is this guide?

This guide provides a comprehensive strategy for identifying and addressing skill gaps in the context of meeting identified business needs.

This guide supports employers through the process of accessing, managing and administering an effective skill gap training program.

It provides employers with the tools to ensure that training is linked to business objectives and measure the benefits achieved.

About skills gaps

Skills gaps defined

The Australian Government's National Industry Skills Initiative (DEST, 2002) provides the following definition of skills gaps:

"skill gaps occur where existing employees do not have the required qualifications, experience and/or specialised skills to meet the firm's skill needs for an occupation. Workers may not be adequately trained or qualified to perform tasks, or may not have up-skilled to emerging skill needs".

Typically skills gaps arise when:

- the workforce composition changes (people come and go)
- people change jobs
- new work practices are introduced including new technology
- new initiatives are implemented
- higher standards of performance are required.

In these situations people have to do different things or have to do the same things differently and are likely to need training.

Employability skills gaps

Employability skills are not specific to one particular occupation or industry. They are skills required for working in today's changing environment and into the future, and they include communication, planning and organising, problem solving, technology and teamwork. Employability skills are sometimes referred to as generic skills, core, foundation or key competencies or workplace know-how (www.tpatwork.com).

A copy of the Employability Skills Framework is provided in the Attachments.

Current employability skills gaps highlighted in the process manufacturing industries and likely to become more pronounced in the future include:

- planning, problem solving, time management, team skills
- language and literacy such as reading, writing and speaking English
- numeracy
- using new technology such as key board skills
- skills that contribute to the development of good work ethics.

Occupational specific skills gaps

Occupational specific skills are the skills specific to the industry, the occupation or the job.

Current occupational specific skills gaps highlighted in the manufacturing industries and likely to become more pronounced in the future include:

- specialised processes such as blow moulding die setting, extrusion, injection moulding, printing, thermoforming
- mechanical such as hydraulics, maintenance, tool set up, fault finding
- electrical such as electrical control systems, electronics
- knowledge such as plastics processes, chemical processes, chemical interaction, chemical handling, polymer processing
- management such as supervision, project management, quality management
- logistics such as forklift licence, warehousing
- compliance such as safety, quality, environmental, food safety
- safety awareness such as hazardous substances, dangerous goods, manual handling.

Skills gaps linked to business needs

Organisations may have a number of identified skills gaps but not all are critical to achieving the business objectives. It is important to conduct an analysis of the business needs at the same time as identifying the skills gaps so that those skill gaps of highest importance can be given priority. This will ensure that training is invested in the right activities and the right people.

To assess the priority of a skill gap two key questions must be asked:

- is it a priority business need?
- is training the most effective way of addressing this need?

This guide provides a step by step approach to developing and delivering a skills gap program strategically linked to business needs.

Benefits of skills training to employers

(The following information is an excerpt from the Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association Skills Needs Research Project 2006 published by the Department of Education, Science and Training)

There is a wide body of both national and international research into the benefits of training to employers, demonstrating a strong link between training activities and improved productivity.

A recent National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) study (Smith, 2001) provides an overview of the empirical studies available from Australia and overseas. Smith reports “enterprise returns on training investment overwhelmingly indicate that firms recoup their investments in training many times over in raised productivity and enterprise performance”.

A number of difficulties are associated with identifying and measuring the benefit of training to employers (Blandy et al, 2000), (Smith, 2001). One difficulty is the shared cost of training between the employer and the employee, making collecting data about the real cost of the training complicated. Another difficulty is the fact that training is integrated with other productivity impacting business activities. So the effects of training are difficult to isolate. For example: it would be difficult to determine whether a productivity increase from a capital investment in new technology came about from the new technology, the new work practices and associated training or just the training itself.

The qualitative benefits are summarised in a 2004 literature review of the benefits of training (Office of Post Compulsory Education and Training Tasmania, 2004) It identifies eleven benefits to employers.

These are:

- increased productivity
- improved human resource management
- improved profitability
- increased competitiveness
- meeting quality standards
- assisting with workplace change
- meeting legal obligations
- assisting business survival
- improved occupational health and safety
- growth of business
- meeting skill needs.

This qualitative data is supported by the feedback gained from employers. The Australian Industry Group (AIG) report, “Training to Compete” (Australian Industry Group, 2000), presents the findings from a survey into the training needs of 350 employers. The survey found that 75% of employers see training as an essential competitive tool and 71% of employers see a strong link between their decision to train and their competitive edge in the next three to five years.

Quantitative research uses a range of analytical tools to measure and calculate the costs and benefits of training to employers. In 2001 the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) funded a series of reports addressing employer return on investment in training:

- The National Centre For Vocational Education And Research (NCVER) report “Enterprise Return on Training” (Doucouliagos and Pasquale, 2000) presented quantitative case studies of seven Australian organisations. It concluded that significant returns can be expected from training activities that are well designed, expertly delivered and relevant to needs of the organisation
- The National Centre For Vocational Education And Research (NCVER) report “Training for Productivity” (Maglen et al, 2001) found strong evidence of Australian manufacturers gaining increased labour productivity from training expenditure. This report also found that “firms with the higher levels of labour productivity in both manufacturing and services considered the success of their businesses to have been predicated on training of their personnel”. It emphasised the importance of linking training with business strategy to gain the most benefit
- The National Centre For Vocational Education And Research (NCVER) report “Does Training Pay” (Blandy et al, 2000) found a direct link between profitability and training and concluded that significant returns were available where the training was “highly specific, rapidly accomplished and related to the introduction of new technology or working patterns”

It is important to note that the studies all emphasise the importance of the quality of the training and the importance of the link between the training and the business strategy.

A step by step approach

This guide breaks down the process of identifying and addressing skills gaps into the following six steps.

Step 1 Identify the business needs

Conduct a business needs analysis to identify the business needs.

Step 2 Review the current skills and identify the skill gaps

Identify the skills and knowledge (both used and latent) held by staff and compare with the skills and knowledge required to meet the business needs.

Step 3 Develop skill gap training to meet business needs

Developing a strategic training solution for the business that addresses the identified skill gaps.

Step 4 Deliver training

Deliver and assess the training.

Step 5 Monitor and evaluate

Measure the training and the business outcomes against agreed objectives.

Getting help

Contact MESAB on (03) 9889 0966 for assistance developing a Training Specification and finding a Registered Training Organisation.

Step 1 Identify the business need

The first step in developing a skills gaps training program is to analyse the factors leading to the need for skill gaps training. This enables an organisation to make an informed decision about what they want to achieve from the training including the training content, target groups and the training delivery mode.

Deciding the scope

Business needs can be identified at any level in the organisation including a department, a project team, a staff level, an individual or the entire organisation. Analysis of the entire organisation ensures that you do not lose sight of the overall business objectives and that training is prioritised according to these objectives.

The scope of your business needs analysis is likely to depend on your level of responsibility within the organisation and whether training is a centralised or line management function.

Conduct the business needs analysis

Once the scope of the business needs analysis has been decided the analysis can begin. For this you will need to take stock of what is happening currently in the organisation and what is planned for the future. Ideally your organisation has a documented list of business objectives and targets that are regularly reviewed and updated. If not you will need to consult with key stakeholders within the organisation to identify the business objectives.

Make sure that you identify recent and future workplace changes that may impact on the skills needs of the organisation.

Examples include:

- changed products or services including import and export and local and global markets
- new or changed technology including material, product, process, electrical, electronics, ICT, mechanical, pneumatic and cryogenic technology including knowledge base, set up, maintenance, control systems, fault finding, problem solving and repair
- quality concerns including quality control, quality assurance, customer service, increasing customer demands, process control, continuous improvement and quality management systems
- regulatory compliance including licensing (eg forklift), regulations (eg dangerous goods), legislation (OHS) and standards (safety, environment, quality, food safety)
- changed systems of work including purchasing policies and procedures, definition and allocation of roles, responsibility and accountability within the workplace, systems in place to ensure quality of training, instruction, competency assessment and supervision, systems of communication, organisation of the work (shift arrangements, multi-skilling, job rotation), training systems, work practices and procedures and emergency procedures (eg first aid and evacuation)

- changed management practices including introduction of teamwork, competitive manufacturing techniques, project management, work ethics
- changed management structures including removal of layers of management
- staff turnover including demographic changes (age, gender, cultural and linguistic background, education level).

Deciding the frequency

The frequency with which you conduct a business depends on the nature of your business.

Critical times to analyse the business needs include:

- when plans are being made to implement a new initiative
- when new staff are going to be recruited
- when new positions are going to be created
- when new technology is going to be introduced
- when organisational changes are going to be made.

The best approach to conducting a business analysis is a continuous one because in today's competitive environment there are always changes and therefore there are always skills gaps arising.

Business Needs Analysis Template

A simple Business Needs Analysis Template is provided in the Attachments.

Step 2 Review the current skills and identify skill gaps

Once the business needs have been identified we can begin to review whether employees have the skills necessary for the business needs to be met.

For each business we need consider the following questions:

- what do people need to do in order that the need is met?
- what skills and knowledge do people already possess?
- what skills and knowledge may be required in the future to continue to meet the need?

Information to answer these questions may be collected from a wide range of sources.

These sources include resumes, job applications, job descriptions, employee surveys, performance appraisal records, interviews and self assessment forms.

Information can also be collected from direct observation, consultation with persons in key positions, and/or with specific knowledge and work samples.

Once this information has been collected you are ready to identify the skill gaps.

Analyse the information gathered and answer the following basic questions:

- what gaps exist in both knowledge and ability of the current employees to meet the business needs now?
- what gaps exist in both knowledge and ability of the current employees to meet the business needs in the future?

A Business Needs Skill Gap template is provided in the Attachments to record the skill gaps identified.

Contact your state government to find out if funding is available in your state for skills assessments.

Step 3 Develop skill gap training to meet business needs

Training Packages

Identify the training most suitable to your employees by selecting a Training Package that contains competencies that reflect your work practices.

Training Packages contain a range of competencies that reflect the skills and knowledge needed in the workplace. It is important to access the appropriate competency to meet the skill need and the business need.

All nationally endorsed competencies can be found online at: www.ntis.gov.au

Training Packages are a product of the National Training Reform Agenda and are now part of the National Training Framework (NFT) forming the basis for training in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector in Australia.

Training Packages encourage greater flexibility in training delivery and ensure consistency across Australia.

Training Packages are made up of endorsed and unendorsed components.

The endorsed components must meet the quality requirements of the National Training Quality Committee to ensure their compliance.

The unendorsed components are the support materials and the concern of the industry providing the practical support and control mechanisms for the Training Package.

There are three endorsed components. These are:

- National Competency Standards that specify the skills and depth of knowledge that employees require to work competently at various levels and functions
Included in each competency standard are the elements of competency, the performance criteria, the range of variables and an evidence guide
- The Qualifications Framework that specifies the rules for determining competency standards to achieve nationally recognised qualifications
- Assessment Guidelines that outline the rules for conducting assessments.

There are also three unendorsed components including:

- learning strategies
- assessment resources
- professional development materials.

Training Packages are organised into broad industry groupings and are developed by the relevant Industry Skills Councils.

Identifying trainer skills requirements

For skill gap training designed to meet business needs the trainer and assessor must also have the skills and knowledge to understand the business needs and the link between the skills they are helping to develop and the achievement of the business needs¹.

Therefore the trainer and assessor for the Upskill Project must possess the following skills and qualifications:

- Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent)
- vocational competence at least to the level of those being delivered
- business management qualifications and/or experience relevant to the identified business needs.

Sourcing a Training Provider

Selecting a Training Provider to best meet your business's skill development needs in a very competitive and complex user choice training market can be an exhausting process.

It is recommended that you meet with prospective Training Providers and interview them.

A list of questions for employers to ask Training Providers is provided in the Attachments along with some useful information and pitfalls to avoid.

A quality Training Provider will be able to confidently provide satisfactory answers to all questions posed. They will also be able to describe in detail and in writing both the financial and in kind contribution expected of you and your organisation.

Clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the Training Provider and the Employer

The success of the training program also depends on the quality of the relationship between the employer and the Training Provider. A Code of Conduct agreement can clarify the expectations of each of the parties. A sample code of conduct is provided in the Attachments.

¹ The Australian Quality Training Framework against which all Registered Training Organisations are accredited requires trainers and assessors who deliver the training and assessment to hold as a minimum a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent) and demonstrable vocational competence at least to the level of those being delivered.

Step 4 Deliver training

Managing the training program

The implementation of the successful training program requires careful planning, scheduling and monitoring in consultation with key representatives of all parties including the employer, the training provider, the employees and the trainers. The creation of a project team is strongly recommended.

The individual representatives allocated to the project team need to:

- have the time available to be involved in managing and monitoring the program
- support the reasons for the training
- support the content of the training
- have the necessary communication skills to act as a representative
- work well with other team members
- have their needs met through participation in the project.

The project team meets at regular intervals to review the progress of the project.

Suggested agenda items for reviewing include:

- the training delivered to date and issues that have arisen
- the suitability of training delivery methods and resources, and ideas for improvements
- alignment of training delivered against business needs
- schedule and performance within allocated budget
- training plans for next period
- reporting requirements.

Training Delivery

In terms of training there are many types of delivery modes

These include:

- traditional classroom delivery – students are grouped into classes and training is delivered in a classroom environment, on or off site, with the trainer as the prime source of information
- flexible delivery – alternative delivery options that include one to one support, self-paced learning resources, face to face or email based tutoring and mentoring and CD ROM resources
- action learning – an effective delivery option where the participants learn from experience, structured around tasks associated with completing a project
- individual coaching – a one on one, face to face, intensive, personal and professional development option.

Speak to a variety of training providers to get an idea of the range of training delivery options available in your industry.

For help finding a training provider contact your Industry Training Advisory Board.

Assessment

The training delivered in funded training programs is linked to the competency standards in Training Packages in the context of the workplace. An assessment is a formal measurement of skills and knowledge of the participants against competency standards.

Assessing the training is a partnership between the assessor and the person being assessed. It involves collecting evidence demonstrating competence and making a judgement against the performance criteria set out in the competency standards. To ensure that sound judgements are made the assessment process must be valid, reliable, flexible and fair.

Participants receive a Statement of Attainment that details each unit of competency or competencies achieved.

Step 5 Evaluate the training

The cost of training can be significant to an organisation. When strategically linked to business needs training is an investment and business benefits are expected. It is important to evaluate training to ensure that the expected benefits to the business are realised.

Evaluating the training helps you to:

- track the achievement of employee knowledge and skills
- assess whether the learning is being applied in the workplace
- determine whether the investment was worthwhile
- inform future training plans
- continuously improve the training processes.

The following can be evaluated:

- immediate reaction of the individuals to the event
- assessment of the skills and knowledge gained
- improvement in the individual's performance
- better achievement of business objectives and targets.

Evaluating training delivery

There are many variables involved in developing and implementing a training program including the training provider, the trainer, the learning and assessment resources, the location and timing and the delivery method.

It is important to evaluate the training delivery to ensure that it has been designed to best meet your needs.

To evaluate the training delivery follow these steps:

- document the training plan
- collect feedback from the employees about the training during and after the training
- assess employee knowledge and skill before and after the training
- observe the employee's new knowledge and skills in context.

Often external events and influences can impact on the training program. It is important that you design a system for tracking the training program and taking corrective action. An effective training program is managed by a team that recognises problems and takes action to solve them. Emphasis should be placed on a timely response to problems identified because if the action comes too late, it may not be effective.

A successful program has in place mechanisms for tracking the progress of the training program against key performance indicators. There are four basic key performance indicators. It is recommended that you review this information on a regular basis to ensure that the full program is delivered and the program outcomes

are met. Remember to choose tracking mechanisms that are easy to manage, easy to summarise, meaningful to the stakeholders and efficient.

The key performance indicators to be tracked are:

- Cost

The budget for the training program is detailed in the application for funding. Tracking and reviewing discrepancies between budgeted costs and actual costs on a regular basis will help ensure that the program remains on target.

- Quantity

The quantity of training and other activities is also detailed in the application for funding. Tracking the actual hours of training and other activities delivered against the quantities specified will help ensure that the whole program is delivered and provide the project team with an opportunity to renegotiate the allocation of hours if training/work needs change.

- Quality

A training program is a partnership between the employer and the training provider. Both parties need to deliver a quality service for the program to be successful. For example, the employer needs to provide access to the employees and demonstrate full support of the training program. On the other hand, the training provider needs to deliver a flexible service sensitive to the competing needs and demands of the workplace. It is important for both parties to track any problems and work together to negotiate effective solutions.

Quality is also tracked and measured through the gathering of feedback from the participants. Feeding this information into the review process will help ensure that the program builds on what is working and discard what is not working.

- Time

The timeline for the program is detailed in the application for funding. Tracking the timeline of the project ensures that everything that the program sets out to achieve is delivered and that the effect of external influences on the timeframe of training delivery is discussed and solutions negotiated by the project team.

Evaluating business results

To evaluate the achievement of business objectives and targets it is important to develop appropriate measurements. To be useful the measurements must be linked to the identified business needs and should be specific, quantifiable and achievable. You need to decide what to measure, how to measure it and how often to measure it.

Examples include:

- reduction in unscheduled downtime from 10% to 8% averaged across both shifts measured on a weekly basis
- reduction in product non conformances from 5% to 4% measured on a weekly basis for each shift
- achievement of zero product returns from customers measured monthly for the department
- achievement of zero lost time injuries over a 12 month period measurement monthly for the site
- reduction of staff absenteeism by 25% measured weekly for the department.

Take measurements before, during and after the training to show progression.

To evaluate the achievement of business objectives and targets follow these steps:

- set your objectives
- decide how progress towards your objectives will be measured
- conduct a measurement before the training commences
- decide the performance target
- decide how often you will conduct measurements
- conduct measurements at agreed time intervals
- continue to conduct measurements over an agreed period of time for the training to take effect
- continue to conduct measurements to see whether the benefits are sustained.

Government assistance for existing workers

Australian Apprenticeships

Australian Apprenticeships is an umbrella term for the national apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements that came into effect on 1st January 1998 previously called the New Apprenticeship Scheme. The New Apprenticeship Scheme provides trainees with skills required in the workplace. The training delivered against a Training Package provides a nationally recognised qualification with links into further qualifications

Profile Funding

Profile Funding is a pool of funded hours available to public providers to deliver training. Each TAFE applies for and is allocated profile hours according to AQF level, industry and geographic location of delivery.

Priority Education and Training Program

The Priority Education and Training Program (PETP) is administered by the Office of Training and Tertiary Education (OTTE) on behalf of the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission (VLESC). The program purchases training to be delivered in Victoria by eligible RTOs. TAFEs and Adult and Community Education Providers are not eligible to apply.

The funding is accessed by private RTOs via a Purchase Schedule that identifies the perceived training needs by industry sector and geographic region.

Workplace English Language and Literacy Program

The Workplace English Language and Literacy Program (WELL) funds workplace communications training integrated with vocational training to help workers meet their current and future employment and training needs.

Business Needs analysis template

Organisation name
Business objectives (objectives that the business is expected to achieve and where resources are focused)
What are the main concerns currently for the organisation?
What issues might become important over the next five years?

Business needs skill gap template

Business goal, concern or issue	What skills are needed?	Who needs it?	By when?

Training specification template

Business need	Skill gap	Competencies	Total cost \$	Identified funding \$	Cost to employer \$
Totals					

Employer questions

Training Provider:		Contact:		
Questions to ask		Good	Average	Poor
Track Record	What experience do you have delivering training in my industry and what references can you provide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What experience do you have with contract management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training tailored to your needs	How will you package qualifications to meet the individual needs of each of my workers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What modes of training delivery do you offer and what are the strengths and weaknesses of each?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How does the training and assessment incorporate enterprise based policies, procedures, work samples and processes and forms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training at the right place and the right time	Where will the training be delivered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How do you customise training resources to meet the specific needs of my enterprise and my employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What strategies do you use to engage learners in a meaningful way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What strategies do you use to ensure that what is learnt in training is put into practice in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting individual worker's needs	How do you address different learner needs such as language and literacy needs, reluctant learners, and learners with a disability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How do you ensure the success of the training for all learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How do you ensure the consistency and fairness of assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The right person for the right job	Who is the trainer and what are their qualifications?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What experience does the trainer have delivering training in my industry and what	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	references can they provide?			
	What opportunity will I have to meet the trainer prior to agreeing to go ahead with the training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What mechanisms do you have in place for offering an alternative trainer should things not work out as planned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What is the process for inducting the trainer to our company processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What will happen when the trainer first meets the learners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Achieving value for money	Is the quote sufficiently detailed and does it accurately reflect any government training incentives being accessed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What are we expected to contribute to the training including both financial and in kind contributions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What specific involvement do you expect from our supervisors and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What administrative effort do you need from our supervisors and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing and administering the project	Show me a draft contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How will the training program be project managed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How will you monitor and measure our satisfaction with your training service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What will you do if we are not satisfied?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How will outcomes be measured and recorded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	How will you report on the outcomes achieved against the contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What mechanisms will be put in place to identify and respond to risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What if half way through the training program our skill development priorities change?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What happens at the end of the training program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Useful information and pitfalls to avoid

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
Track Record	<p>Every industry is not only characterised by particular skills sets but also by a unique culture including the way in which business relationships are formed, developed and managed.</p>	<p>Training Providers who do not have business experience dealing in your industry or a similar industry.</p>
	<p>The Training Provider is responsible for the management of all contracts associated with the training. This includes both their contract with you and, where applicable, their contract with the funding body. They must meet their obligations with respect to records and reporting.</p>	<p>Training Providers who do not have a good reputation for contract management.</p>
Training tailored to your needs	<p>Each qualification is made up of competencies that must be packaged in accordance with the qualifications packaging rules. These competencies are either core competencies or electives and may be imported from other Training Packages. A training provider should work in collaboration with the employer to ensure that qualifications are packaged to meet the needs of learner. For example you may have five workers in the same position but one a safety rep, another production support, one a forklift driver , one a fabricator, one a moulder and one working towards a supervisory position. Qualifications can be packaged to meet the needs of each of these learners.</p> <p>The units of competency selected for each worker may be different to reflect their skill requirements.</p>	<p>Training providers who want to deliver the same qualification and the same packaging of competencies to all your workers.</p>
	<p>Training can be delivered in a variety of ways – in a classroom on site or in the workplace, on the job, self paced learning materials or online. These are all legitimate methods of training delivery with strengths and weaknesses. For example training in the workplace enables your policies,</p>	<p>Training providers who tell you that their way of delivering training is the best way or the only way.</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	<p>procedures, equipment and internal resources to be effectively integrated into the training. On the other hand training off site may introduce your employees to other people and processes and stimulate innovation when they return to work. Self paced learning helps to develop independent learning skills and on line learning helps to develop computer skills. Not all training providers deliver training in the same way and therefore it is important to explore the options and shop around.</p>	
	<p>Training Packages have been developed to meet the needs of industry not your specific enterprise. Trainers should customise the training and assessment to your enterprise by using your workplace policies, procedures, work samples and processes and forms.</p>	<p>Training providers who use generic policies, procedures, work samples and forms in their training.</p>
	<p>Training and assessment resources are developed to suit as wide a range of clients as possible and should be customised to meet the needs of your enterprise such as your policies, procedures and forms and your learners such as any special needs (eg literacy difficulties).</p>	<p>Training Providers who are not prepared to customise resources to meet the needs of the enterprise or the learner.</p>
<p>Training at the right place and the right time</p>	<p>The location of training delivery is an important consideration. Training facilities should be safe, accessible, comfortable and appropriately equipped for the training delivery. This could be in a classroom, an office or in production. The best training is usually a combination of both on and off the job components.</p>	<p>Training providers who say that all training should be conducted on the job or all training should be conducted in a classroom.</p>
	<p>Not all learning experiences are the same Adults learn best when they see a need to learn. Effective training happens when the learning experiences have meaning and value and at the same time are motivating and challenging.</p>	<p>Training Providers who you don't think will be able to engage your workers effectively.</p>
	<p>The benefits of training are realised</p>	<p>Training Providers who</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	<p>when the learning acquired is put into action in the workplace and integrated into day to day work activities. Effective training strategies facilitate the transfer of learning between theory and practice.</p>	<p>think that learning activities and real work practices are separate activities.</p> <p>Training providers who have no strategies to ensure that competencies have been achieved.</p>
<p>Meeting individual worker's needs</p>	<p>All registered training providers must, as a condition of their registration, have procedure in place which incorporates access and equity principles including a duty to provide reasonable adjustment.</p>	<p>Training Providers who are not prepared to explore effective reasonable adjustments to be inclusive of all learners.</p>
	<p>Not all learners are the same. Differentiators include language, literacy or numeracy skills, positive or negative memories of school, motivation to learn, shift arrangements, etc. Training arrangements that are flexible and responsive to the needs of learners ensure that each individual learner has the greatest chance of a successful outcome.</p>	<p>Training Providers who offer a fixed approach to training and are not prepared to consider other alternatives.</p> <p>Training providers who can not offer strategies for addressing individual learner needs.</p>
	<p>All registered training providers must, as a condition of their registration, must moderate and validate their assessment. This mean reviewing the assessment tools and methods to see that they comply with the requirements for assessment and that they are consistent not only within your enterprise, but across the clients they work with and the training industry.</p>	<p>Training providers who are not prepared to take the time to review assessment processes and tools.</p>
	<p>Generic or limited training resources that do not meet individual units of competency requirements.</p> <p>All registered training providers must, as a condition of their registration, have resources available for every unit in every qualification they deliver and it is reasonable for you to ask to inspect these resources. The resources may be commercially available or privately developed and you will need to respect the copyright</p>	<p>Training Providers who rely heavily on print based resources to deliver training and assessments to people with low language and literacy levels.</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	conditions.	
The right person for the right job	<p>It is reasonable to ask to meet the trainer and ask questions about their credentials. As a minimum the trainer needs to have a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training and must be able to demonstrate vocational competencies at least to the level of the training being delivered.</p>	<p>Training Providers who allocate trainers based on who is available rather than who is best qualified or experienced to do the job.</p> <p>Training Providers who refuse to provide references.</p> <p>Training providers who are not able to provide an alternative trainer should problems occur.</p> <p>Training providers who are not able to provide trainers with the particular operative experience that your workers are involved in.</p>
	<p>Training is a personal service and the choice of trainer can determine the success of the program. Often the person who is trying to sell you the training program will not be the trainer. Even with all the right qualifications and experience, a trainer also needs to be able to blend into your company culture.</p>	<p>Training Providers who are uncomfortable for you to meet the trainer before committing to the training program.</p> <p>Training providers who do not have alternative trainers should training not progress effectively.</p>
	<p>A new trainer may have experience in your industry but will not know your organisation including your safety procedures, the type and location of internal resources and facilities, key staff contacts and the work area. An effective induction process introduces a trainer to your workplace and gives them an insight into your organisational culture.</p>	<p>Training providers who think the trainer can start training without an induction.</p>
	<p>The decision to proceed with a training often takes place at a different level of the organisation than the actual training delivery. Therefore it is important at the start of the training program to induct the learners who may feel nervous and uncomfortable. This allows them to meet the trainer, get information about the training program both</p>	<p>Training Providers who think that the enrolment process is the induction.</p> <p>Training providers who do not allocate time for staff induction in the training specifications and costing.</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	<p>verbally and usually in the form of a student handbook and ask questions. Helping the learners to feel more at ease at the start of the training program ensures that the transfer of learning will be more effective.</p>	
<p>Achieving value for money</p>	<p>When you source training you are buying a service in a competitive market It is your prerogative to shop around and ask for various quotes before making a decision. Look at the quotes carefully and make sure they contain a full description of the service to be provided, the outcomes to be achieved, the length of the service, what is and what is not included in the quote, invoicing arrangement and what government funding is being accessed so that you are fully informed about what you are being offered and can make far comparisons.</p>	<p>Training Providers who are reluctant to provide a detailed quote and training specifications.</p> <p>Open ended quotes that do not itemise training and assessment events and outcomes.</p>
	<p>Training is an investment in human resources capital and, even where funding is available, it is never free. All training requires adequate employee release, support from supervisors and the involvement from management and sometimes other business functions to be effective.</p>	<p>Training Providers who tell you training is free.</p> <p>Training Providers who tell you training will not interrupt the workflow and production.</p> <p>Training providers who say that they will take care of everything with no requirement for enterprise resources.</p> <p>Providers who will only offer one qualification option. Eg offering only the Certificate III in Process Manufacturing when a Certificate III in a technical specialisation such as injection moulding is more appropriate to your workers.</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	<p>Training doesn't only happen when the trainer is visiting. It is happening continually and it is often the learner's supervisor or manager whose role to support their skill development or alternatively workplace mentors are trained by the training provider. An effective training program will recognise and support this relationship and therefore involve supervisors in the training program.</p>	<p>Training Providers who do not recognise the role of supervisors and mentors or who only require supervisors to sign off the paperwork.</p>
<p>Managing and administering the project</p>	<p>When you agree to go ahead with a training service it is reasonable to have a training contract. This contract should reflect what has been agreed to clearly outlining the obligations of both parties including information about the modes of delivery, customisation requirements, project management mechanisms, outcomes to be achieved, timing and cost.</p>	<p>Training Providers whose contracts lack sufficient detail about what was agreed.</p>
	<p>Training programs don't just happen, they are project managed. Good project management means that the Training Provider seeks and acts upon client feedback and provides regular progress reports against agreed outcomes.</p>	<p>Training Providers who don't build in schedule for providing regular progress reports in training specifications and contracts.</p>
	<p>Continuous improvement requires proactively seeking feedback from clients. Training providers should ask both the enterprise and the learners for their opinions on whether the service delivery met their needs and how it can be improved It is also important that training providers act on the feedback given.</p>	<p>Training providers who do not seek and act upon client feedback.</p>
	<p>Training must be supported by effective administration, particularly where funding is accessed. Effective administration means that all training and funding body administrative requirements are managed and maintained accurately and efficiently and smoothly by the Training Provider requiring input from the</p>	<p>Training Providers who have a reputation for poor training administration. Training providers who tell you not to worry and are not prepared to explain their procedures for managing records on</p>

Issue	Useful information	Pitfalls to avoid
	<p>employer only where absolutely necessary. Ineffective administration means that funding may be delayed, records may be lost and the training may lose its focus due to administrative problems.</p>	<p>request.</p>
	<p>Training programs do not happen in a vacuum and any issues that might affect the training need to be identified and dealt with openly in a timely and effectively in a timely manner before they become problems.</p>	<p>Training providers who say that there will be no problems.</p>
	<p>During the life of a training program in a competitive and dynamic business environment your training priorities can change. These changes can include logistical changes such as restructuring of shifts, technology changes such as new equipment, process changes such as new materials or business changes such as mergers and acquisitions. Whatever the change you will want to be confident that your Training provider can respond to these changes.</p>	<p>Training Providers who are not prepared to respond to your changing needs.</p> <p>Training providers who tell you not to worry, that they are experienced and will take care of everything – without telling you ‘how they will do this’.</p>
	<p>It is important that there is an opportunity at the end of the training program to report on the achievement of the outcomes agreed to in the training contract.</p>	<p>Training providers who do not provide a final contract report.</p>
	<p>Training providers develop strong relationships with enterprises during the design and delivery of the training program. It is important that there is an opportunity at the end of the training program to debrief on problems that arose, the lessons learnt and the actions implemented as a result of those lessons and recommendations for further progression. This is not only good customer service, it is good quality management for a training provider interested in continually improving service delivery and maintaining relationships.</p>	<p>Training providers who do not understand the value of the post training debrief.</p>

Sample agreement

As the training provider we agree to provide the following quality of service delivery:

Track Record	We will provide references for two other recent training clients in your industry	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We have experience in contract management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training tailored to your needs	We will package qualifications to meet the individual needs of your workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will present the modes of training delivery and explain the strengths and weaknesses of each	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will incorporate enterprise based policies, procedures, work samples and processes and forms in the training and assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will customise training resources to meet your specific needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training at the right place and the right time	We will deliver training in a suitable location	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will engage learners in a meaningful way	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement strategies to ensure that what is learnt in training is put into practice in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting individual worker's needs	We will address different learner needs such as language and literacy needs, reluctant learners, and learners with a disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement strategies to ensure the success of the training for all learners	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will ensure the consistency and fairness of assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>
The right person for the right job	We will provide details about the trainer's qualifications and experience	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will provide references of other enterprises where this trainer has delivered training	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will introduce you to the trainer if requested	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will offer an alternative trainer should things not work out as planned	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will work with you to induct the trainer to your company	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will explain what will happen when the trainer first meets the learners	<input type="checkbox"/>
Achieving value for	We will provide a detailed quote that accurately reflects any government training incentives being accessed	<input type="checkbox"/>

money	We will explain up front what you are expected to contribute to the training including both financial and in kind contributions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will explain up front what specific involvement we expect from your supervisors and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will explain up front what administrative effort we need from your supervisors and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing and administering the project	We will show you a draft contract	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement a project management process	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement a process to monitor and measure your satisfaction with our training service	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will respond in a timely manner if you are not satisfied with the service in any way	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement a process to measure record and report the project outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will implement a process to identify and respond to risks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We will be open to renegotiating the contract should your skill development priorities change?	<input type="checkbox"/>
We will debrief with you at the end of the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	

As the Employer we agree to support the Training provider in the achievement of this Code of Conduct by meeting my requirements as detailed in the Contract

Training Provider:	Training Provider:
Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

Employability Skills Framework

The following table is from the Training Package Development Handbook published by the Department of Education, Science and Training 2/11/2005.

Skill	Facets
Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations across employees and customers	<p>Aspects of the skill that employers identify as important (the nature and application of these facets will vary depending on industry and job type)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and understanding Speaking clearly and directly Writing to the needs of the audience Negotiating responsively Reading independently Empathising Using numeracy effectively Understanding the needs of internal and external customers Persuading effectively Establishing and using networks Being assertive Sharing information Speaking and writing in languages other than English
Team work that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working across different ages and irrespective of gender, race, religion or political persuasion Working as an individual and as a member of a team Knowing how to define a role as part of the team Applying team work to a range of situations eg futures planning, crisis problem solving Identifying the strengths of the team members Coaching and mentoring skills including giving feedback

Skill	Facets Aspects of the skill that employers identify as important (the nature and application of these facets will vary depending on industry and job type)
Problem solving that contributes to productive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing creative, innovative solutions Developing practical solutions Showing independence and initiative in identifying problems and solving them Solving problems in teams Applying a range of strategies to problem solving Using mathematics including budgeting and financial management to solve problems Applying problem solving strategies across a range of areas Testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account Resolving customer concerns in relation to complex projects issues
Initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapting to new situations Developing a strategic, creative, long term vision Being creative Identifying opportunities not obvious to others Translating ideas into action Generating a range of options Initiating innovative solutions

Skill	Facets Aspects of the skill that employers identify as important (the nature and application of these facets will vary depending on industry and job type)
Planning and organising that contributes to long and short term strategic planning	Managing time and priorities– setting time lines, co-ordinating tasks for self and with others Being resourceful Taking initiative and making decisions Adapting resource allocations to cope with contingencies Establishing clear project goals and deliverables Allocating people and other resources to tasks Planning the use of resources including time management Participating in continuous improvement and planning processes Developing a vision and a proactive plan to accompany it Predicting - weighing up risk, evaluate alternatives and apply evaluation criteria Collecting, analysing and organising information Understanding basic business systems and their relationships
Self management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth	Having a personal vision and goals Evaluating and monitoring own performance Having knowledge and confidence in own ideas and visions Articulating own ideas and visions Taking responsibility
Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes	Managing own learning Contributing to the learning community at the workplace Using a range of mediums to learn – mentoring, peer support and networking, IT, courses Applying learning to ‘technical’ issues (eg learning about products) and ‘people’ issues (eg interpersonal and cultural aspects of work) Having enthusiasm for ongoing learning Being willing to learn in any setting – on and off the job Being open to new ideas and techniques Being prepared to invest time and effort in learning new skills Acknowledging the need to learn in order to accommodate change

Skill	Facets Aspects of the skill that employers identify as important (the nature and application of these facets will vary depending on industry and job type)
Technology that contributes to effective carrying out of tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a range of basic IT skills Applying IT as a management tool Using IT to organise data Being willing to learn new IT skills Having the OHS knowledge to apply technology Having the appropriate physical capacity