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CLASS NOTES

Skills & Training



Skills & Training

Building a Dynamic and Skilled Workforce.



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David is the Executive Manager Stakeholder Engagement for the Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance. Prior to this he was the Acting Executive Director of Apprenticeships Victoria where his role was to rebuild the organisation and position it for the future.

David is committed to promoting vocational education as a strong career pathway and has done this for more than eight years with executive roles in the Victorian Government across TAFEs, workforce development and the government funded training market.



“Currently, there is a major shortage of skilled labour in our industry, which has been identified as a critical threat to businesses.”

Our industry often has concerns about the significant need for improvement in our industry's skills and training standards.

There is a high demand for better quality and consistency in this area. Currently, there is a major shortage of skilled labour in our industry, which our industry members identify as a critical threat to their businesses. Given that our workforce is aging, attracting new talent is crucial for the industry's future. One key area of focus is increasing apprenticeship completion rates - currently, over 50% of apprentices do not complete their training. This is a priority for industry, and we have additional strategies in place to address retention and training issues.

CHALLENGE 1 - DIRTY TRADE

Manufacturing jobs are not seen as an attractive choice for school leavers. In Australia, we are well placed to develop knowledge intensive, low carbon emissions capability in key segments of global and regional value chains. Australia lacks a clear narrative on 'what we do', leading to a devaluing of manufacturing careers.

There are a range of solution pathways our industry can take to change the stereotypes:

IMPROVING APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION RATES

- > Achieve an accurate assessment of completion rates and the reasons why our apprentices leave our industry.

PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- > Targeting specific cohorts and promoting the benefits and opportunities of careers in manufacturing. For example, advertising, career expos.

CHANGING THE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

- > To attract new workers, we need to adapt our employment offering. For example, flexible work, salaries, child care support.
- > Learn and earn programs partnering with TAFEs, RTOs, Universities.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

- > Create and promote clear pathways for individuals.
- > Promote the job, for example: helping to build Australia's defence capability or help Australia meet net zero emissions.
- > School engagement programs.

CHALLENGE 2 - LACK OF DIVERSITY

Research done by Jobs and Skills Australia last year made it clear that the more skewed a workforce is in terms of gender, the more likely they are to have a labour supply issue. With the manufacturing industry standing as a traditionally male-dominated industry, lacking gender diversity, it is no surprise the sector is seeing labour supply issues.

In response to these challenges the Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance recommends:

IMPROVING APPRENTICESHIP COMPLETION RATES

- > Achieve an accurate assessment of completion rates and the reasons why our apprentices leave our industry.

TARGETED PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

- > Making manufacturing an attractive worker proposition for:
 - > Indigenous people
 - > Women
 - > LGBTQI+ cohorts
 - > Culturally and linguistically diverse people
 - > People with disability

INDUSTRY EDUCATION TARGETING

- > Networks for different cohorts e.g. Women in manufacturing networks.
- > Leadership in diverse organisations.
- > Creating optimal work environments for different cohorts.

“It has recently been found that over 34% of the industry workforce are aged 50 years and over.

In 2006, this was at 24%.”

Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance

CHALLENGE 3 - SKILLS RETIREMENT CLIFF

There's clearly a challenge in retaining workers for as long as possible and sharing their knowledge along with bringing in a new generation of workers that can learn. By expanding diversity programs in business and moving business knowledge into onboarding programs, industry will see higher retention of staff and a more diverse cohort in the workforce:



Mentoring programs.
Support and career guidance for employees.



Succession planning.
Identifying talent and nurturing it to leadership roles.



Tapping into government industry transition programs.
Programs which support workers utilising existing skills or learning new ones to continue employment.



Better retirement transition.
Setting concrete goals and articulating them clearly. Supporting your employees in reaching their goals.



Improving the apprenticeship experience.
Better experiences for apprentices will lead to better completion rates.

CHALLENGE 4 - SKILLS FOR FUTURE AUSTRALIA

Transferable skills are becoming a key to success going forward, such as the opportunity to transition from defence to clean energy for example, (a gearbox, is a gearbox).

Considering skills for the future includes developing the skills of those workers that we do retain - how do we keep them skilled and how do we upskill them with the new technology and everything that's coming in? Looking to your future workforce begins with the workforce you already have. Consider facing the current issues impacting the workforce quality - dirty trade, lack of diversity and skills retirement cliff.

Other solutions you could get underway include:

MORE RESPONSIVE SKILLS SYSTEM

- > Achieve an accurate assessment of completion rates and the reasons why our apprentices leave our industry.

LEVERAGING BEST PRACTICE

- > Targeting specific cohorts and promoting the benefits and opportunities of careers in manufacturing. For example, advertising, career expos.

FLEXIBLE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- > To attract new workers, we need to adapt our employment offering. For example, flexible work, salaries, child care support.
- > Learn and earn programs partnering with TAFEs, RTOs, Universities.

VISION - A STRONGER FUTURE

We have an empowered manufacturing workforce that drives the Australian economy. The Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance works towards supporting the manufacturing industry across a range of facets, including posing solutions to some of the industry's most difficult workforce challenges at present. Beginning to recognise the particular challenges your own business is facing will help you navigate a plan in 'future-proofing' your workforce.



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