

Major engineering solutions company in South Africa

Location: JHB and Kwa- Zulu Natal

Founded: 1981

Employees: 300+ permanent, skilled staff

iLearn®

How an engineering company identified and rectified critical skills gaps, transformed the culture of their organisation and increased their employee productivity.

THE CHALLENGE

The client was in need of a formal skills audit across a number of subsidiaries to assist them with:

- Gathering data on current skills sets, level of education and extent of experience.
- Identifying the skills gaps within current job roles.
- Optimising productivity by closing the gaps by means of providing formal training, mentoring and on-the-job training.
- Identifying individuals who have skills sets that can be used in other roles in the organisation.
- Identifying high performing individuals who may be considered for development for career progression and succession.
- Formulating a training plan for high priority training needs for 12 months and medium to low training needs for the following 24 months.
- Determining a budget required to meet high priority training needs and align these to regulatory requirements such as Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) and Employment Equity (EE).

THE APPROACH

The following process was followed:

STEP 1

Meeting with senior management to obtain buy in and ensure participation from all stakeholders. This meeting also included the sharing of BBBEE and EE targets.



STEP 2

Meeting with line managers to explain and demonstrate the administration of the skills audit document and establish time frames for completion.

STEP 3

Issuing of the skills audit to the respective line managers and launch of internal communication to all employees on the purpose and process of the skills audit, examples were provided.



STEP 4

Line managers administering the skills audit to their teams, explaining the questions asked in the document and providing deadlines for return. Some line managers preferred to do individual interviews with employees to complete the information required.

STEP 5

All skills audit documents are collected and scanned and emailed back to iLearn for consolidation, analysis, interpretation and recommendations.



STEP 6

A consolidated raw data report is provided to the client to determine high priority training needs and for use in the submission of their Workplace Skills Plan (WSP). This is a highly consultative approach and findings were unpacked in detail to determine the next steps.

HOW THE RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED

The client determined that the priority was the development of individuals who had been placed in leadership roles for various reasons, without any formal education. This is a trend across the South African landscape.

20 individuals were placed on a Management NQF 3 Learnership. This was accompanied by the development of two additional models.

1. HR formulated a competency framework which would establish criteria for other employees to apply for specific positions. For example, if a candidate applied to be moved up to a Team Leader position, they would need to have completed an entry-level management qualification. Supervisors were required to complete a higher-level qualification. Other factors were also taken into consideration such as performance and attitude.
2. A Succession Plan was put in place to support the competency framework.

THE IMPACT

The Department of Labour commended the organisation for how they approached the identification of their skills gaps and the action they took to close them.

The organisation also obtained the required points for the skills development element of their B-BBEE scorecard.

Monitoring and evaluation throughout the project revealed that the participants and organisation benefited from the programme in the following ways:

- Increased morale and comradery amongst the participants.
- A uniform approach to leadership was adopted and applied.
- Participants obtained a higher level of respect from their team members.
- A more structured approach to leading and planning led to an increase in productivity.
- Participants understood their role in the business and were able to contribute more valuable and relevant information in meetings.
- The reporting ability was improved.
- 98% of the participants were eager to continue learning in the future, encouraging a progression of learning.
- The competency framework was readily adopted by employees as they were eager to start a learning journey.