



Growth Institute
Workplace Integrated Training Solutions
An approved private college



Skills Development

Facts to consider

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Introduction

The National Skills Development Act compels employers to help staff in obtaining a work-related qualification. Employers are expected to make use of learnerships or apprenticeships to remain compliant with the Act.

Our in the field experience has shown that many employers are bitterly disappointed having spent significant amounts of money on training interventions that do not deliver what was initially promised by providers.

Six Important Facts

There are six main points to consider when embarking on learnerships and/or apprenticeships.

1. *Implementation*

Employers often wait until the last minute before learnerships or apprenticeships are implemented. Best practice suggests that employers should make sure that their skills development plans are reviewed and approved at least three to six months before training should commence. This provides sufficient time for employers to solicit proposals or quotes and to compile a shortlist of providers.

2. *Process*

There are specific processes to be followed. There are at least four parties to a learnership/apprenticeship:

- 1) The training provider
- 2) The learner (either an employee or a previously unemployed person)
- 3) The employer
- 4) SETA or QCTO
- 5) A Quality Assurance Partner that the SETA or QCTO can appoint to oversee the delivery of the training intervention by the training provider

3. *Approach*

Skills development is not about “ticking the boxes”. The most successful skills development programs are those where employers put people development above compliance motions. A “people first” approach ensures high levels of motivation and has been proven to increase productivity by a significant margin.

4. *Identify potential*

Not all employees are suitable for skills development interventions. Best practice has shown that employees that are coerced into a learnership or apprenticeship do not perform at the same levels as those who voluntarily participate in a skills development intervention.

Employers often state that they do not have the right employee for a skills development program. There are training providers who also specialise in finding the right learner for a specific program. Such provider can be very valuable to the success of your skills development initiatives.

5. *End to end custodians*

Some training providers are specialists in learnerships and apprenticeships. They have an in-depth knowledge of all processes required to make skills development a success. The Growth Group has the benefit of experienced educators who also know the learnership processes and the skills development elements on the B-BBEE scorecards.

Clients can be assured that they will receive objective advice in all matters regarding skills development.

Providers who are willing to act as end-to-end custodians of learnerships can save employers time and money.

6. *Exploitation*

From an ethical perspective, employers should exercise great care that the youth is not exploited when placed on a skills development program. Common complaints from learners include issues such as:

- Not having all the information about a program
- Not having the means to get to classes at all times
- Being used as a token for the sake of ticking compliance boxes

Questionable skills development practices could cause employers and providers to face restitutive actions from learners or regulators.

Standards

Skills development programs that make use of professional bodies as Quality Assurance Partners are generally of a higher standard than others. Most programs offered by the Growth Group require a pass mark of 60% as stipulated by professional bodies. Choosing between a candidate who met the requirements of a professional body compared to other candidates, are obvious.

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