

June
2004

FOCUS ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workers from diverse industry sectors – automobile manufacturing, banking, mining, utilities, financial services, and transport – have all received assistance in identifying, enrolling into and completing skills training programmes through the JET Education Services Workforce Development programmes. The JET programmes are built around a core finding that adult learners require an advising and support system in order to be successful in their learning ventures. JET offers learners a three-day *Dipaakanyo* preparation workshop, individual education/training advising sessions for the creation of personal development plans and a toll-free learner support help-line for continuous support throughout the duration of their learning programme. Additionally, JET's Workforce Development Division (WFD) identifies appropriate accredited skills training providers, brokers with these providers to customise courses to meet the learners' needs, contracts the providers and provides quality assurance monitoring on behalf of the learners.

The Model: Rationale and Objectives

This comprehensive learner advising and support system is modelled on the programmes of the USA-based Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). In 2001, with support from The Ford Foundation and The Joint Education Trust, the

THOUSANDS OF WORKERS ACQUIRE NEW SKILLS

*by Diana Bamford-Rees
The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)*



newly formed Section 21 company - JET Education Services - launched a new division for workforce development.

Some objectives of the new division were to:

- Build an organisational infrastructure that would sustain a model of workforce development that could be replicated over time and across industries to serve both incumbent and retrenched workers.
- Facilitate the provision of the necessary programmes, services and skills with which to access labour market and job creation opportunities for 1 000 retrenched workers in a pilot project that would serve as a prototype of the workforce development model.
- Influence policy change within government, organised labour, the corporate world and education and training providers.
- Develop and execute a marketing strategy to generate the client base and revenue projections to ensure self-sustainability beyond the grant funding period.
- Become a national leader in the area of workforce development.

The creation of this division strengthens JET's efforts to achieve its mission as it relates to improving the relationship between education and the world of work.

The South African legislative and policy framework, namely The Skills Development Act and Social Planning policy, create a positive environment for adult education and training opportunities to emerge. Through the establishment of this legislative and policy framework, programmes and funding opportunities have been created. However, even in the midst of a climate favourable towards workforce development, a number of barriers exist and these must be overcome for these initiatives to succeed. Implementing these newly created systems has proven very challenging, and while important lessons have been learned and progress has been made, issues regarding access, retention and maximum use of these learning opportunities continue to pose threats to the success of these initiatives.

The JET Workforce Development Programme model provides a solution. The model assists employers with skills audits and the creation of their skills development plans. The associated fund management,

accounting and tracking system, the JET Skills Enabler (JSE) is designed specifically to assist South African employers and workers to achieve their skills development goals. The JSE presents data in reporting formats required by the SETAs for employers to reclaim the funds paid through the Skills Levy.

Implementation

The initial South African pilot project, in 2001, was for 111 retrenched auto workers from the Ford Motor Company assembly plant in Pretoria. The pilot was supported by grant funds and the Work Security Fund (WSF), a fund created jointly by the Automobile Manufacturing Industry of Southern Africa and NUMSA for skills retraining for retrenched auto workers. Since launching the model with that pilot project, advising and support programmes have been delivered for additional former auto workers at the Ford engine plant in Port Elizabeth and for the Nissan Motor Company in Rosslyn. Other retrenched worker projects have been with Computershare, an

international stock transfer company with offices in Johannesburg, and with retrenched mineworkers from O.R. Tambo mine in Emfundisweni, Eastern Cape. Programmes have also been delivered for incumbent workers in the taxi industry in Gauteng. More information about these and other programmes are provided in this Bulletin (see pages 6-7).

Barriers to Successful Adult Learning

Even when education and training opportunities are made available to workers, there may be barriers for these workers which limit the maximum use of training and reskilling opportunities. Workers encounter many obstacles as they face returning to learning. They often lack much of what is required to be successful including:

- funds to pay tuition costs;
- access to, and funds for, transport to attend courses;
- time to study or attend classes;
- preparation for successful learning outcomes, often due to extended time away from a learning environment;
 - self-confidence, due to previous negative experiences in school and fear of failure;
- information about the kinds of courses available that are appropriate to progression or re-entry to the workforce;
- corrective lenses for eyesight problems; and
- adequate nutrition for effective learning.

Adults returning to formal learning need information about available education, training and job opportunities. They also need confidence



Retrenched auto workers participate in Dipaakanyo workshop in Port Elizabeth

SOUTH AFRICAN LEARNERS HONOURED AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

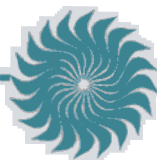
Two learners from the retrenched auto workers reskilling project at Ford Motor Company were honoured at the annual international conference of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) in Orlando, Florida, USA in November 2001. Petrus Skhosana and SJ (Fox) Lekale were selected from the 111 participants in the programme to be the representative "Learners of the Year". Each year, CAEL honours one or two adult learners who have overcome exceptional barriers to return to learning. A team of JET staff and company and union representatives accompanied Mr Lekale and Mr Skhosana to America to receive their awards.



Petrus Skhosana, left and SJ Lekale

Travelling with the honourees were: Phindi Sigodi, Dasi Moodley and Gloria Mkize of JET, Diana Bamford-Rees (CAEL), Anton van der Walt (Ford Motor Company of Southern Africa) and Petrus Nxumalo, (NUMSA). The team also presented a

workshop at the conference which showcased the JET-administered innovative pilot project that Ford and NUMSA sponsored. The honourees were acknowledged at a luncheon reception during which they each made a short acceptance speech.



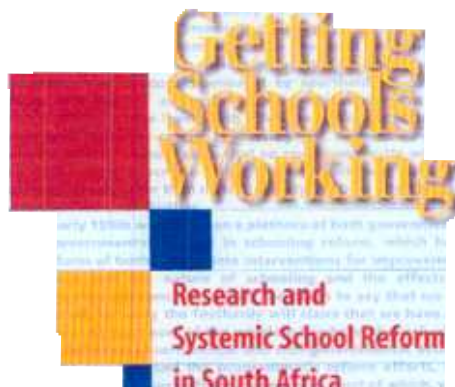
NEWS

GETTING SCHOOLS WORKING

Research and Systemic School Reform in South Africa

Authors:
Nick Taylor
Johan Muller
Penny Vinjevold

Over the last ten years, the research community has produced some highly suggestive information about the state of education in South Africa. *Getting Schools Working* reviews this knowledge base systematically and provides an analysis of school improvement efforts, as well as a detailed discussion of the kinds of research, both empirical and theoretical, that go beyond common sense and suggestive trend data to reveal systemic implications for future research and school reform programmes.



Nick Taylor
Johan Muller
Penny Vinjevold

The result of this systematic review is a model of the factors that influence learning at school in South Africa. The review and the model brought together in *Getting Schools Working* constitute a valuable resource for researchers, policy makers and practitioners in the field of education.

"...without the form of qualitative and theoretical shift suggested in the book, South Africa will fail to Get Schools Working. That is a failure we cannot afford. The book and the practical examples from outside South Africa should be made essential reading and practice for all those who dare to lead South Africa's educational transformation."

Naledi Pandor
Launch of *Getting Schools Working*
13 August 2003



Boitumelo Sebolao, recruited from our network of trained advisors/facilitators, has been on the WFD staff since June 2002; first as a Site Co-ordinator at our Rosslyn office and later as a Project Officer at the home office. As a professional teacher she possesses a wealth of experience in the field of education and she has worked as an ABET facilitator and trainer in both government and NGOs. Boitumelo holds a Bachelors Degree from University of South Africa and an Honours Degree from the University of Pretoria.



WFD has a contractual agreement with LeadTrain for the full time services of Reuben Kgatitswe as a second data capturer working with Xenothan on the JSE.



Xenothan Hojem is the Database Administrator for WFD and is responsible for the administration of the JET Skills Enabler (JSE). The JSE is used by WFD to track all the learners registered in our programmes and to report on their progress to the various stakeholders/clients. Xen joined WFD in February 2003. Xen came to us from LeadTrain, the organisation which developed the internet based data management system that WFD uses to support the JSE. His experience in data administration comes from his work for companies like MGX (formerly CCH) where he set up the front- and back-end databases for their various call centres, and Systems Publishers where he maintained their subscriber databases, set up new databases and also assisted in event co-ordination. He is currently completing a B.Comm Degree in Information Management.



Diana Bamford-Rees was seconded to JET from CAEL (USA) in 2000. Diana has more than twenty years experience in managing workplace skills training for employees and reskilling for retrenched for many US companies. She worked on the team that created CAEL's Returning to Learning™ workshop and this experience made her the ideal resource for the development and implementation of JET's *Dipaakanyo* Workshop. Diana has extensive experience with the design and delivery of training for education advisors and the management of these networks. Diana provides technical assistance consultation and mentoring to the WFD staff. She will continue in this role until the end of July 2004.

A special thank you to
The Ford Foundation
 for their generous support given for the creation of the Workforce Development Division and for making it possible to bring these services and products to the workers of South Africa.



and relevant and how can they be obtained. JET functions as this neutral agency.

Summary

A blended learning solution is required by employers to achieve successful learning outcomes. Large employers with the capacity to arrange learning interventions for their

and self-esteem building, and planning and decision-making tools to enable them to navigate both the education and training and labour market arenas. The workshops and individual education advising sessions provided through the JET Workforce Development model enable workers to build and enhance their learning skills and support networks.

Employers and organised labour encounter barriers as well when they attempt to provide education and training for their workers. They may lack *information*: many employers are not familiar with how to organise effective training and education and thus are not familiar with the relationship between education and training, continuous improvement, and work reorganisation. *Money* may also be a barrier: a lack of financial resources to pay for education and training is a particular concern for companies with minimal or non-existent education and training budgets and the amount they can reclaim from the skills levy they pay may

not be sufficient to meet their needs. *Time* can also be an impediment: as many employers cannot afford the staff time needed to administer a workforce education and training programme adequately during company hours. And, they may lack long-term *vision*: some employers equate education and training with short-term remediation of a specific problem, rather than focusing on broad education and skills development for long-term impact. Through consultation with employers, JET helps them to make a paradigm shift regarding training and also assists with the identification of sources of funding for skills training.

Employers are often reluctant to participate in the educational services that are available due to a lack of trust that the services are relevant and will fill a workforce education gap. There is a demand in South Africa for a neutral agency that can provide trustworthy information on education and training programmes – such as what courses or programmes are accredited

employees may require just one or two of the JET workforce development services. Small employers and funders, such as the SETAs, require a total solution and a subcontract with WFD can be that solution.

Where retrenchments are involved, our findings are that it is best when an independent party, rather than the employer, arranges the programme of reintegration into the growing areas of the economy.

WFD exists first and foremost to support learners to achieve success in the new arena of lifelong learning. Where capacity can be built in geographic areas, WFD does that. However, some clients want an immediate solution. WFD will provide the services the client requires for learner success.



Diana Bamford-Rees is Senior Project Director for The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), USA. She was seconded to JET (2000-2004) to assist with the design and implementation of the Workforce Development Programme model.

JET – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

SKILLS AUDIT AND PREPARATION OF WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN

It is important for an employer to know the capacity that its human resources already have before considering any development intervention. A skills audit is the beginning point for the systematic development of the skills capacity of organisations. In the performance of a skills audit, JET:

- Reviews current skills profiles of employees
- Reviews staff profiles with regards to skills needed to perform defined functions
- Identifies the skills gaps and processes a staff profile gap assessment
- Defines workplace skills
- Recommends an implementation plan.

PREPARATION FOR SKILLS TRAINING

The *Dipaakanyo* Workshop prepares employees for career planning, goal setting and to achieve these goals from skills training. It is a three-day programme and can accommodate a maximum of 25 participants under the guidance of two trained facilitators.

At the end of the three days, participants will:

- Understand change in their own lives within a broad social context
- Develop skills in goal setting and decision making
- Build confidence and self-esteem
- Identify their educational and vocational strengths, interests and challenges

- Articulate their own preferred direction and understand organisational needs
- Make sound personal development plans based on genuine opportunities for education, work and social activity.

INDIVIDUAL ADVISING AND COUNSELLING SESSIONS

Following the *Dipaakanyo* Workshop, these individual sessions provide the opportunity for each employee to examine his/her personal career goals and learning agenda in a supportive environment with a knowledgeable career/education professional. Three sessions, separated by at least one week to allow for information gathering and reflection, are recommended. This service includes:

- Individual one-hour sessions with a trained facilitator
- Gathering concise information and refining individual plans
- Confidential space to complete each employee's Personal Development Plan.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Personal Money Management is a one-day workshop, covering themes such as hire-purchase buying, developing a saving attitude, debt management, and such like. The workshop is designed for:

- Retirees/Retrenchedes – How to manage ones package.
- SMMEs – Separating

business income from personal income.

- Individual Workers – How to improve savings habits and deal with debt.

Work Ethics and Productivity Workshop is a two-day workshop aimed at assisting employers with the improvement of work ethics at their workplaces and to address problems concerning good service delivery. The workshop is targeted for:

- SMMEs – Addressing issues of service orientation and competitiveness.
- Employees – Assists in the development of good work ethics.

Either of these workshops can be delivered as a stand alone workshop or conducted in conjunction with *Dipaakanyo*.

MANAGING SKILLS INVESTMENT

JET provides the following services:

- Brokers with education and training providers
- Builds linkages between the world of education and training and the world of work
- Develops criteria for selecting providers
- Creates a database of providers
- Works with providers to redesign and adapt curricula to meet the needs of candidates
- Manages costs
- Registers the employees
- Tracks employees' progress and gives support
- Generates progress reports (participation, performance and completion)
- Provide employees with a toll-free help-line.

MEET THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TEAM



Letshego Mokeki joined the division as a programme director in July of 2002; in August 2003 he became Deputy Division Manager and in January 2004 assumed the position of Division Manager. Previously he had been employed by the National Department of Labour where he gained valuable experience in project management and social planning. He was a member of the South African team that adapted the CAEL Returning to Learning™ workshop to *Dipaakanyo*. He was in the first group of facilitators that JET trained to deliver the *Dipaakanyo* workshop (July 1999) and thus has worked with JET WFD since the inception of our pilot projects in January 2001. He holds an Honours Degree in Psychology from the University of Natal and is currently enrolled in Masters studies at the University of the Witwatersrand.



Violet Chisulo joined WFD as a part-time Project Coordinator in July 2003. She brings extensive experience in developing training materials and contextual assessment methods and tools. Violet has consulted extensively on workplace communication as well. She holds a BA in Social Work and a Higher Education Diploma from the University of the Witwatersrand.



Makgabele Maila also joined the team in October 2003. Makgabele has been involved as a Project Manager in community based public works projects as well as Zivuseni poverty alleviation programmes with the Gauteng Department Of Public Works. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Primary Education as well and an Honours Degree from the University of the Witwatersrand and she has a Diploma in Project Management from Damelin College.



Cynthia Moeng joined the WFD staff in October 2003. Cynthia has experience in project coordination and training in the field of Social Work, Youth Programmes and Early Childhood Development. She has also worked extensively in the development of training material in the mental health field. She holds a BA Degree from the University of Natal.

SeTswana, with a group comprised largely of men between the ages of 18 and 25.

The newly developed Pre-Interview Guide was used in both settings to provide orientation to the CCOA for employees. Assessors then conducted CCOA interviews and completed an assessment of each interview that provided feedback to the project on the interviewee's response to the assessment process. Assessors answered the following questions about each interview:

1. Interviewee was comfortable with interview process
2. Interviewee was comfortable with the language chosen for the interview
3. Interviewee told stories appropriate to the questions asked
4. Interviewee seemed comfortable telling stories
5. Interviewee used "we" and "I" appropriately in the interview
6. The interview was conducted within the recommended timeframe.

Based on the history and practice of the EPP in the United States and on discussions with CCOA assessors, these questions were deemed central to understanding if the CCOA could work with the population targeted. The

responses to the questions indicated that the instrument was generally well received but that assessors would need to improve on conducting the interview within the recommended time of one hour.

Industry Focus Groups

Discussions during the assessor training illuminated several inconsistencies between the capability model and the nature and expectations of the South African workplace. To ensure that the capabilities were a good fit for the context, it was important to gather input from sector representatives and other South African workplace professionals to guide revision of the capabilities, their definitions, and the behavioural indicators for each, which guide assessment of the interview. A questionnaire was sent to a number of professionals in the JET network, requesting feedback on the initial CCOA capability model and suggestions for revision. In addition, focus groups were held to supplement data gathered from the questionnaires. The response to the questionnaire was minimal, but the focus groups provided rich and relevant information about the existing capabilities and additional ones of value to South African employers. The focus group discussions clearly reflected the perspective of the workplace and yielded

important ideas for improving the model.

South African Context

Based on discussions with the assessor trainees and the data gathered through the 56 pilot interviews and the industry focus groups, the model was revised. Changes were made to several of the 14 capabilities, generally revising language and adding or deleting behavioural indicators of capabilities to calibrate them for use in South Africa. The 14 capabilities being assessed in the revised model are: concern for others, teamwork, goal orientation, planning skills, problem solving, self-control, flexibility, influence skills, managing others, self-confidence, learning orientation, reliability, leadership, and leveraging diversity.

Launch of CCOA

In June 2003, JET hosted a luncheon seminar in Johannesburg to introduce its new Critical Crossfield Outcomes Assessment tool to representatives of various industry sectors. International employee potential expert, Dr Donna Younger, was in South Africa at the time to train JET interviewers in the CCOA process. Dr Younger and Dr Sam Isaacs, Executive Director of SAQA, were the keynote speakers at the seminar

Proud graduates of a plumbing programme offered through Skills for Africa display their certificates.



JET SKILLS ENABLER (JSE)

This is a comprehensive learner management system adapted from LeadTrain and is accessible from anywhere the Internet is available.

- The JET Skills Enabler allows JET to monitor, track, store and report on a range of matters within each project. The system manages information on learners' personal details, areas of interest and levels of competency, as well as types of education or training they have received and their results. It can also assist in assessing skills and creating learning plans for an individual or a group.
- The JSE records all information relevant to an individual's learning and development.
- In addition, this system has the ability to manage, coordinate and track funds. The system allows JET and its stakeholders to understand, plan and manage the allocation of budgets to projects and individuals, which means that JET is able to ensure all donor funds are maximised to achieve the best possible return on investment.

LEARNERSHIP MANAGEMENT

WFD also deals with the management and administration of learnerships.

- Registers learnerships with the respective SETAs
- Provides client with the best-fit service providers for the execution of learnerships
- Obtains agreement and signatures on all contracts amongst client, SETA, selected learners and service providers
- Prepares the selected learners for the learnership
- Identifies if any selected learners are candidates for recognition of prior learning (RPL) assessment
- Recommends and manages the RPL service provider

- Registers the selected learners onto the JET Skills Enabler
- Prepares the mentors for their roles and responsibilities with the selected learners
- Collects all reports in terms of learnership contracts from all parties and reports to the SETAs
- Updates selected learners' files and posts results on the JET Skills Enabler
- Obtains client grants and tax rebates due to it by the SETA and the South African Revenue Service.

CRITICAL CROSSFIELD OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT (CCOA)

Critical Crossfield Outcomes (CCOs) have sometimes been neglected in favour of unit standards in the assessment for a qualification. CCOs are the generic capabilities (life skills) - such as problem solving, planning, initiative, goal orientation, concern for others, learning orientation, leadership, self-control, teamwork, self-confidence, reliability, self-diagnosis, influence and flexibility - that employees require (at different levels of competence) to be good at their jobs. In fact, often managers think that competence in the CCOs is more important than competence in unit standards.

The Critical Crossfield Outcomes Assessment



(CCOA) process uses a one-on-one assessment instrument designed to help employers screen and place job applicants and to motivate new and current employees toward future success. The process consists of: a one-hour structured interview conducted by a JET trained assessor; review and coding of the interview content by the assessor; a feedback session with the interviewee; and, a written profile of the interviewee's capabilities delivered to the interviewee and to the current or prospective employer.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

WFD provides the following services in RPL:

- Assessor Training workshops
- Developing on-line courses
- Portfolio Development Course
- Policy Development.

EVALUATION

- JET provides a systematic evaluation of the impact of any WFD programmes implemented.
- Evaluation data enables the client to quantify its return on investment in education and training and to measure the effectiveness of the methods used.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CLIENT PROJECTS



CLIENT

Gauteng Department of Transport (Gautrans)

This is the provincial authority of the Ministry of Transport. Gauteng was the first province to put in place a process of democratising the taxi associations (207 in the province) with a preparation for skills training course (*Dipaakanyo* workshops); registering and tracking learners (JET Skills Enabler); and leadership courses leading up to a qualification.

Location: Johannesburg, Gauteng
Population: 1 800 Taxi Association members
Duration: January 2003 - December 2004

Activities:

- Provide 90 two-and-a-half-day *Dipaakanyo* Workshops.
- Enter and track learners on the JET Skills Enabler.
- Design impact study instrument; train staff to conduct interviews, summarise data.
- Monitor training provider services and provide an ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of the training.

During the months of January, February, March 2003, WFD conducted 47 workshops for a total of 777 participants. Activity is scheduled to resume in 2004.



CLIENT

National Productivity Institute (NPI): Social Planning Division

The NPI, as custodian of Phase 1 of the Department of Labour's Social Plan processes, was looking for an agency to assist in developing a strategy for economic development of the Babalegi area, once a hub of economic life and employing over 20 000 workers. The

initiative was to look at identifying high impact projects, to be supported by a whole range of stakeholders, that would result in poverty alleviation, employment and SMME opportunities for communities around the area.

Location: Babalegi, North West
Duration: September 2002 - August 2003

Activities:

- Conduct survey in Babalegi development zone to determine which sectors are growth sectors. Data will be used to plan for training activities in Phase 2 of local Social Planning.
- Provide report of the findings.

JET compiled and submitted the data obtained from the survey and made recommendations for services to assist with implementation of local training needs. The survey project was completed in 2003. JET hopes to be commissioned to carry the work forward to implementation in Phase 2 of the project.

Ford Foundation and JET representatives visit Royal Bafokeng Economic Board (RBEB) project. Back row (left to right): Mike Tlaine (RBEB), Ezyi Likhaimane (RBEB), Diana Bamford Rees (CAEL/JET) Chaucy Lennon (Ford Foundation), Matome Modipa (RBEB), Barbara Baloyi (RBEB). Front row: Nick Taylor (JET), Letshego Mokeki (JET) and John Colborn (Ford Foundation)



CLIENT

Computershare Project New Horizons

Computershare is the largest stock transfer company in the world. They are going through a global rationalisation process resulting in retrenchments in their local offices.

Location: Johannesburg, Gauteng
Population: 63 eligible; 38 participated
Duration: July - December 2003

Activities:

- Provide 3 three-day *Dipaakanyo* Workshops.
- Provide two individual advising sessions pre-training.
- Locate the appropriate accredited skills training providers; enrol the learners in programmes; pay the invoices.
- Enter and track learners on the JET Skills Enabler.
- Provide final report for the client.

Seventeen training providers delivered courses in the areas of tourism, catering/baking, sewing, computers, teacher training, call centre services,

JET DEVELOPS A TOOL TO ASSESS CRITICAL CROSSFIELD OUTCOMES

Over the past several years, there has been an increased emphasis on the role of attitudinal and relational skills (sometimes called 'soft' skills), such as the ability to work in teams and self-control, in workplace performance. This growing emphasis has led a number of organisations across the globe to include the assessment and development of soft skills in their plans for employee training and development. In South Africa, the primacy of these skills was underscored by their inclusion in the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) competence framework to guide selection and development efforts across all sectors. In this context they are referred to as Critical Crossfield Outcomes. Given this, JET recognised the need for a means to assess these skills and so sought to develop an assessment tool for use in South Africa, and to evaluate its effectiveness through a pilot application with South African companies and employees. The assessment process involves: a one-hour one-on-one structured interview conducted by a JET trained assessor; review and coding of the interview content by the assessor; a feedback session with the interviewee; and a written profile of the interviewee's capabilities, delivered to the interviewee and to the current or prospective employer.

Assessor Training

In 2003, JET sponsored training for six assessors in the use of the Critical Crossfield Outcomes Assessment (CCOA), an adaptation of CAEL's Employee Potential



Hawa Hoosen interviews Bongi Kakana in a practice session during CCOA assessor training.

Profile (EPP). The training was provided by CAEL, based on its twenty years of experience with soft skills assessment. As with EPP, the CCOA assesses the transferable soft skills of entry- to mid-level employees in organisations, or of people seeking employment, and provides developmental feedback to those assessed. Twelve additional JET assessors were trained in May 2004.

During the 2003 training, the CAEL trainer and the JET trainees determined that while the CCOA model provided a supportive context for identifying and assessing interviewees' transferable soft skills, it would be crucial to provide a systemic orientation for interviewees. To achieve this, a Pre-Interview Guide was developed. This form gathers information important to

preparing both the interviewee and the interviewer for the assessment, including the interviewee's choice of language for the interview

A Pilot Project

Pilot interviews were conducted to determine if the CCOA would prove effective in helping South African employees demonstrate soft skills and recognise their role in supporting career advancement. Two JET client organisations, Gautrans and Entrepreneurial Support Centre (ESC), participated in the pilot. At Gautrans, 29 interviews were conducted, all in English. Interviewees were office workers at different levels of the organisation, with a range of educational levels, and fairly evenly divided between genders. At ESC, 27 interviews were conducted, half in English and half in

THE HARD VALUE OF SOFT SKILLS: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRITICAL CROSSFIELD OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Donna Younger, Ed.D.



Donna Younger

Despite the terminology, there's nothing soft about "soft skills". Though the term often used to refer to skills such as self-control, reliability, and teamwork - skills that have become increasingly valued in the workplace - somehow suggests these skills are less important than technical skills and knowledge. Over the past fifteen years or so, the literature of the workplace has shown that superior performance is dependent on these and similar "soft" skills. Companies like American Express and Johnson & Johnson in the USA have incorporated these skills into leadership selection and training and have found measurable results in productivity and profit.

And the reason behind their impact is clear and powerful. Soft skills enable employees to deploy their more technical, specialised skills effectively.

Think of the number of accountants, physicians, and administrators you know who clearly understand finance, medicine and management, but fail to be effective because they are unable to interact well with clients, patients and employees. When workers are able to manage themselves and their relationships with others, their specialised knowledge can be brought to bear on solving problems and creating products and methods. For this reason, specialised knowledge may be thought of as "threshold", or the basic tools to do the job. Soft skills are considered "distinguishing" because they sort strong candidates from weaker ones by identifying those best able to use their specialised knowledge effectively, in the workplace, working with others.

The notion of the partnership between these two kinds of skills isn't new. Thorndike and Wechsler were early advocates of the importance of social knowledge in partnership with cognitive knowledge to achieve excellence. More recently, Daniel Goleman has articulated a framework of emotional competences that represent social and personal knowledge in action in the workplace. And other progressive companies and organisations, including JET and its partner, CAEL, have developed models of workplace assessment that incorporate soft skills. The Critical Crossfield Outcomes Assessment (CCOA), recently developed by JET, provides a means of assessing fourteen competences found central to workplace success. Unlike

other existing models and assessment tools, the CCOA was developed specifically to assess these skills in entry-level employees with little or no previous work experience or formal education.

The CCOA is especially powerful in the South African context because of the great numbers of talented workers who have little or no evidence of their abilities, in the form of educational credentials or work experience. These workers have developed skills in leadership, problem solving, self-control, influence, and teamwork in their civic and family lives and are eager to apply these skills in the workplace. And because soft skills are highly transferable, it makes little difference if the skill was learned at school, at work, in political organisations, or in the family. Soft skills become refined and strengthened with practice across settings and the CCOA enables JET clients to locate talented workers and match them to positions requiring similar strengths. This practice positions South Africa to lead the way in the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in our workplaces and institutions of public and private life.

Dr Donna Younger is Director of the Learning Center at Oaklands Community College in suburban Chicago, Illinois, USA. She is a senior assessment consultant for The Council of Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL.)

marketing management, estate agency services, driving, small business management, childcare, financial management, motor mechanics, and B.Comm.



CLIENT

AES Kelvin Power

AES is a global player in over 100 countries worldwide. AES won the privatisation of the Johannesburg Metro Kelvin Power Plant. AES sought a skills audit of the workers it inherited and a workplace skills plan for the ESETA.

Activities:

- Skills audit for 242 workers.
- One-on-one interviews.
- Report on workers' skills.
- Prepare workplace skills plan, aligning the company's strategy with the skills requirements to achieve that strategy in one year.



CLIENT

Entrepreneurial Support Centre (ESC) - Boikanyo Project

Entrepreneurial Support Centre - an initiative of the North West Department of Economic and Provincial Planning to assist SMMEs - in partnership with Boikanyo Funeral Parlour, requested JET Education Services to assist in preparing a group of unemployed carpenters/coffin-makers to take up positions as partners or employees with Boikanyo Funeral Parlour.

Activities:

- Conduct 1 three-day *Dipaakanyo* Workshop.
- Prepare the participants for both workplace and SMME challenges.

The workshop was conducted in early August 2003 with 38 participants. JET is currently exploring further and future cooperation with ESC and some of their clients.



CLIENT

First National Bank (FNB)

FNB, with funding from the Bank SETA, needed to train 1 000

workplace assessors to conduct assessments in their areas of expertise. FNB chose the online, intranet, assessor training route. JET developed the course for them.

Location: Nationally in South Africa

Population: 1 000 FNB employees

Duration: 2002 - June 2003

Activities:

- Adapt and customise online RPL Assessor Training Course.
- Install programme to FNB intranet.
- Manage the training of 1 000 assessors.
- Participate in monthly meetings of FNB project team.



CLIENT

Royal Bafokeng Economic Board - Letsema Project

The Royal Bafokeng Economic Board has a mandate to lead the economic development of the Bafokeng people through focused skills development initiatives and the identification of high impact projects and businesses in the area. Project Letsema was conceptualised to look at the development of HR policies and systems that assist in developing standards for dealing with labour relations matters; to conduct skills audits to determine the skills levels that exist in each company; to implement identified skills development programmes (business efficiency, personal money management, work ethics, and similar); and to look at the development of a social plan for ex-mineworkers in these communities.

Location: Rustenburg, North West

Population: 510 workers in 56 SMMEs

Duration: February 2004 - December 2004

Activities:

- *Dipaakanyo* Workshops for all workers.
- Good Business Practices workshops - managers and employees.
- Profile companies, job titles, and individual employees.
- Tracking data on JSE.
- Establish local project office.



African Explosives and Chemical Industries (AECI); African Explosives Ltd (AEL)

African Explosives Limited, a subsidiary of AECI, was going through a restructuring process that led to some jobs being declared redundant and other workers opting for early retirement. The brief to JET in this project was to provide advising and counselling services and assist with the creation of Personal Development Plans. These would then provide options for training related to the economic activities individual participants had identified.

Location: Modderfontein, Gauteng

Population: Retrenched

Duration: October 2003 ongoing

Activities:

- Two *Dipaakanyo* Workshops: 40 people in 2003; one workshop in January 2004; additional workshops scheduled for 2004.



CLIENT

MQA and TEBA for O.R. Tambo Pilot Project

The O.R. Tambo Project forms part of the Mining Qualifications Authority's (MQA) initiative funded through the National Skills Fund (NSF) to reskill ex-mineworkers. JET's role is to assist in providing a counselling and advising programme to prepare the participants for skills training to take up roles in projects aimed at income generation.

Location: Emfundisweni, Eastern Cape

Population: 250 retrenched mineworkers or their proxies

Duration: December 2003 - June 2004

Activities:

- Conduct 2 two-day *Dipaakanyo* Workshops.
- Two one-hour individual advising sessions for each participant.

52 people in pilot project. JET is awaiting further decision from MQA and TEBA to continue services for remaining 200 people.

DIPAAKANYO - PREPARING WORKERS FOR RETURNING TO LEARNING

The *Dipaakanyo* Workshop is a tool to prepare employed and retrenched workers for career planning, goal setting and achieving their goals through skills training. The workshop is delivered usually over a period of three days, to groups of 25 workers, under the guidance of two trained facilitators. At the end of the three days, participants have a broader understanding of change and are better equipped to define their own personal development plans based on genuine opportunities for education, work and social activity.

The workshop, originally designed by The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) in 1984, has been delivered to thousands of US workers in hundreds of companies and dozens of industry sectors. Socially responsible United States companies who were faced with having to retrench workers, invested in skills training of retrenchees to enable them to make informed career changes. Research studies conducted indicated that workers who had not trained for a long time either did not complete training courses (high dropout rate) or took much longer to achieve the results than was allocated in the courses chosen. Both of these findings pointed

toward an erosion of the training investment made. CAEL, together with organised labour, specialist academics and company managers, designed the Returning to Learning™ workshop to maximise the training investment by preparing retrenchees, according to the principles of adult learning, to receive the full benefit of the skills training.

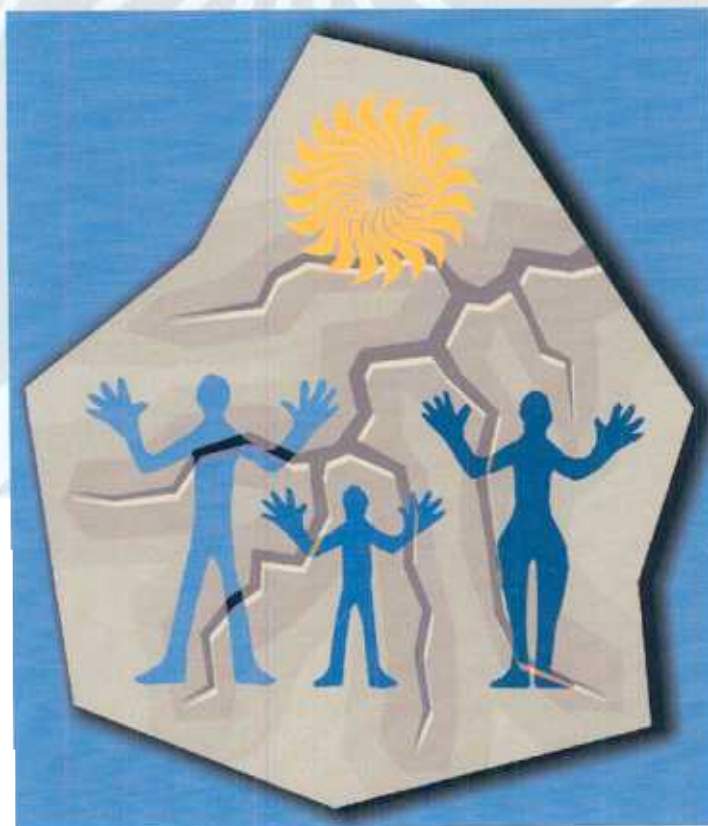
JET invested in translating the Returning to Learning™ workshop for the South African context. Assisted by representatives from organised labour, the Department of Labour, HR managers, specialised academics and CAEL, JET created the *Dipaakanyo* Workshop. *Dipaakanyo* is a

Tswana word which means planning and preparation.

Pilot Projects in the Auto Sector

Dipaakanyo Workshops have been conducted for retrenchees at the Ford Motor Company's plants in Pretoria and Port Elizabeth, and retrenchees at the Nissan plant in Rosslyn, as a beginning for their career changes. Following the three-day workshops, individual advising sessions were held during which the retrenchees created their personal development plans. Thereafter, JET managed the individual skills investment with various training service providers. A toll-free helpline was available throughout the learning programmes.

Training programmes selected included: Motor Mechanics, Driving (Codes 8 and 10), Business Management, Drapery Making, Catering, Nursing, Computer Repair, Poultry Farming, Painting, Carpentry and Furniture Making, Bricklaying, Plumbing, Hair Care, Electrical Appliance Repair, Panel Beating, Welding, Spray Painting, Dairy Cattle Farming, and Security Guarding.



TRAINING DIPAAKANYO WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

Since the adaptation of the *Dipaakanyo* advising and counselling workshop for delivery in South Africa, JET has trained facilitators in Gauteng, Cape Town (Western Cape), Newcastle (KwaZulu-Natal) and Rustenburg (North West). A total of 80 trained facilitators have been deployed to facilitate workshops and provide one-on-one advising sessions. In local areas where projects are to be delivered, JET advertises for trainers, interviews and selects suitable applicants and then trains them in *Dipaakanyo* workshop facilitation and one-on-one counselling.

The criteria for *Dipaakanyo* facilitators are:

- Awareness of and commitment to adult learning principles
- Knowledge of South African Skills Development legislative context
- Positive approach to change and community/personal development

- Experience in working with adults
- Respect for the knowledge, skills and experiential learning of all people
- Familiar with the world of work and education
- Familiar with the history and politics of how the majority of South Africans have been under-educated
- Familiar with the mechanisms of confidence-building and self-assessment facilitation
- Familiar with the methods for facilitating goal setting and decision making
- Familiar with the design and implementation of community/worker centred advisory systems
- Gender and culture sensitive
- Excellent communication skills
- Available and flexible regarding project deployment
- Speak and read multiple South African languages.

The facilitator training is three days initially and is conducted

in the community from which the facilitators have been selected. Additional training and briefing sessions are held from time to time, as project work requires.

Trained facilitators are deployed to JET projects as contracted consultants and are paid a flat fee per workshop for *Dipaakanyo* facilitation, and by the hour for individual advising sessions.



If you meet the criteria stated above and would like to be trained as a *Dipaakanyo* facilitator, please FAX a copy of your current Curriculum Vitae to:

Divisional Manager
Workforce Development
011 403 5626
indicating that you wish to be included in the next facilitator training in your area.



Facilitator/Advisor Training in Newcastle, KwaZuluNatal



Lethego Mokeki (JET) processes *Dipaakanyo* exercise at Gauteng Advisor Training



JET CELEBRATES ACHIEVEMENT OF PBO STATUS

JET received notification from SARS in March that the organisation has been classified as a Public Benefit Organisation.

The assets of the Joint Education Trust can now be transferred to JET Education Services and the Trust wound down as soon as the process is complete.

Despite the changes in JET's legal status, the work of the organisation remains focused on the Mission which has guided its activities since its inception in January 1992.

JET has weathered the transition to democracy better than most non-governmental organisations. Aside from its service delivery track record, good governance has been an important element in its success. This principle has been carried into the new Board of Directors of JET Education Services, the composition of which continues to reflect the diversity of South African society.

CONGRATULATIONS NALEDI PANDOR!

The Board of Directors, Management and staff of JET congratulate Naledi Pandor on her appointment as Minister of Education. Naledi has served as Vice Chair of the JET Board of Trustees since September

1996



NEW APPOINTMENTS AT JET



Jennifer Njelesani-Vergeer has been appointed Finance Director, taking over from Jim Wotherspoon who retired at the end of December 2003.



Saeeda Anis-Prew has been appointed Programme Director, responsible for marketing, public relations and overall management of the different divisions within JET.

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