

June 2006– June 2008: Embedded Foundation Learning

A pilot project, funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), to improve literacy levels within the electricity supply industry began in 2006 and is currently being evaluated by TEC.

The pilot entitled, “Embedded Foundation Learning”, was aimed at raising foundation skill levels through an integrated approach to the ownership and management of literacy issues between literacy specialists and trade trainers.

Collaboration was required to identify and support activities which provided opportunities for integrated communication, language, literacy and numeracy skills development at work and in workplace training at Utilitech Training Centre.

Activities included developing the capability of on and off-job trainers to:

- Understand the significance of literacy and numeracy issues in training and the use of literacy assessment tools
- Analyse specific and routine tasks and activities for literacy requirements
- Provide work-related instructions which integrate opportunities to develop literacy skills (which would typically happen while a learner is engaged in learning a task)
- Improve curriculum development and training resources to meet the skill needs of the job and to make them responsive to the needs of the trainees.

Target Group

Learners with training agreements with ESITO, who are assessed through Utilitech Training Centre, were selected for the pilot. The group was predominantly line mechanics with a small number of (around 50) cable jointers.

An integral part of all line mechanics training is the on-job component which would be enhanced by the introduction of embedded foundation learning. On-job training is usually undertaken by employees who have substantial practical skills but in many cases have had little or no formal teacher training.

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