



final report

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Building industry viability through leadership and innovation

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1 Milestone requirements

- progress on advanced diploma
- graduation program
- outcomes of the evaluation of second targeted training program
- outcomes of leadership development strategies
- case study on targeted training program
- case study for publication on leadership development strategies for advanced diploma students

1.1 Progress on advanced diploma

The students have now successfully completed the Advanced Diploma programme. This includes Jo Watts who is the first woman in Australia to achieve this qualification.

All the units of study have been completed and the assessments have been submitted and marked for the final unit.

1.2 Graduation

The students will take part in the graduation ceremony which will form part of the AMIC conference. The dinner will be held on the 7th of September at the Sheraton Mirage on the Gold Coast.

As part of the ceremony, Murray Wilson from AMH has agreed to speak about his experiences of the course and the benefit to him and the industry, on behalf of all the graduates.

1.3 Outcomes of evaluation of second targeted training program

The second phase of the program included the following two units:

- Manage and improve meat operations
- Manage new product/process development

1.4 Informal feedback from participants

In general, the participants agree that they have benefited greatly from the program.

- Building good contacts with others in the course continues to be of great benefit to the group and some firm friendships have evolved which will continue past the completion of the course.
- The group discussions in the workshops have been as much benefit as the actual content. They provide an opportunity to discuss the subject matter and how it might be applied to the industry.
- Getting the group of speakers in from the industry was a very positive experience for them all and they particularly enjoyed hearing Jack Barclay, who they found quite inspiring.

- Facilitators have been very effective and made the training subject relevant to the industry and have engaged the group
- There is on-going discussion about how to keep the group together with some follow up activities
- Some felt that it might be useful to have the group of industry speakers earlier in the Advanced Diploma programme as this would give them contacts that they might find useful during the course.
- Only a few of the participants had benefited from their mentor relationships and this should be reviewed for the next course.

1.5 Feedback from training provider

At the end of each workshop the students are asked to complete a feedback form. Feedback is also provided by the facilitators of the workshop.

Unit: *Manage and improve meat operations*

The participants' feedback from this module was generally good average scores (out of five) as follows:

- The subject matter was relevant to my needs – 4.5
- The learning activities were effective – 4.3
- The style of the workshops were effective – 4.4
- The aids were useful – 4.1
- The facilitator's style was conducive to learning – 4.4
- Overall assessment - 4.3

In general the outcomes can be summarised as:

- Developed a good understanding of the industry structure
- The provided an insight into the future of the meat industry and potential innovations
- Improved network within the meat industry

Unit: *Manage new product/process development*

The students' feedback for this module was again very positive in relation to the content, the facilitator and the learning activities. They particularly enjoyed having speakers from outside the industry and felt this added a good element to the discussions. Again there was a strong emphasis on the benefits of the group discussion and the networking opportunities.

1.6 Feedback from training provider

As above, the formal feedback from the participants was positive as follows:

- The subject matter was relevant to my needs – 4.5

- The learning activities were effective – 4.5
- The style of the workshops were effective – 4.5
- The aids were useful – 4.3
- The facilitator’s style was conducive to learning – 4.6
- Overall assessment - 4.6

The outcome for each participant can be summarised as:

- The ability to plan and analyse the potential for a new product or process for a plant
- The capability to perform a risk assessment process for a new product/process
- The ability to put in place a validation process for a new product/process

In future, it might be useful to add in the use of additional guest speakers, particularly talking about innovation in other industries and to make more use of video presentations, which have been very well received in this and other units.

1.7 Outcomes of leadership development strategies

Participant feedback evaluations have been collected for both the Leadership Development programme run by Outdoor Insights and the overall programme. Further, evaluation will be presented in September when results from a survey of managers of the participants in the programme are analysed, and compared to the survey that was completed prior to the participants attending the Outdoor Insights programme.

1.8 Feedback on the overall program

All the participants were asked to complete a feedback form at the end of the programme. Participants were asked to comment on what worked well for them in the programme format, ideas for improving the programme, the key benefits they have gained and the relationship with the mentor.

Overall, the comments were very positive with all being able to state clear benefits to themselves and/or their organisations.

In terms of the format of the advanced diploma training the following things were considered to have worked well:

- Class interaction and group discussions – mentioned by a large number of the participants
- Networking opportunities
- Having a national group and having the workshops around the country
- Facilitators – quality, knowledge of the industry and the variety of their teaching methods
- Having a mentor and involvement of the industry

- Exposure to other subjects not part of day to day job

One particular comment was made in this section which encapsulates some of the comments

The ability to develop relationships beyond that of the classroom is also invaluable. Should this in fact be the next group of industry leaders then a common ground and training base will ensure decisions that are made, that affect the industry, will be made with sound mind and judgement. Consideration will be provided to all those impacted by the decisions as compared to the perceived self interest based decisions of today.

Participants were asked which of the key ideas and concepts were most relevant to them and their working environment. Answers included:

- Problem solving
- Presenting a financial case for project proposals
- Innovation development, new product process
- Managing plant operations
- Cold chain management
- Employee relations
- Environmental and complex projects

Participants were also asked to comment on what they felt could be improved. Where improvements were suggested these included:

- Enabling site visits to other plants
- More guest speakers on key ideas and concepts
- Training in 2 day blocks, some wasted time
- Reassess mentor role
- Expand managing finance to include livestock costing, yield calcs etc

The dinner speaker programme was generally well received with the following being mentioned as being of particular benefit.

- AMPC and MLA
- Lean thinking
- Bob Killip and his Everest trip
- Cameron Dart
- The night with all the mentors

Although Jack Barclay was not a dinner speaker, he was mentioned a number of times as being inspirational, and that they would like more interaction with him and others like him.

The participants were asked to identify the key benefits they have gained from being part of the programme and also asked to rate the overall benefit of participating in the programme. The average of the scores was 4.4 out of 5, with only one score being 3 rather than a 4 or 5.

Benefit that they have identified included:

- Assisting in project implementations
- Further development of own learning
- Networking
- Qualification
- Participation in Outdoor Insights programme
- Being able to apply the knowledge at work
- Learning effective tools to apply in the workplace
- Learning more about self and leadership style
- Better industry knowledge
- Understanding that all staff need to be aligned to the company's goals and objectives
- Increased self confidence
- Demonstrated the benefit of on-going training for staff at all levels

The mentor relationships have not been as successful as hoped and these came up as an area for improvement. The participants were asked to score on a scale of 1-5 the benefit they gained from their mentor. The average score was 2.4. Clearly this is an area that requires some additional thought for the next programme. There were extremes in the scoring with marks either being 4 or 5 or 1 or 2.

Any other comments were also requested and these included the following:

- Running an OI element at the start of the programme
- Courses should be harder to attain
- Consider a different evaluation as hard to complete the assessments if implementing an actual project
- Continue running a national programme

In summary, the participant feedback has been extremely positive, with all students recommending that MINTRAC continue with the programme. They have all clearly identified some key benefits as well as providing some good suggestions as to how the programme can be improved further.

1.9 Feedback on Leadership Development element

The Outdoor Insights programme was attended by 7 of the participants, plus Louise Kovacs. The participants were asked to complete a feedback form one month after attending the course. This was to provide an opportunity to measure what they still considered important from the course and to ask them if they had applied any of the concepts at work.

The participants were asked to recall the key ideas and concepts and all were able to recall some of the key concepts and how they were applied during the course. Participants were then asked to comment on which of the key concepts were most relevant to them and their working environment. The following answers were given:

- Understanding different communication and personality styles
- Team work
- Identifying own and others role in the team
- Giving skills to identify team members strengths and weaknesses and lead accordingly
- Problem solving
- Understanding the key elements of effective leadership and its role in problem solving
- Understanding team dynamics
- Getting everyone involved in gathering information

Participants were also asked what they had learned about themselves from the programme. Answers included:

- Didn't listen to what people had to say if I didn't think they would understand or grasp what was being proposed
- Importance of listening
- Importance of having a problem solving structure
- Learning how I could be perceived by others
- I am very unfit!
- I can be a bit pedantic but once all information is in place, fully committed
- Sometimes I act before getting everyone involved

Participants were asked to identify which of the ideas or concepts, or what they had learned about themselves they had applied at work. All participants were able to name things they were using and gave good examples of what they had done. Participants were also asked to estimate how often they had applied the concepts since they had been back at work, on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being not at all and 5 being most days.

The average score was 3.8, indicating that most people were using the techniques learned at least once per week or more. Some scored 5, saying that they used techniques most days.

Participants were also asked what worked well in the OI programme and the following were identified:

- Continual analysis and working on how it could have been done better.
- Continually challenging the group
- Sharing leadership role
- Group of leaders having to be a team member

- Being taken out of your comfort zone
- Guidelines were set, but the rest was up to the team

Very few suggestions were made for what could be improved, although one participant asked that the programme ran for longer to see what evolved. In terms of overall benefit the participants scored the OI Programme an average of 4.6 out of 5 (highly beneficial).

In other comments made, it was suggested that other groups from the industry participate in the programme to help the industry reinforce team values that the OI programme is run at the start of the programme, and for the programme to run longer. The comment below summarises the overall feedback well.

....a great programme that continually challenged the participants to perform better. Challenging what was achieved made us want to get better results. In the first exercise we thought we had done well, in the last we wanted to do better.

2 Case study

Developing our industry leaders

The Australian meat industry is developing its future leaders through a structured leadership program designed to provide potential leaders with the skills and knowledge needed to lead the industry. 12 participants were selected from applicants at a middle management level in meat processing plants and who had already completed the Diploma in Meat Processing.

One of the participants who recently completed the program is Pat Gleeson. Pat comes from a rural background, his family running a cattle property in Queensland. Leaving school at 15 to become an apprentice butcher, he has now been in the industry for 26 years, working his way from an apprentice to boner, to boning room supervisor and to his current position as Assistant Plant Manager at Oakey Abattoir, owned by the Nippon Group.

The leadership program ran over 18 months and included completing an Advanced Diploma in Meat Processing. This involved 4 units of study on subjects such as employee relations, innovation, finance, and improving plant operations. Talking about the Advanced Diploma Pat says, 'The modules on managing and improving plant operations, and developing new processes were of particular benefit to me as we are doing a lot of re-building at our Oakey plant. The course gave me more confidence in voicing my opinions to key stakeholders in this improvement process'.

Along with gains in technical knowledge there have been some other major benefits to being in the program. 'I've had a great opportunity to network with managers from plants all over the country and to share ideas on alternative ways to deal with problems and to hear about the innovation that is going on in other places' says Pat, 'Not only that, but I have now many of the current leaders, which has given me a much broader perspective on the running of the meat industry and the stakeholders involved.'

The participants also attended an outdoor experiential Leadership Development course as part of the program. The aim of this element was to encourage some of the necessary skills and leadership attributes required to be a successful leader in today's business environment. Pat also found this very beneficial, saying 'This part of the course helped me see how I could improve my communication skills, particularly listening, in order to be a more effective leader. Being taken out of your comfort zone and then being required to lead was certainly a good way of learning'

Pat says he hopes to be able to pass on some of the knowledge he has gained to his work colleagues and he believes that the meat industry is a great place to develop a career, particularly for people from a rural background where most plants are based. 'I'd like to demonstrate to others in the industry, or considering the industry, that you don't have to be a great scholar to do well in this industry. The course was challenging, but has been a great boost to my career and I now hope to continue my study so that I can help advance the meat industry in Australia'.