

## **SKILLS FOR EMPLOYABILITY**

### **Business Participation in the Partnership**

**What has been the contribution and benefits  
for participation?**

**What is needed to make collaboration  
flourish?**

Mr Program Director, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, Good afternoon.

I will be talking to you on Partnerships, what we have contributed into our partnership and what we believe the institution, the organization and most important, the learners have benefited from this partnership.

But first I am going to give some background that led to our partnership with the ORBIT College.

## **INTRODUCTION**

We did not just wake up one morning and decided to find an institution to partner with. The need for a partnership developed over time after bad experiences with certain public institutions. Bad experiences in terms of the quality of learner we received from these institutions as well as bad experiences in terms of the standard of practical training conducted by them.

Prior to the merger of the old FET institutions we had a partnership with a FET institution that provided some practical training to some of our students. I say some; because they were either not equipped or did not have the expertise to provide the full complement of the training required.

Further to that we encountered major challenges with the employment of qualified artisans. At Ford we conduct pre-employment assessments on everybody we employ. In the majority of assessments conducted on

trades people, the candidates were not on par with even our second year apprentices. We conducted an investigation and found that, without exception, they were all trained by public institutions.

We then formed a partnership with the institution closest to our plant where we provided expertise in the form of a technical trainer that assisted and trained the staff at the institution for short periods of time. We provided workshop equipment, training material and a complete vehicle to be used for training and assessments. We provided workplace experience to a number of selected engineering students and employed every single student that completed the program. The partnership did not last very long. We will come back to that later.

### **THE NEED FOR A PARTNERSHIP**

In order to meet our skills development targets we realized that we will have to up our number of learners. That was the easy part.

Now we had to provide training. Our training facility was not big enough to accommodate the extra numbers and we did not have enough training personnel.

Providing the practical experiential or on the job training was not going to be a problem.

We, at Ford, believe that TVET institutions should provide career based learning that focusses on preparing learners for the world of work. Career based learning that addresses the scarce and critical skills, as communicated by the Seta's, in the regions where the institutions are situated. Career based learning identified and agreed on with the industries situated around them.

There are too many examples of institutions filling classrooms and workshops with students enrolled in disciplines that there are no need for. Disciplines that is easy to deliver.

Our primary business in South Africa is to manufacture and assemble motor vehicles and motor vehicle engines and components. Although we have a responsibility to develop our people, learning and development is not our primary function. We believe that disciplines leading to qualifications should be done in partnership by TVET Institutions. In fact, all learnership training in this country should be delivered by TVET institutions. Companies should only provide short courses for brand, company specific or systems specific training as part of the on-the-job training component.

We have worked with ORBIT for the best part of four years and believe that we now know what a real partnership entails.

We have experienced good times and bad times, successes and failures. What is good about it is the fact that we sat down and looked at what we did right and what we could have done better. It takes a really good relationship and commitment to the partnership to be able to do that. Now what is a partnership?

### **What is a partnership?**

I tried to look up the definition of a PPP on the internet. The only ones I could find were where a company enters into an agreement with a government department, taking over the funding responsibility for a public project. There was nothing on the type of partnership we were looking for.

A partnership, in our opinion, is very much like a personal relationship. It cannot be built on agreements alone. There has to be trust, mutual respect and genuineness from both parties to make it work. Both must want to be in the relationship. Both must want something from this relationship. Our expectation from the partnership was to receive above standard training for our learners while at the same time giving something back to the institution. It is like a good marriage.

In our case we were also looking for a provider partner who is as committed about skills development as we are and who is as committed about investing in the youth of today as we are. It is therefore important to pick your partner very carefully.

In my introduction I referred to a previous partnership that did not last. Why did the previous partnership not work?

All the contributions had to come from the Private Partner. The Public Partner had nothing to offer. The Public Partner did not have a functional College Council. The Public Partner had no money to invest in its facility. The Public Partner did not have suitably qualified managers. I can go on and on and on.

Honesty, openness and the desire to work together and to achieve is absolutely critical in maintaining the long-term relationship that is central to a successful partnership. An effective, supporting and present College Council is equally important. You cannot have a College Council that expects an investment and resource contributions from the private partner, but who is not prepared to invest into the partnership itself. Equally, the financial capacity and the real reasons for partnering of the

private partner should be considered in the final selection process. Yes, the Public Partner must also be satisfied with the credentials of the Private Partner.

Very important also is the Private Partner's knowledge of the workings of TVET institutions.

In the FORD / ORBIT partnership we discussed all the detail and the extent of the disciplines to be trained, the level to be trained, the facility and equipment requirements, number of learners that could be accommodated, actual mode of training delivery, training duration, assessments, etc. We then determined and agreed on the roles and responsibilities of the two parties. That was the first big test.

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ORBIT**

Provision of training facility

Provision of facilitator

Provision of sleeping accommodation for students

Provision of learning material

Delivery of training

Assessment of learners

Moderation of learners

### **FORD**

Technology

Training vehicles

Automotive engines and components, including body panels  
Learning material  
Electronic workshop manuals  
Training of facilitators  
Assistance with new installations and maintenance of equipment  
Workplace training

## **BENEFITS**

FORD has benefitted tremendously from this partnership.

- We don't have to invest in additional facilities, equipment, trainers
- We receive well trained learners back from the institution
- We get to train more people

To ORBIT

The benefit to ORBIT is:

- Exposure to latest technology
- Modern and latest training vehicles
- Latest technology automotive engines and components, including body panels
- Latest learning material
- Electronic workshop manuals
- Assistance with training of facilitators
- Assistance with new installations and maintenance of equipment
- The learners are linked to a workplace where they receive on-the-job training under the supervision of qualified personnel

- They are the only institution in the country providing learning in the qualification of Automotive Manufacturing and assembly. A while ago BMW, in preparation for an additional shift, were looking for a provider to deliver training to new operators. As a result of this partnership BMW decided to also approach ORBIT for purposes of training new recruits. That resulted in ORBIT training over a 1000 learners for BMW.

## **CHALLENGES**

Remuneration of College personnel compared with Industry

Difference in culture between Colleges and Industry

Not enough engagement between industry and DHET in terms of determination of disciplines to be offered at TVET,s, content of curriculum, facility and equipment requirements, etc.

## **WAY FORWARD**

In South Africa we are experiencing a huge shortage of suitably qualified Technical Trainers. Colleges experience the same with lecturing staff.

Within the Ford / ORBIT partnership we are in the process of investigating the development of lectures/facilitators with ORBIT.

Possible solutions are where FORD employs a student trainer/facilitator who will then be trained jointly by FORD and ORBIT.

We are talking to our Dealer Council regarding the training of learners in body and paint repair qualifications. This will happen in conjunction



with a company called TTI Global. They also have an office in the UK and has been contracted to provide training to Ford Dealerships around the world.

We have dealerships around the country and realize that ORBIT cannot provide in all their training needs. What can happen though is that ORBIT will set the standard for other TVET Institutions to jointly provide in that need.

The Auto Chamber, through the Merseta is engaging in a research project with Technical High Schools and selected TVET Insitutions. The objective of the project is to assist Technical Schools and TVET Colleges to meet skills requirements of the OEM's. Ultimately the Auto Sector would like to see that TVET's and Technical Schools are able to operate at a high standard and continually improve to meet the needs of the sector.

ORBIT is one of the institutions identified to participate in the project.

End

What we are working towards, that is ORBIT and FORD, is a partnership where there is one real winner in the end and that is the learner. If the learner wins then both the College and Industry have achieved their goal.

I thank you.

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## Vehicles and equipment donated to the Orbit College for FET

### ITEM REFERENCE

1. Stenhoj 2 post hoist
  2. Raaglioli 4 post hoist
  3. Oil receptical x 2
  4. Smart spray paint repair booth
  5. Ford Ikon
  6. Ford Ranger
  7. 1 x Ford Bantam (LHD)
  8. 2 x Ford Bantam (RHD)
  9. 2 x Worktables
  10. 8 x Bench vices
  11. Ford Focus engine
  12. Ford Focus front and rear suspensions
  13. 2 x 3.0L Ford Ranger diesel engines
  14. 1 x Facilitator desk and chair
  15. 2 x Wheel balancing machines
  16. Pneumatic and Hydraulic training equipment
  17. Electronic workshop manuals
  18. Automotive learning material
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