

‘A huge learning curve’: TAFE practitioners’ ways of working with private enterprises

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Appendix A: Literature review

The literature concerning the involvement of VET practitioners in industry settings covers a wide field of topics, but only some, a relatively small proportion, deal specifically with the impact these practitioners have had and how they are viewed by industry managers, workers and worker-learners. As external consultants, how do VET practitioners establish new learning networks, how are they responsible for disrupting existing ones and how much are they absorbed into existing networks? Also, how do learning networks and work networks interact and what is the VET practitioner's role in such interaction?

A major study (Long, 2002) analyses the workplace training experience reported in a longitudinal research project begun in 1995. This study suggests that three quarters of respondents were satisfied with their opportunities for workplace training, although 16% who had received some training believed that they needed more. These tended to be in accommodation, cafes and restaurants. Full-time workers were more likely to receive training than casual workers and were more likely to receive more training hours. Since casual workers make up approximately half of all workers, this imbalance could tend to exacerbate the inequality of income and opportunity between these two groups. It could also influence workers' perceptions of workplace training and their attitudes to VET practitioners. Further, since returns on training are likely to be greater for full-time employees (Long, 2002), employers and, since they are also market driven, some VET practitioners are likely to favour emphasis on full-time employee training. This could be seen as a somewhat narrow view in terms of national workforce development and international competitiveness.

Noonan (2003) reports that other nations, notably Singapore, are looking beyond current approaches to knowledge and skills training to a more holistic approach to workplace preparation. He suggests that:

we must also recognise that most workplaces are not high performing work organisations and that quality work-based learning or HRD practices are not characteristics of most firms at present. Further, the workforce development model involves an extension of VET as it is currently conceived to encompass all of the processes and structures by which workers can develop their skills and capabilities, and a better integration of formal and informal learning, not a shift away from recognised to informal learning. In fact, the shifts might occur in both directions. (Noonan 2003, p. 4)

To meet this challenge:

capabilities beyond traditional notions of teaching and learning are clearly required ... The need for VET providers, intermediary bodies and government agencies to themselves be high performing work organisations will increase as their engagement with other work organisations and community bodies increases, and as the VET client base continues to diversify. (Noonan 2003, p.8)

In their working with private enterprise, are VET practitioners high performers? Are they seen as high performers by employers and trainees? How VET practitioners are perceived in the workplace and how they can influence workplace learning policy is an important component of

any attempt to improve Australia's workplace learning and ensure it meets identified needs. Some authors suggest that, for workplace training to be successful, there needs to be a radical reorganisation of the workplace itself.

To implement workplace training programs properly, you really need to change work organisation, so learners have opportunities to be exposed to different things, see the need to learn, and have the chance to apply what they do learn. It takes negotiation with supervisors, particularly in the beginning. (Field & Mawer 1998, p.19)

In a study of high performance small and medium-sized companies in South Wales, Edwards, Delbridge & Munday (2003) found that they were, among other characteristics, 'more active in skill development and training, placing employees on vocational schemes and reporting employee involvement in graduate education' (p.3). These researchers concluded that while continuous improvement constitutes an important element in company innovative potential and 'both training and on-the-job development are necessary if improvement activities and innovation are to become routine in the workplace, ... conducting continuous improvement requires investment and may need a change in attitude' (p.13).

Certainly VET practitioners could have a critical role in any such rethinking of workplace organisation. Dawe (2003) expands this theme and suggests that such workplace reorganisation should include logically graded work experiences, systematic mentoring and structured interaction with more experienced workers for the learner. Furthermore, Billett (1999, 2001) highlights four elements of the collaborative and guided approaches to learning which are central to his model of workplace learning. These include:

- having in place a logical sequence of workplace activities of increasing complexity and accountability
- making accessible to the learner the goal or product of the workplace activities
- enabling learners to be guided by more expert fellow workers, including mentors and coaches
- providing for learners to receive indirect guidance through activities like listening to and observing other workers.

Learning within enterprises can be seen as both a positive and a problematic activity. Its virtues and benefits are frequently extolled and taken for granted. For example, Misko (2001, p.7) summarised the benefits as assisting recognition and portability of qualifications through Training Packages, facilitating industry input for off-the-job training, streamlining and centralising arrangements for work placements, developing learner skills and awareness of suitable occupations and organisations, improving the public image of employers and improving teacher awareness of industry developments. On the other hand, Spencer (2002, p.299) contends that current enthusiasm for such ideas as lifelong learning and learning organisations 'has dulled researchers' critical gaze as to what exactly is going on in workplace learning' and that such learning can result in the entrenchment of existing power relations. Similarly, Boud and Middleton (2002, pp. 201-202) argue that the popular notion of communities of practice has its limitations, in that they found a variety of networks through which learning takes place in the workplace and that while some showed characteristics of communities of practice, others did not strongly build identity and meaning.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research, in *What makes for good workplace learning?*, suggests that

Learning in the workplace is not just something that happens, but is part of a wider system. This system consists of the enterprise and its managers, the individual, the external training provider, and other organisations such as government and community

bodies. There is a change in thinking about how these various elements view each other. Rather than being discrete, the various elements form networks and even become partners. Within a systemic approach, it is the networks and partnership arrangements that are of crucial importance. (NCVER 2003, p.8)

Thus the ingredients for effective workplace learning include not only a changed work organisation but a network of individuals and agencies working co-operatively, with the VET practitioner a pivotal member of any such partnership.

Certainly governments see VET providers taking a leadership role in this network building. *The NSW Strategic Plan for Vocational Education and Training 2002–2004* states as a key policy the intention to:

Encourage training providers to develop a leadership role with regional business, government and community agencies and become active agents in regional development and community building. Encourage training providers to work with regional networks and business groups to develop innovative training services that meet the needs of small and medium sized businesses. Encourage training providers to become learning brokers for their local enterprises and industries, anticipating and responding to employer needs and developing customised products and services that meet those needs. Build strategic partnerships in order to increase skills development with industries of particular importance to regional economies ... (BVET 2002, p.15)

Are VET practitioners currently filling this role? Do they see themselves in this role and do employers accept that this is a legitimate function for VET practitioners? Robinson (2000) found that, whereas industry was well organised in its development of a united approach to VET policy in its dealings with government and VET providers, there was indeed a need for improved local-level relationships between industry and VET providers. In his view, this is the least developed area in Australia and one which offers the best prospects of further developing a system to better meet employer needs.

The activity of TAFE practitioners working with enterprises, however, is not without its issues. Misko (2001, p.33), for example, reported concerns about the customising of training programs to meet employer needs and how this may limit learners' ability to transfer to different workplaces. Favero (2003) also found such issues included meeting the demands of regulatory compliance, funding and concerns about the provision of transferable skills, reluctance of some employers to release trainees for training, the time taken to travel to workplaces, concerns about funding, and changes to the roles of TAFE teachers (particularly the expansion of administrative tasks).

The actual role of the VET practitioner in this new working environment with its different expectations and emphases has been and still is evolving. The traditional TAFE lecturer role – working within a TAFE college and relatively isolated from industry – is becoming rarer and is being supplanted by a wide variety of roles in a range of organisations and contexts:

New groups of VET practitioners who work in quite different VET sites have emerged as a result of this changing environment. These practitioners may work in TAFE colleges, schools or industry. They may work for industry training groups, private registered training organisations, evening colleges or not-for-profit community organisations. Indeed, they may work as private VET consultants or as small businesses. Irrespective of site, these groups of practitioners are being asked to work in different ways and to undertake new roles and responsibilities. (Chappell & Johnston 2003, p.8)

Chappell and Johnston (2003) found that

The working lives [of VET practitioners] are highly varied, with the vast majority of respondents experiencing two or more career changes. The interviews also suggest that

the most common entry into vocational education and training is through part-time teaching in TAFE. (p.5)

The competitive VET market has invoked new roles for these VET practitioners that not only are

additional to the traditional 'teaching' role but are also substantially different in terms of focus, purpose and practice ... The competitive market has also encouraged the emergence of new VET practitioners who operate as VET consultants and who earn their living by entering into commercial contracts with particular organisations and enterprises. (Chappell & Johnston 2003, p.5)

This evolutionary shift from a teaching to a consulting focus is further elaborated by these authors to consist of more than a simple shift in emphasis in what VET practitioners do. It entails a change in who they are and how they relate to employers, worker-learners and other stakeholders in the VET arena.

A number of researchers have focused on these new ways of working that are being constructed for practitioners in contemporary education and training sites (Ainley & Bailey 1997, Farrell 2000, Seddon 2000, Chappell 2001, Chappell & Johnston 2003). A common feature in these commentaries tends to be that when

education and training practitioners are asked to do things 'differently' in their everyday practices, they are being called on to become different practitioners; that is, to have different understandings of their role in education and training, to have different relationships with learners, to conceptualise their professional and vocational knowledge differently, to alter their relationship with their organisation, to change their understanding of who they are in the new education and training landscape. In short, to change their identity at work. (Chappell & Johnston 2003, p.8)

The VET practitioner is thus seen as a link between the world of learning and the world of work. Technical subject content knowledge is no longer enough. Teaching skills are no longer enough. Nor are entrepreneurial and business skills enough.

... the new VET practitioner must in some senses not only be capable of spanning the cultural divide which distinguishes the world of work from the world of education but also that which distinguishes the world of private enterprise from the world of public service. This requires them to negotiate different values, norms and modes of conduct than those currently found in either the public or private sector. (Chappell & Johnston 2003, p.11)

He or she has to develop a new role that, above all, requires the establishment of relationships and the development of a learning environment that is viewed positively in the working environment.

Although the notion of a learning organisation can be a somewhat ambiguous concept (Poell et al. 2000), it is structured by the recurring theme of learning facilitation at individual, team and organisational levels linked to the argument that teams are crucial contexts in post-industrial enterprises for the organisation of both work and learning ... (Henry, Mitchell & Young 2001, p.6).

Using the perspective of learning network theory (Poell, Chivers, Van der Krogt & Wildermeersch 2000), it is constructive to look at how some authors have described the relationship between VET practitioners and their industry counterparts and how the former initiate new networks in their roles as workplace trainers, particularly with respect to the development of teams or networks.

The establishment of networks happens consciously or unconsciously. In the *Reframing the Future* project (Mitchell 2003), network development was a conscious strategy, framed as the establishment of what Wenger (1998) terms ‘communities of practice’. These communities are in effect an expansion of the enterprise’s internal learning network to include both external VET practitioners and external industrial representatives. While encouraging the formation of networks of trainers and organizations that have training problems in common sounds a worthwhile endeavour, research suggests that such networks are not always initially favourably received and they require skill and determination to maintain. In his major study, Mitchell (2003) warned that

Communities of practice are an attractive theoretical concept for collaborative-minded VET professionals, but they are not always easy to form, nurture and sustain. As with any group of human beings, communities of practice involve group dynamics, the group moves through stages of development and obstacles normally emerge. Communities of practice are deceptive: on the one hand they seem to be based simply on good relationships; on the other hand, communities of practice can be complex and easily derailed ... (Mitchell 2003, p.12).

These communities of practice have in common a structure that consists of three elements – a domain of knowledge, community and practice (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder 2002). Reporting on the *Reframing the Future* project, Mitchell (2003, p.24) observed that:

All the 2001 communities were clear about the broad domain for their projects: the implementation of the National Quality Training Framework. Many of the communities focused appropriately on a narrow aspect of this broad domain. All the 2001 communities created a sense of community as they understood the importance of fostering interactions and relationships based on mutual respect and trust. However, not all the 2001 communities had enough time or resource to fully explore and capture the set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories and documents that community members share. Future communities of practice may benefit from allocating sufficient human and other resources to capturing the ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories and documents that underpin their community.

Thus it seems that these VET practitioners and their industrial counterparts are quite clear about the body of knowledge that forms part of the learning network and they generally develop functional networks based on mutual respect and trust. However, this network tends to be less than optimally valuable due to lack of the required time and resources necessary to develop it to its full potential. So how do VET practitioners deal with this issue in their work with private enterprises where the learning networks inevitably exist in tension with the work networks?

There is evidence that VET practitioners are respected for their knowledge both of the training content and the training context. They are also respected for their skills in training, something that their industrial partners acknowledge industrial personnel do not necessarily have. For example, Dumbrell (2003, p.2) found that concerns an industry-led training environment would lead to an over-emphasis on immediate skills needs to the detriment of long-term training needs were unfounded, ‘because most employers were prepared to accept that they were not experts in training and relied on the advice of RTOs in the design of training courses’. Smith (1999) also concluded that VET practitioners were respected for their training skills when she found that apprentices preferred structured instructor-led programs to independent learning.

VET practitioners are also acknowledged for their expertise in developing relationships and providing a personalised service to the employer. Where employers feel that VET practitioners lack this skill, they seem very prepared, and indeed encouraged by user choice policy, to change VET provider to one that has it:

Several of the employers interviewed supported the view that market forces were driving their training services. In particular several employers discussed having changed their main VET provider as a result of the emergence of a training market. Generally, these employers switched trainers because the new RTO provided greater flexibility and better communication with the employer than had former RTOs. (Dumbrell 2003, p.2)

Dumbrell (2003) observed that VET practitioners' relationship and networking behaviour suggests that they are more comfortable generating networks that include other trainers than with non-training industry personnel. VET practitioners seemed ready to network with other VET providers even though they were, in a market sense, in competition with them. He found that

Informal networking was much more common and this technique was cited as keeping teachers/trainers in touch with industry developments. Much of this networking however seemed to be with other RTOs, industry-based trainers and TAFE rather than with those directly involved in the production process ... several RTOs said that there was a good deal of interaction and information exchange between RTOs despite their being in competition. (p.5)

Where criticism of VET practitioners is reported, it generally focuses on how their involvement interferes with the running of the business, that is, where the introduced learning network interfaces with the work networks. Some VET providers remarked that conflict was sometimes caused by external factors such as government pressure to meet other policy objectives. For example,

there was increasing pressure on employers for the provision of work experience places and that this competition was having a negative impact on other workplace based training programs, such as this VET in schools program. They were, in the case of this program, having increasing difficulty in finding host employers. (Dumbrell 2003, p.5)

Other pressures come from the lack of acceptance by some employers that trainees are learners and not just subsidised employees. Dumbrell (2003) found this problem was more acute for employees in Certificate II than Certificate III courses. Also, where employees were in industries characterised by casualisation and/or shift work (for example, hospitality), this problem seemed more prevalent. In these situations, VET practitioners were more likely to be seen as intruders and less likely to find co-operation from industry partners. Dumbrell also found that another impediment to the establishment of successful learning networks was the communication problems caused by frequent changes in training personnel.

In reviewing ten years of competency-based training, Smith (1999) concluded that support for apprentices' learning in their workplace is typically unplanned and haphazard. Findings on the learning preferences and learning strategies of apprentices, coupled with the findings of typically poor or unplanned support in workplaces, indicate that effective flexible delivery of training to apprentices in the workplace provides a number of challenges. Where VET providers were flexible, employers found that not only did this make for more effective training for new employees, but also 'skills enhancement and upgrading of existing workers was now easier because there was a much larger menu of training options available as a result of developing more customised training'. (Dumbrell 2003, p.2)

Small business is, in some ways, a unique domain when it comes to training. In a major study of the Small Business Professional Development (SBPD) Program, Kearns (2002) emphasises the importance of networks in the functioning of small businesses:

Networking and networks are the keys to the way small business does business and the way it learns (NCVER 1998). Building networks and clusters of small firms is one of the key strategies to emerge from SBPD. The relevance of this strategy for small firms is confirmed by other research in Australia ... and overseas ... Building small firms into

interacting networks or clusters is the foundation strategy for a collaborative self-help approach. The benefits of networks, when well conducted, are well documented in Australian and overseas research ... (p.35).

In his opinion, networks and clusters, when well conducted, can:

- involve a high degree of business-to-business activity
- provide peer support and engender confidence and motivation for learning
- stimulate the flow of new ideas and generally foster innovation
- provide a practical environment that suits small business preferences
- evolve into learning communities (communities of practice)
- contribute to building social capital and human capital in the participating firms

However, these benefits do not automatically flow and the experience of the SBPD network projects points to the need for effective promotion and facilitation (Kearns 2003, p.35).

Kearns provides a number of overseas examples of where networks are used in workplace learning

Papers from the British Marchmont Observatory also conceptualise networks of small firms as learning networks, or communities of practice, and see their development in terms of social theories of learning ... This approach recognises that work-based learning combines theory with practice and explicit and tacit forms of knowledge ... (Kearns 2003, p.36).

VET providers can play a major role in the establishment and development of these networks and, although Kearns (2003) does not comment on how their involvement is perceived by industry, he does indicate some of the strategies VET providers use to promote such networks. They include:

- promoting 'just-in-time' training to satisfy immediate skill shortages and business imperatives as opposed to marketing full qualifications
- linking training to bottom-line business outcomes
- promoting the benefits of skilled workers and the capacity to be more productive and innovative
- promotion of small business skills to support existing technical/industry skills for employers. (p.44)

Again, field experience appears to reveal that, although the formation of networks is valuable and although VET practitioners (the successful ones, at least) are seen as adept at developing learning networks, there are frequently impediments to this process. Some of these impediments stem from workplaces and some from how VET practitioners operate and are perceived in industry.

A critical factor in the formation of learning networks in workplaces is the interaction between such networks and the work networks. As has been mentioned above, workplace learning activities are sometimes seen as impediments to the smooth operation of the work and productivity, which is the primary focus in workplaces. However, workplace learning can also be seen as having a positive influence on productivity (Blandy, Dockery, Hawke & Webster 2000, NCVER 2001, Smith 2001), though many senior managers in industry are still not convinced about returns on investment in training in their companies (Callan & Ashworth, 2004, p.49). Blandy et al. (2000) concluded that profitability of firms is directly related to the amount and quality of training that they provide, and that the profitability of training is particularly high for

training that is highly specific, rapidly accomplished and related to the introduction of new technology. They also stated that informal learning is regarded by many companies as superior to formal classroom training in terms of its impact on profitability and productivity. In similar vein, the NCVER (2001) in its summary of findings in this area concludes that there is a solid body of evidence that across a range of sectors, training investments can yield very high levels of returns for companies. These returns, which are not always in the form of increases in profitability or productivity, appear to depend on the nature of training and its relevance to the company's business needs; they are highest when the training is highly focused and when it is linked to clusters of other innovative practices such as new ways of working and new forms of organisational structure.

Santoro (2002) provides a useful insight into the perceptions of some VET providers. She contends that there is considerable resistance to what some providers believe is a 'dumbing down' of their educational role from 'teacher' to 'trainer', suggesting that:

The trainers, and especially the teachers in this study, are 'locked' into narrow understandings of what constitutes training and teaching and who can do either. They represent themselves in particular ways, identifying as one or the other. However, in effect, they continually cross boundaries between teaching and training, taking up positions within each of these discourses at different times, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously. (p.10)

Clearly for the VET practitioner to be effective in the workplace learning environment there needs to be a working through of this position. However, any such dialogue is made all the more problematic if some of the networking skills and negotiating skills needed to bring learning networks and work networks to a greater degree of harmony are not perceived from all quarters as vital skills.

In a study on evaluating on- and off-the-job approaches to learning (Strickland, Simons, Harris, Robertson, Harford & Edwards 2001), 595 apprentices and trainees across Australia were asked what factors they considered important for their success in learning in the workplace and they rated very highly quality relationships with those in the workplace who are helping them to learn. When asked what important factors they considered missing in their own workplaces, around one-third of the respondents specifically highlighted important relational skills as 'employers/trainers taking time to talk to them about their job', 'employers/trainers interested in their future in the workforce' and 'employers/trainers taking time to listen to concerns and difficulties about work'. Learners' attitudes towards VET practitioners are determined by such factors as these, as well as the currency of their technical skills.

In an American study, Leach (1996) investigated the distinguishing characteristics among exemplary trainers in business and industry. He describes these using behavioural and attitudinal factors and concludes that exemplary trainers typically

Not only demonstrate a concern for the mechanics of training but also a concern for the participant. They almost always spoke of incorporating humor in conjunction with personal real life stories and examples during training. (Leach 1996, p.8)

In their handbook for workplace trainers, Field and Mawer (1998, p.35) list some basic skills for practitioners: be supportive and encouraging, provide positive feedback to build confidence, use examples and visual images to explain abstract ideas and processes, give learners opportunities to show initiative, recognise that learners have experiences and insights that you can build on, avoid an atmosphere of criticism, be frank and encouraging, reinforce learner progress by commenting on it, use two-way discussion to identify learner skills, encourage trainees to help plan learning activities, explain tasks clearly, ask questions to make sure the learner understands, and help learners to focus on overcoming skill and knowledge gaps. These are unremarkable as skills one might expect in any teacher, except that they particularly emphasise the interactive, supportive

and mentoring types of skills. Field and Mawer (1998, p.62) also list a range of other skills considered essential in a VET provider that an employer should look for including:

- Track record – What projects have they recently been involved in? What is their understanding of learning issues? What is their understanding of current work practices and processes? Do they meet deadlines?
- Relevance and flexibility – Will they tailor their approach to suit your particular needs and conditions? Will they offer related services such as literacy? Will they take into account existing employee competence through RPL? How quickly can they respond?
- Quality – To what extent do they build on existing opportunities for learning at work? Are they willing to contribute their knowledge to your workplace? How do they evaluate the quality of their own work?
- Ability to relate – Can they work with the training committee? Can they work with management? Can they work with employees? Are they sensitive to industrial issues? Can they negotiate with industrial and government bureaucracies? How will they work with people who already have a training role in the organisation?
- Reliability – Do they do the work themselves? Do they delegate or subcontract the work?
- Cost-effectiveness – How do their fees compare with others? Do they charge a flat, all inclusive fee or a fee based on time spent? Have incidentals such as travel costs been included in a quote?

What is particularly informative to note in this catalogue of searching questions is that understanding of the workplace, negotiating skills and networking skills feature prominently.

In a paper that examines the linking of learning with work, Praetz (2001) emphasises the importance of the workplace as a place for learning in doing. She concludes that '[m]uch of what is required for successful work performance involves the progressive acquisition of skills, knowledge and identity using experienced mentors skilled in pedagogic conversations' (p.6). This suggests that workplace learning includes a significant amount of 'informal' learning, which is certainly supported by other researchers (e.g. Garrick 1998, Boud & Middleton 2003). For example,

In a study of workplace trainers, Harris, Simons and Bone (2000) found informal workplace learning to be of central importance and, furthermore, that there was an inter-relationship between learning and work. That is to say, informal workplace learning is not merely an ad hoc process, but part of a deliberate strategy which takes into account the work which needs to be done and the skills needed to do the work. This may, for example, involve giving employees a variety of tasks, or arranging the work in a manner which maximises learning opportunities. (NCVER 2003, p.7)

Thus mentoring skills and 'getting alongside' skills would appear to be essential for the VET practitioner, and clearly these interpersonal skills rate highly for VET practitioners. Such relationship issues for those VET practitioners working with enterprises are made more complex due to:

the inherent tensions between the needs of the enterprises and the needs of the apprentices and trainees. Successful learning and assessment for apprentices lies in the strength and effectiveness of the partnership developed between the trainee/apprentice, the employer and the registered training organisation. Quality partnerships build an environment where effective learning and assessment can take place. (Strickland et al. 2001, p.3)

These inherent tensions within workplaces have been highlighted in learning network theory. Poell et al. (2000, p.42) have provided a comprehensive theoretical framework that 'is [a] descriptive and interpretive model of how learning can be organised rather than a prescriptive model of how learning should be organised'. They propose a series of four basic learning networks that exist in workplaces – self-initiated, vertical, horizontal and external. Furthermore, they suggest that there are three main components to a learning network – actors, processes and structures. Significantly, VET practitioners are just *one* group of actors in these learning networks. From the point of view of workplace learning, they are external – 'outsiders'. However, there is evidence to suggest that the demarcation between external and internal may be becoming less rigid. In a study on training partnerships in industry (Callan & Ashworth 2004), it was found that both industry and VET providers were instrumental in initiating such linkages. Providers were becoming responsible for delivering training that was part of a larger program of cultural change within the industrial organisation. The VET providers were involved in a range of activities within the organisation, not just training, and VET providers were expected to build partnerships both with other industries and key instrumentalities. Thus, the VET practitioner may perhaps be increasingly seen both as external to the industrial organisation and in some cases as a representative of that organisation. Such dual positioning of the VET practitioner provides many challenges and possibilities.

Appendix B: Interview schedules

Protocol for interviews with TAFE staff

[Welcome, introduction, overview of project, timing, consent form, audiotaping]

Your partnership with the company

- Tell me about the history of your partnership with the company? (e.g. who initiated it? when? why? how long have you personally been involved?)
- Describe the kind of partnership you have now with the company (e.g. how many times do you work there? for how long? with whom? to whom do you report?)
- When you first started to be involved, what did you find out about the company? How did you find it out?

Your views on work and learning in the company

Work

- In this company, how would you describe:
 - (a) the *nature of work*?
 - (b) the *work structure*?
 - (c) the *work processes*?
 - (d) the *work climate*? (e.g. values, beliefs, rules)
 - (e) the *work relationships*? (e.g. communication patterns, flow of information, content of communications, etc.)
- Are there identifiable groups/networks:
 - (a) for working?
 - (b) for learning?
- If yes, what are the characteristics of each of these groups? (e.g. composition? overlap?)

Learning

- How is learning *organised* in the company, particularly in terms of learning responsibilities?
- Who makes the decisions about what, how and at what pace the learners are to learn?
- What resources for learning do you have access to within the company?
- What learning relationships does the company have with organisations/ individuals/ associations outside?
- In this company, how would you describe:
 - (a) the *nature of learning*?
 - (b) the *learning processes*?
 - (c) the *learning climate*? (e.g. values, beliefs, rules)
 - (d) the *learning relationships*? (e.g. communication patterns, flow of information, content of communications, etc.)

Your role in the company

- Describe what you do when you work within the company?
- How do you think (a) managers and (b) workers see your role in the company?
- To what extent do you mix with (a) managers and (b) workers in the company?

	A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
Managers	5	4	3	2	1
Workers	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you know about the internal workings of the company? (e.g. structures, processes, nature of the work, climate, relationships.)

Knowledge of:	A lot	Considerable	To some extent	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you think your knowledge of these internal workings influences your role in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How valued do you think learning is in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

Please explain your answer.

- In this company, how much influence do you think you have on (a) what the learners learn, (b) the structuring of their learning, and (c) the pace of their learning?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
What they learn	5	4	3	2	1
Structuring of learning	5	4	3	2	1
Pace of learning	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How much influence do you think you have on the internal workings of the company?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How effective do you think you are in carrying out the following aspects of your role within the company?

	Very	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Not really at all
Delivering training	5	4	3	2	1
Facilitating learning		4	3	2	1
Assessing learning	5	4	3	2	1
Coaching learners	5	4	3	2	1
In other ways:*	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1

* Specify these other ways

Your views on helps and hindrances to your ways of working

- What three things *help* you most in your role in the company?
- What three things *hinder* you most in your role in the company?
- How might these hindrances be minimised?
- What strategies might help to make your role in the company more effective?
- How do you think these strategies might improve the quality of training, assessment and learning?

[Conclude interview; thank them for their valuable contribution; what will happen next.]

Protocol for interviews with company staff

[Welcome, introduction, overview of the project, timing, consent form, audiotaping]

Your views on the partnership with the TAFE teacher/institute

- Tell me about the history of your partnership with the TAFE teacher/institute? (e.g. who initiated it? when? why? how long have you personally been involved?)
- Describe the kind of partnership you have now with the TAFE teacher (e.g. how many times does he/she work there? for how long? with whom? to whom does he/she report?)
- What is your role in the company? What connection do you have with the TAFE teacher?

Your views on work and learning in the company

Work

- In this company, how would you describe:
 - (f) the *nature of work*?
 - (g) the *work structure*?
 - (h) the *work processes*?
 - (i) the *work climate*? (e.g. values, beliefs, rules)
 - (j) the *work relationships*? (e.g. communication patterns, flow of information, content of communications, etc.)
- Are there identifiable groups/networks:
 - (c) for working?
 - (d) for learning?
- If yes, what are the characteristics of each of these groups? (e.g. composition? overlap?)

Learning

- How is learning *organised* in the company, particularly in terms of learning responsibilities?
- Who makes the decisions about what, how and at what pace the learners are to learn?
- What resources for learning does the TAFE teacher have access to within the company?
- What learning relationships does the company have with organisations/ individuals/ associations outside?
- In this company, how would you describe:
 - (e) the *nature of learning*?
 - (f) the *learning processes*?
 - (g) the *learning climate*? (e.g. values, beliefs, rules)
 - (h) the *learning relationships*? (e.g. communication patterns, flow of information, content of communications, etc.)

Your views on the TAFE teacher's role in the company

- How would you describe what [the TAFE teacher] does in the company?
- To what extent do you think [the TAFE teacher] mixes with (a) managers and (b) workers in the company?

	A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
Managers	5	4	3	2	1
Workers	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher] knows about the internal workings of the company? (e.g. structures, processes, nature of the work, climate, relationships.)

Knowledge of:	A lot	Considerable	To some extent	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher's] knowledge of these internal workings influences their role in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How valued do you think learning is in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

Explain your answer.

- In this company, how much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on (a) what the learners learn, (b) the structuring of their learning, and (c) the pace of their learning?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
What they learn	5	4	3	2	1
Structuring of learning	5	4	3	2	1
Pace of learning	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on existing structures, processes, climate and relationships in this company?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How effective do you think [the TAFE teacher] is in carrying out the following aspects of his/her role within the company?

	Very	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Not really at all
Delivering training	5	4	3	2	1
Facilitating learning		4	3	2	1
Assessing learning	5	4	3	2	1
Coaching learners	5	4	3	2	1
In other ways:*	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1

* Specify these other ways

Your views on helps and hindrances to [the TAFE teacher's] ways of working

- In your view, what three things *help* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- What three things *hinder* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- How might these hindrances be minimised?
- What strategies might help to make [the TAFE teacher's] role in the company more effective?
- How do you think these strategies might improve the quality of training, assessment and learning?

[Conclude interview; thank them for their valuable contribution; what will happen next.]

Protocol for interviews with TAFE managers

[Welcome, introduction, overview of project, timing, consent form, audiotaping]

Your views on the TAFE teacher's work with and within the company

- How often does [the TAFE teacher] work within the company?
- How would you describe what [the TAFE teacher] does in the company?
- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher] knows about the internal workings of the company? (e.g. structures, processes, nature of the work, climate, relationships.)

Knowledge of:	A lot	Considerable	To some extent	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher's] knowledge of these internal workings influences his/her role in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- In the company, how much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on (a) what the learners learn, (b) the structuring of their learning, and (c) the pace of their learning?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
What they learn	5	4	3	2	1
Structuring of learning	5	4	3	2	1
Pace of learning	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on existing structures, processes, climate and relationships in the company?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How effective do you think [the TAFE teacher] is in carrying out the following aspects of his/her role within the company?

	Very	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Not really at all
Delivering training	5	4	3	2	1
Facilitating learning		4	3	2	1
Assessing learning	5	4	3	2	1
Coaching learners	5	4	3	2	1
In other ways:*	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1

* Specify these other ways

Your views on helps and hindrances to [the TAFE teacher's] ways of working

- In your view, what three things *help* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- What three things *hinder* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- How might these hindrances be minimised?
- What strategies might help to make [the TAFE teacher's] role in the company more effective?
- How do you think these strategies might improve the quality of training, assessment and learning?

[Conclude interview; thank them for their valuable contribution; what will happen next.]

Protocol for interviews with learners

[Welcome, introductions, overview of the process, timing, consent forms, audiotape]

Your views on work and learning in the company

Work

- Who are you responsible to in your company – (a) for working? (b) for learning?
- Are there identifiable groups/networks – (a) for working? (b) for learning?
- What are the characteristics of each of these groups? (e.g. composition? overlap?)

Learning

- How is learning *organised* in the enterprise? (particularly in terms of learning responsibilities)
- Who makes the decisions about what, how and at what pace you are to learn?
- What resources for learning do you have access to within the company?
- What relationships for learning does your company have with organisations/ individuals/ associations outside?
- How would you describe:
 - (a) the *learning processes* in the company?
 - (b) the *learning climate* in the company? (e.g. values, beliefs, rules)

Your views on the TAFE teacher's role within the company

- How often does [the TAFE teacher] work within the company?
- How would you describe [the TAFE teacher's] role in the company?
- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher] knows about the internal workings of the company? (e.g. structures, processes, nature of the work, climate, relationships.)

Knowledge of:	A lot	Considerable	To some extent	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

- How much do you think [the TAFE teacher's] knowledge of these internal workings influences his/her role in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
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5	4	3	2	1
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In what ways?

- How valued do you think learning is in the company?

A lot	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Very little to not at all
5	4	3	2	1

Explain your answer.

- In this company, how much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on (a) what you learn, (b) the structuring of your learning, and (c) the pace of your learning?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
What you learn	5	4	3	2	1
Structuring of learning	5	4	3	2	1
Pace of learning	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How much influence do you think [the TAFE teacher] has on existing structures, processes, climate and relationships in the company?

	A lot	Considerable	Some	Slight	Very little to none
Structures	5	4	3	2	1
Processes	5	4	3	2	1
Nature of the work	5	4	3	2	1
Climate	5	4	3	2	1
Relationships	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways?

- How effective do you think [the TAFE teacher] is in carrying out the following aspects of his/her role within the company?

	Very	Considerably	To some extent	Slightly	Not really at all
Delivering training	5	4	3	2	1
Facilitating learning		4	3	2	1
Assessing learning	5	4	3	2	1
Coaching learners	5	4	3	2	1
In other ways:*	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1

* Specify these other ways

Your views on helps and hindrances to [the TAFE teacher's] ways of working

- In your view, what three things *help* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- What three things *hinder* [the TAFE teacher] most in his/her role in the company?
- How might these hindrances be minimised?
- What strategies might help to make [the TAFE teacher's] role in the company more effective?
- How do you think these strategies might improve the quality of training, assessment and learning?

[Conclude interview; thank them for their valuable contribution; what will happen next.]

Appendix C: The six case studies

Case study A

The enterprise

The enterprise taking part in this current case study is a large wine-making conglomerate, employing several hundred staff in a number of widespread locations both in South Australia and interstate. The worksite under study is a long established feature of the local area and, because of the skills necessary to the traditional nature of wine-making and its locality, has a history of offering secure employment to staff located in the region. The actual case study site is _____ where approximately 400 staff are employed.

Apart from management and administration, staffing roles range across wine-makers, laboratory technicians and engineers to process and production workers. Machine operation and allied technology has taken over from much of the previous manual handling required within the industry. This site has recently been the subject of a commercial merger with a rival company.

The company had adopted and developed an established workplace training program through the industry training packages. The decision to enter into an industry/TAFE training liaison program, however, followed acknowledgement by the company that staff needed recognition, as well as accreditation, for the training they were undertaking and the new skills they were acquiring.

The TAFE institute

The TAFE organisation involved with this study is a regional institute encompassing a number of widely spread campuses across various rural centres. This TAFE's involvement with situated training at industrial and commercial sites is a relatively recent innovation for them but has resulted in a number of liaison programs, particularly in the field of hospitality. The TAFE nominated VET practitioner began accreditation programs with the company approximately 12 months ago following some detailed negotiations. The main responsibility for this sector of the training operation at the company rests with a TAFE manager whose section covers wine and food studies across the whole institute's area ... TAFE bases its training charges on a nominal hours figure.

Training

Workers have been progressing through various training systems over periods of up to 30 years in some cases. Their skill capacity is therefore considered high. As a consequence, the company does not see a need to put them through up to another two years of external training. In these cases, there was a need for recognition of prior learning (RPL) as well as recognition of current competences (RCC). In other cases, newly arrived employees need to be given immediate workplace skills or other workers need to access to skills commensurate with newly acquired machinery or technology.

Overall, the company has embedded training requirements into its enterprise bargaining agreement and offers a minimum of 20 hours per person external training over a year. The company has training relationships with other external registered training organisations (RTO) and uses TAFE only for the wine industry training package components. These components cover Certificates 1, 2 and 3. As well as accredited training, the company offers internal training

in areas of management and supervision. The focus is on relevance to company needs and immediate work-skills rather than preparation of personnel for future roles. The company values and promotes training in areas of safety and task-oriented needs. The most highly valued training at this site by workers is the on-the-job training between peers and similarly work-situated learning between fellow employees and immediate supervisors.

The training programs overviewed for this case study are based within the company's packaging department and its bottling line. In both cases the VET practitioner reports to the relevant manager as well as the human resources (HR) advisor. The practitioner delivers core material and units from industry training packages. Additionally, when a worker's skill acquisition takes place on the job, it is the VET practitioner's role to then structure and deliver sessions that will facilitate skills assessment processes for various accreditation needs. In other cases, the practitioner will organise one day or longer courses with assessments at completion. The courses are run in-house and utilise the workplace and various situations that occur during normal work operations.

Perspectives

The VET practitioner

The current practitioner is an ex-employee of the company who was made redundant two years prior to this study. However, his knowledge and expertise and his ability to 're-invent' himself as a training consultant for TAFE have made him an ideal candidate to undertake the training needs of this company. He has some concerns with both the demands of TAFE and with the attitude of the company towards training needs of its employees. In terms of TAFE, the practitioner feels that the complexity of the work situation and its needs in relation to the workers and learners cannot be fully comprehended by an outside organisation. Additionally, as TAFE is a very structured organisation, their ability to deliver or arrange particularised training is somewhat limited.

In relation to the practitioner's perspective on a company level, this is coloured by his long association with, and knowledge of, the company as its employee. He notes with some concern what he sees as a lack of communication between management and workers, and an obvious difference in purpose and intent between the two. As well, he has concerns that economic factors are impinging upon availability and level of training. These factors relate both to costs demanded by TAFE and willingness of the company to fund more lengthy training courses.

The HR Advisor

The advisor has some concerns regarding what might be perceived as tensions between training and company needs. On the one hand are the restrictions that training providers have in place and their need to comply with institutional training regulations. On the other is the company's attitude towards task-oriented training needs and then its natural tendency to be concerned with relating all learning to cost benefit factors. The advisor also negotiates and arranges training with other RTOs for other areas of the company, as well as internal staff-run training. He is therefore viewing the TAFE industry liaison from a wider perspective than perhaps are other stakeholders within this study.

The advisor's view is that bureaucratic administrative factors are the likely cause of additional costs and slow response times from TAFE. He considers that the practitioner, being a previous long-term employee, is therefore ideally situated to understand overall training requirements, workers' backgrounds and aptitudes, as well as company nuances, from all sides. Hence the VET practitioner can often more speedily facilitate learning needs and delivery and is perceived as doing so in a highly effective manner.

The TAFE Manager

The TAFE manager perceives the current VET practitioner as an important link between, and enormous benefit to, TAFE and the company. This perception is brought about by the practitioner's background with the company and with his strong drive to take on a training role as a consultant following the retrenchment. The manager is aware of the practitioner's instrumental role in opening up various training opportunities and keeping TAFE alert to the potential and needs.

The TAFE manager understands that there are tensions between wine company clients and TAFE in terms of attitudes towards bureaucratic needs and immediate skill-acquisition and accreditation needs. She understands, too, that personalities play an integral role in making a TAFE/industry liaison work well. The manager perceives well that one of the main issues for the company is productivity, which has to be constantly weighed against training.

At another level, the manager sees the professional development of trainers through advanced level study as being a very significant factor. This factor relates both to a practitioner's ability to widen relationships and training opportunities with companies, and also to enable them to access career opportunities with organisations such as TAFE. However the manager acknowledges that encouragement to undertake such development, say through study leave, funding, extra entitlements, etc. is not readily forthcoming and consequently not often viewed as a viable career option. The manager believes that in some cases, the lack of formal education and training may impact upon relationships with, and training done within some companies.

Issues within the case study

During conversations with stakeholders from the company, the VET practitioner, and from TAFE management, a number of issues impacting both positively and negatively on ways of working became apparent. These include:

- Organisational
- Personnel
- Attitudes towards training
- Communication
- Economics

Organisational

The connection between the TAFE institute and the enterprise under consideration is a recent one and has not been without organisational difficulties. The training in question is undertaken in the packaging and bottling departments of the company and requires specific and constantly changing skills. As mentioned, the training had previously been carried out by internal staff but, with the need for external accreditation, it was felt necessary to use an outside RTO. The initial organisation for the training proved quite problematic for both the company and the RTO due to procedural needs within both.

We basically got in touch with TAFE and said we've got all these people who are progressing through the system internally, we want to get that external recognition going... I had to put a lot of pressure on TAFE to actually get the thing up and running (pp. 32-3).

but

...some of our processes within TAFE are highly bureaucratic. We work to the SMS (student management system) database. We have enrolment forms that we apply on a

calendar basis. We have parchment applications and procedures. All things that literally drive our industry clients crazy (p. 65).

The company in question is, by its own definition, highly compartmentalised. This results in the work of training being dependent upon various attitudes and abilities of section managers to agree to and arrange for training, and to work with and facilitate the work of VET practitioners.

Personnel

As with much training within industry, the success or failure of the venture is dependent on the quality and commitment of a specific educator. In the wine industry, it is considered that the skills required, both by employees and by those who train them, are very specific. In this study too, the company and TAFE required a trainer with close affiliations to the industry and accordingly, TAFE contracted this previous employee. The employee, now a training consultant, had been a training coordinator in the bottling department of the enterprise. Although his TAFE manager accepted that the trainer did not seem to *'know a lot about pedagogical issues and methodology'* (p. 59) and that *'he does not have a deep strength in terms of a true training professional'* (p. 62), it is interesting that the trainer himself notes of the training that, *'I'm still doing the job I used to do'* (p.43).

The training practitioner also comments that:

I find that I'm doing the work more often than not of the coordinator but also I'm trying to motivate the coordinator to communicate with the person here [at the company] because really they should be getting together saying, this is what we need, can we ... do it? (p. 55)

and is proud of his contribution to the industry specific training program:

we can be critical about a lot of the things here but if you compare them to other [wineries] ... you'd most probably find that they're the best trained around.(p.45)

The HR advisor also recognises both the trainer's valuable contribution and that his specific knowledge is what allows him to work well within the enterprise. 'With his experience he really knows exactly what's required' (p.39).

Attitudes towards training

All parties concerned in this liaison have differing perceptions of the nature and relevance of training. Tensions arise from this perceived clash between the two cultures of an industrial/commercial enterprise on the one hand and the essentially bureaucratic operations of a large training institution on the other. Some of the industry section managers are ambivalent about the benefits of training and accreditation. They see the employees there already doing the job they're employed to do, and hence perhaps consider that ancillary skills and knowledge may not be necessary. This is particularly so in regards to RCC, as that aspect does not appear to all supervisors to add to a skill base. There is also the factor of fitting training into a changing workforce and the need to gear it around shift work that keeps lines running for 24 hour periods at certain times of the year.

So people have to be trained on equipment and assessed and then given credit, accreditation, for having these skills and that's necessary because you're looking at three shifts and you're also looking at a group of casuals that they use. They have to be able to roster them to skills, and I think according to their OHS (p. 47).

Other than one or two key personnel, there also appears to be a general lack of knowledge about training packages and what they entail, or why it is necessary for a trainer to be able to sign off on acquired competencies.

There's a philosophy that [training] is just another interruption to their work because their work is production (p.51).

and:

if you spoke to department managers, they would say the whole training package stuff's out of control (p.37).

On the other hand, the company accepts that resources must be utilised for training and why.

People are trained to do their job and we need people trained to do their job so there's not an issue there. I mean, if we employ someone then obviously we're going to train them to do their job, which involves operating as many pieces *of equipment as we can get them to operate* (p. 36).

Additionally, a union and company agreement sees workers needing to progress upwards in skill grades within a given period of time, as this relates to pay rate rises. However, the gradation of pay rates also results in workers having a measure of expediency in their attitude towards assessment and a consequent expectation that accreditation should occur whether training is successful or not.

The VET practitioner points out that one of the differences in approach to training in an industrial context is a contradiction between the classroom-based requirements of the VET modules and the practical realities of on-the-job training that occur within the industry here. He asks,

how can you deliver something academically? That's suggesting that the whole thing should have happened in the workplace not out of the workplace (p.48).

At the same time, the VET practitioner's work as a trainer is held in high regard by both supervisors and workers. The company considers that '*his knowledge of the industry, his knowledge of the company and the relationship he has with the employees and management*' (p. 40) to be the key factors adding to any positive attitude towards training in the sections under review in this case study.

Communication

Communication between management, staff and TAFE is an area of concern to nearly all stakeholders involved in the current liaison. It may be one reason for the ambivalent and sometimes contradictory attitude that various personnel have towards training. The company is very large and split into a number of sections, a factor that adds to the lines of communication not flowing as easily as interviewees would like.

We have workgroup meetings every month where the department manager will talk to all the employees but, as we get bigger and bigger, that contact is harder and harder to maintain (p.35).

Naturally, the perceptions change from level to level and relate to needs as well.

As [company] managers we would say, "the communications great"; however, I'm sure if you spoke to the employees, they would say "Oh, communication's a real problem" (p.35).

Concern regarding the difficulty in getting a message across flows into dealings between the company and TAFE liaison and its management. From the practitioner's point of view, the sometimes ineffective communication has repercussions on the training:

a key [to the effectiveness of the training] is communication, knowing what the needs are and I don't say that happens very often (p.55).

Similarly, the dependence on personalities, noted in a section above, relates specifically to communication, and stakeholders understand quite clearly that this is a crucial aspect addressing the effectiveness of the various ways of working:

It [TAFE] just relies on a couple of people in there to understand what we want and be able to do it, and if those couple of people weren't there, we wouldn't be able to do what we do... the TAFE system relies too much on individuals within TAFE (p.33).

Conversely, from the point of view at TAFE, and perhaps as a result of ineffective communication, the TAFE manager takes a differing perspective, saying that *'I think having established really good dialogue with companies has been a key'* (p.66).

The company has very specific training needs and takes issue with not always being able to communicate these needs to TAFE. As TAFE is an establishment that is highly structured and lacks flexibility due to organisational restraints, it cannot always respond to the needs of its clients. As a consequence, the company is critical of the organisation that is not geared to be flexible, saying, *'there's TAFE, that monster in the background that's really frustrating to deal with'* (p. 40). However, communicating needs between very differently focussed enterprises and each being able to adapt to those needs, is not seen as a simple matter by those involved.

One of the problems you have with organisations like TAFE is although they say that our facilitators go back in the industry every now and then so they're kept up to date... but if they do it's only for a very brief period of time and that's understandable, they don't have that knowledge of how an organisation works, or they lose track, and so therefore they can't deliver what you need, they can only take a guess at what you need.

There's a huge conflict in what we want and what TAFE requires; however, if you look at the training package, what's in the training package is what we want and, if you spoke to TAFE, they would say, well, what's in the training package is what we provide, but there's a huge difference in the way it's interpreted (pp.39-40).

It is, perhaps, this *'difference in the way it's interpreted'* that is at the root of the communication issues discussed above and that has led to some of the tensions apparent between the stakeholders.

Economics

From the company's point of view, the cost structure of the training offered by TAFE is problematic. The reasons given for this concern relate directly to actual training by TAFE and assessment of RCC and RPL. The company consider that TAFE should justify the charges more directly to actual time of training, rather than a preset, per person, nominal contact hours agreement for the various certificate levels.

For certificate two it's five hundred and something dollars a person [TAFE charges], based on 120 nominal hours, but actual contact hours are going to be sixteen (p.41).

Again, TAFE's lack of flexibility is viewed by the company as the main culprit, this time for the high expense related to training – the company would prefer that TAFE personnel come to the workplace when required, but charge only for the actual contact time.

The real down side of this whole training package qualification stuff is the cost to the company, with very little by way of return, very little – there is a return, but it's very small (p.34).

The view therefore is that the expense of the training currently offered by TAFE is difficult to warrant in terms of actual cost benefit to the company itself. However, the economic factors may be viewed differently by individual workers who obtain transferable certification and recognition for their skills within this industry. In addition, there are cost benefits to the wine industry as a whole as accreditation raises the skill base of the workforce involved.

But economically, and perhaps culturally, the company view regarding training is perhaps what is at the heart of this somewhat fraught liaison between industry and TAFE. It appears to be what

impacts most heavily on the way in which the VET practitioner works with and within the enterprise.

The stuff that's most valued, the valued training in this whole organisation, is on the job training that people do, day to day, where there's no external training provider. It's just fellow employees training other people how to do the job – certainly our most effective and the cheapest (p.37).

Case study B

The enterprise

The enterprise under consideration is a large and geographically fragmented industrial complex in an Adelaide southern suburb. The plant is involved in the design, development and manufacture of rubber and plastics components for the original equipment automotive industry, general, as well as industrial products for the automotive after-market, building, construction, marine and specialised customer development.

The transport engineering industry is large and diverse. In Australia, the automotive industry alone employs over 350,000 people in areas from vehicle, truck, bus and coach manufacturing and assembly, to bicycles, leisure craft and boating.

The company in this case study employs approximately four hundred and fifty workers, of whom over three hundred are occupied directly in component production, the remainder being allocated to management, staff and support departments. Approximately 75% of the company's workforce is from a non English speaking background.

Utilising a team approach, the company actively endeavours to continuously improve its systems and processes in order to meet customer needs, and is committed to maintain responsible quality, occupational health, safety, welfare and environmental management and to aim for continuous improvement of a level of performance which is supported and encouraged by all people in the organisation.

The TAFE institute

The TAFE institute in this case study is a large multi-campus establishment, and spreads over a wide area of suburban metropolitan Adelaide as well as regional areas of South Australia. Each of its five campuses and two learning centres provides the local community and industry with vocational education services.

The institute provides training for employers and businesses via traineeships and apprenticeships and customised courses to meet specific needs.

Training

Prior to 1994, training within the company had been undertaken by section leaders on the production line along with some courses delivered by a different TAFE institute from the current one.

During 1994, a assessment of the literacy and numeracy levels across the whole workforce found that the courses being delivered were based on resource materials that were inappropriate for the NESB nature of most of the learners. The modules assumed that after basic English training, workers would articulate immediately to mainstream TAFE certificate and diploma courses. This proved not to be the case and a complete reworking of the company's training direction was undertaken based on the innovations of the then training coordinator.

Over the past five years the training emphasis has gradually been redirected towards a multi-faceted approach to learning. Industry skills are stressed, but there is also importance placed on lifelong learning that encompasses literacy, numeracy and computer skills, together with offerings such as preparedness for retirement.

Involvement in the training that TAFE undertakes at the enterprise is voluntary on the part of the workforce, although candidates for promotion are expected to participate fully in the training program.

Perspectives

The company training and development coordinator

The company training and development coordinator has an extensive background in working for TAFE, especially in commercial and industrial situations. As a relatively recent arrival at the company, she has rebuilt the training programme at the company, and is particularly involved with the literacy problems associated with the NESB nature of over three quarters of the workforce.

She is enthusiastic about “seeing the company grow, seeing the whole culture diversity model grow” (p. 71), noting that, despite the highly competitive nature of the industry,

it's automotive, the hardest manufacturing environment to work in and they say that if you can cut it in automotive you can cut it anywhere (p. 75)

there is a wider agenda embedded into the company's training program:

this is about learning life long, and feeling good about yourselves and that will come back to the company in an obscure way (p. 76).

This holistic attitude to learning in industry, “everything we do in our training is about changing cultures” (p. 80), is a reaction on her part to the inappropriate training offered previously at the worksite by TAFE:

TAFE used to have this awful model, where they'd say, we're the expert lecturer, we'll teach the programme, you come along and mop up the problems that we create with learning support. And that was an appalling model (p. 73)

The company training and development coordinator has managed to build the previously ancillary nature of 'learning support' into an integral part of the training program. This has proved essential with a workforce that is so predominantly NESB:

Having English as a second language is an ongoing thing that needs to be managed within a training programme - it took five or six years to get it out of the system (p. 73)

She also feels it necessary for the training to attempt to overcome some of the traditional stereotypes associated with a culturally varied workforce:

people used to assume, oh well, they're all non-English speaking background they all get on well, but there were factions and then there's the socio-economic stuff that happens within countries that they bring to here, that they don't think people fathom (p 72)

and:

lets start just chipping away at them through the training and development programme (p. 80)

At the same time she is aware of the commercial motives implicit in any industrial training scheme:

if it doesn't have a business objective you need to seriously question it, if it's not going to have a business outcome why would we do this training (p. 75)

and recognises that the costs involved are not inconsiderable:

if you looked at my time as well as TAFE's time as well as the work release time and some of the labour coverage over eighteen months, that would cost us about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. So we want to get paid back for it (p. 79)

The company training and development coordinator is particularly responsive to the need for flexibility in training, married to an appropriate specificity in programming training materials:

they talk about industry driven training packages and things and I think, no, you don't understand the industry. Who the hell's the industry that you consulted to put the training package together, where did all of that stuff come from (p. 82)

She also stresses the necessity of a broad targeting of learners, noting that some industry training programs only recognise the needs of the less able:

I mean that's like that school model where, 'I'm sorry, all of the advance students won't get it, we'll only help people who didn't do well in the basic skills test', you bugger up education if you do that, so you've got to work it both ends. (p. 78)

To this end, she has promoted a much wider view of training at the worksite:

we're just starting to develop what I call a well being programme and a general education programme and retirement programme fit in under that, and the next one we bring in will be fit programme and anti smoking programme, so we've got the sort of health well being and morale stuff, obviously not a priority for the business point of view, but if you don't do then you suffer (p. 76)

and is convinced that the company benefits from the innovations:

if you spoke to our manufacturing manager he'd tell you he's so much happier with the training and the programmes we've got now because it's dynamic and it's running along the lines of the business (p. 77)

The company learners

Two learners were made available for a formal interview for this case study. Both of recent eastern European background, they were enthusiastic about the opportunities that BSTG are offering with the training programme. They both emphasised the need for training materials to be modified in terms of language levels to take into account the large proportion of NESB workers under training. Both saw the BSTG training programme as a realistic and achievable stepping stone to promotion within the company.

They agreed that sometimes the TAFE training material was not always suitable for NESB learners with limited literacy levels: "speaking for myself, yes, I'm not used to using all these fancy different words" (p. 92), and maintained the need for "more basic English" (p. 92) in the resource materials because "sometimes it's hard for me to understand and if that was more simple, in simple language, maybe simplified more I think it would be easier for me" (p. 90).

For one in particular, studying team leadership as part of a Certificate 3 course, this was a very real difficulty "my backgrounds Polish, I'm Polish I like to be more simple, sometimes it's, I don't know, ... too hard" (p. 90). This learner was, however, well aware of the reasons why he was undertaking the training "this should help us for to, to be better ... for the people, the department which we look after" (p. 89), and was curious about the eventual outcome of the course:

Well I want to go and see what is expected of ... of a team leader in the position that was put into ... you know, what they expect people in that role (p. 89)

Both were appreciative of the effort that the TAFE trainer puts into her work with them: “if she knows that you’ve missed that part and don't really understand it, she will get you to understand about it and so on, very good” (p. 85), and “she's helping us a lot, I mean myself, helping me a lot to understand and how to put this together” (p. 91).

One was a little cynical about the practical application of some of the worksite courses:

Well for example if they will strongly educate people in the safety system that we've got on paper and on the computer, alright, and if everyone follows that system, this factory probably wouldn't run (p. 84)

and noted that, contrary to the opinion of the company training and development coordinator, “people are encouraged to practice things that will actually benefit the company, not the things that are good for the safety and health of workers” (p. 84).

The TAFE trainer

The TAFE trainer specialises in small group or one-to-one training within industrial contexts. She is an experienced trainer in industrial situations and spends virtually all her time on this aspect of TAFE training. She has little communication with her management team at TAFE, preferring to work on her own. She has been associated with this particular worksite for four years.

She appreciates the way in which the company has introduced a wider concept of training to the worksite, and enjoys being associated with the enterprise because “I think they look after their people really, really well” (p. 96), noting that “training is such an important part of this [company's] culture that it is so easy for us to operate, we also have good conditions to work in” (p. 101).

She recalls that when she began training with the company workforce, because of the predominantly NESB nature of the learners:

they were actually having a lot of difficulty with the language that was involved and the relevance of it and just sorting through the paperwork which was required for them to complete the assessment. (p. 94)

The TAFE trainer also recognises the need for an informal approach in dealing with NESB learners in order to facilitate the personal interaction essential to this sort of learning: “that's where my forte is, with actually doing the relationship, with students to make them feel very, very comfortable so that they can ask questions” (p. 100).

She acknowledges her debt to the training coordinator in that the preparation of literacy programs had already been started before she began her association with the company: “she'd done training needs analyses for literacy programmes over several years before, so I had access to those before I did any planning” (p. 94).

She also admits that there are still some difficulties with NESB learners entering leadership programs: “as soon as they get to a leadership programme there's a lot greater requirements for literacy than they would have had previously” (p. 94), and notes that these particular learners “will have problems doing all the written assessments” (p. 93).

Difficulties aside, the TAFE trainer welcomes the fact that the training coordinator of the enterprise is encouraging computer literacy throughout the workforce and

really believes strongly in the whole of life learning and so she'll give them opportunities even though they may never be on a computer [at work], it's just like opening up the mind, so which opens up to further possibilities on a personal level (p. 97)

Issues

One issue that arises from this case study is the relationship between TAFE as the corporate training provider and the TAFE trainer who functions at the worksite. This relationship is seen as problematic by the company training coordinator who expresses concern at the lack of supervision afforded to the trainer by her line management:

[the trainer needs a] decent manager from TAFE. Seriously they let their lecturers loose out into the workplace all the time, have no idea what the lecturers are doing, have no idea what they're teaching, what they're delivering, what's going on. Have you costed it right, is the only thing they'd ever get asked. No idea of the quality thing, no idea of the initiatives, or the hours that they work or the sort of programmes that they're doing (p. 82)

This concern was further voiced by the TAFE trainer who found it difficult to nominate any of the educational managers at her TAFE base who were involved in or aware of the nature and practice of her work at the company.

Case study C

The enterprise

Situated in a regional centre in rural South Australia, the hotel complex is owned by the local community and comprises a number of bars, restaurants, accommodation and gaming facilities. The company has a virtual monopoly on the entertainment side of life in the area and is a significant employer within the wider region.

The TAFE institute

The TAFE institute caters for a geographically large area that stretches from the Lower North of South Australia to the Victorian and New South Wales borders. Most of its courses are vocational certificates and they have a good record in gaining employment for their graduates, particularly in the hospitality and food courses. The course that I observed is a one semester combination of certificates two and three in hospitality, and is intended to offer a broad introduction to the industry, covering food, drink, service and presentation. Approximately a third of the learners on this course are employed by the enterprise under consideration here.

Training

Most of the hospitality training conducted by this TAFE institute is performed in house with a small amount being undertaken, when requested or relevant, at a worksite. The impetus for most of the training stems from the enthusiasm of the principal lecturer in the hospitality field whose professional background and range of contacts within the industry gives him the credibility and respect necessary for him to direct the training.

A feature of the training is the willingness of the institute to adapt existing courses to suit the needs of the industry worksite.

I guess what we really look at is what the industry needs, then we will tailor this particular package to suit what the hotels requirements are and keep it within the guidelines of the training package (p.114)

As the TAFE manager points out, any compromises between the curriculum and the needs of the worksite have to be as a result of consultation.

we certainly don't go in there to impose on them, it's a negotiated thing, what do you want to learn, when do you want to learn it, how do you want to learn it, how do you want it assessed? (p. 107)

Another important feature of the training is the close and lasting rapport between trainers and learners. Because the hospitality staff often make themselves responsible for finding employment for their students, usually within the local area, learners keep in contact with their lecturers through informal visits to the institute after they have finished their courses. Such informal contact keeps both ex-learners and institute staff aware of local employment opportunities, as well as keeping abreast of industry trends.

Perceptions

The TAFE manager

The Educational Manager who oversees the Institute's hospitality section is enthusiastic about the success of the training courses because they reflect well on the Institute as a whole. He is aware of the competitive nature of training within industry, and that TAFE is only one of a number of rival training providers:

people vote with their feet and it's very, very difficult in country areas if TAFE's not doing the right thing, word very soon spreads around and they've got freedom of choice, competitive market they can either go to other local providers so there's a lot of alternatives to us so we really have to be good (p.107)

He is also aware of the absolute necessity for keeping in touch with the industry for which the training is provided:

if you're going to start working in closely with industry you've got to be able to keep going around and around and around, coming back and revisit, revisit, revisit, make new ground, come back, you know, offer things, do things come back and visit again, it's no good just being out there for two or three months and then disappearing (p.109)

One of the problems that he faces, as an administrator, is the nature of funding available to instigate and maintain the courses, and that such funding is reliant on the financial priorities of the government of the day. Any diversion or shortfall in funding in the hospitality area seriously affects the ability of his senior lecturer to develop the TAFE-industry links that are vital to the success of the training:

if I had the funding I could let him go and develop those sort of things and work with industry closer and back filling with another person. We just don't have the funding to enable him to go off and do this development work (p.108)

He is, however, realistic enough to admit that there is a limit to the extent that unlimited training funding is pointless if relevant employment opportunities do not exist within the local area.

if we were given a hundred thousand dollars now we probably wouldn't have enough people wanting to do the courses anyway, and if we did we'd be overproducing people in the Hospitality industry where there's not jobs for them (p.111)

The TAFE trainer

The Advanced Skills Lecturer in charge of the hospitality courses that are run both on and off site has a strong industry background and commands respect both from his colleagues and from the staff of the enterprise under examination in this case study. . His knowledge of the hospitality industry is, by repute, encyclopaedic and, as the TAFE manager points out, he is “very involved with the industry quality groups throughout the state and also shown a lot of leadership within the programmes that he runs and the curriculum” (p.105).

The TAFE trainer places much importance on the nature of his personal relationship with the hospitality industry:

I've been involved with (the company) group for probably the duration that I've been with TAFE, which is ten years. It has come about mainly through sending commercial cookery apprentices in there and we've grown up from that point over the last ten years I suppose to assisting them wherever possible with any course that they need, and we've got a good relationship with them through that (p.112)

and that “I feel that we’re held in reasonably high regard right across the region but its come about with fairly hard work and lots of meetings” (p.125).

He notes the lack of success of the industry training before TAFE became involved:

the private provider came in and did some training and the company actually put a couple of their people in there but it was non accredited training and no one had the understanding of what the accreditation really meant and we ended up putting out fires probably for about twelve months after that from people that were coming to us and saying I've got this ticket, and they actually didn't have a ticket (p.115)

but maintains that TAFE’s success in training learners in the hospitality industry is due to his staff’s willingness to adapt their courses to suit the individual needs of each enterprise: “ we identified a few areas that we felt they would benefit from” (p.113) and “we know that the package is something that the industry wants. So it’s a sort of a win, win thing” (p.114).

It is this flexibility that the TAFE trainer sees as essential to the success of the training packages: “We've got a fair bit of flexibility, they still have to obviously meet the key requirements but the way it’s physically structured, I mean, we can do what we wish with it really” (p.118), and notes the essential element of potential employability in the trainer-trainee relationship:

we’ve built into the full time course a lot of skills that aren’t necessarily in the curriculum, and we do that to try and make them work ready, to try and make sure that they are leaving here with a bit more than the other staff (p.121)

But he is also aware of the sometimes inexplicable gap between training and the practical realities of the industry:

I've sent people out to work experience in other business who've come back after work experience and been told by a head chef for instance “No, that’s what you do at TAFE, we don’t do that here we do it this way” and usually it’s not the right way (p.119)

The TAFE trainer is also conscious of the improvements that have taken place in training specifically designed for the hospitality industry:

I feel that its improved I feel that we've got better equipment, we've got great people and we’re working now with materials, assessments, workbooks, all of the physical resources are much better than ever before (p.125)

And notes the beneficial effect that the various industry training subsidies have had on learners:

So our process is great, the process is marvellous in that we’re now getting people who really are keen and couldn’t do it previously because they couldn’t afford it (p.124)

The Company Manager

The company spokesperson is the head chef at the enterprise, and oversees all kitchen operations and associated staffing. He works closely with the TAFE trainer and takes his junior staff from the ranks of the graduates or near graduates of the hospitality courses. He is impressed with the quality of the hospitality courses and of the graduates that he has employed

He oversees the catering operations within the company and explains that:

Roughly the group is about four hundred which I think I'm not sure on the full time and the casuals but we're a large group now, we've now got five outlets, we've got a restaurant, bistro, say three bistros and a café, that we're currently running. They also have other businesses like a bottle shop, another bottle shop. (p.127)

In house training, apart from the TAFE courses for apprentices, are conducted on an ad hoc basis: "I guess [HR functions] are left to the managers of the departments to look after" (p.129), and notes that the nature of the industry in general, and the worksite in particular, makes some aspects of training difficult to organise:

we've actually had management training, we don't do it that regularly, probably could be done more, but its quite a hard thing to bring all the staff in while the place is operating (p.129)

He is appreciative of the qualities that the TAFE trainer brings to the hospitality courses, and recognises the value of "his experience from outside of TAFE, from the actual industry itself" (p.133) and that "its important what he does for the company" (p.131). Although he is aware of the shortcomings of any practically based industry course, and of the shock effect of course graduates entering the workforce for the first time: "I think a lot of them might be under thoughts that when they finish their six month course that, this is commercial cookery course, that they're qualified chefs" (p.132).

He notes the value of the training: "anything that will help them be better than their competition" (p.130). He is also realistic about the quality of the learners entering the hospitality courses offered by TAFE:

I think the problem that might come from it is a lot of young kids straight out of school that don't know really what they want and maybe their parents have paid for them to do the course, I think that can be a problem sometimes (p.133)

The company learners

The two learners interviewed briefly for this case study echoed some of the sentiments of the company spokesperson with regard to the quality of the students entering the hospitality courses:

a lot of them have just come out of school and I think maybe its just something they want to try without having a focus of going into the industry, maybe just a taste of what it might be like or maybe it was just the course to do because there wasn't anything else (p.139)

Both learners were complimentary about the quality of the training: "I like how they incorporate personal experiences into the class, I find that really interesting and sort of gives you an insight" (p.136), and were aware of the wider implications of the course: "the course is aimed to give a broader view of what's happening out there and to open your eyes" (p.143).

One was particularly appreciative of the implicit employment opportunities arising from the course: "it's the opportunity, being at the right place at the right time and you are limited here by population size" (p.142), while the other had achieved success before she had completed the course: "now I have a job there, so for me it was a very good outcome" (p.136).

Issues

1. While this site did not quite fit the parameters of the research since much of the TAFE training is carried on at TAFE rather than at the site, most of the aspects of the training that are discussed here are, to a great extent, symptomatic of the situations found in many regional areas.

Not all the learners in the group are currently employees of the company, but some are and some others will certainly be employed there at the end of their training.

The relationship between the company and the hospitality section of the local TAFE institute appears almost symbiotic, an aspect stressed by learners, the TAFE trainer and the company spokesperson. As the TAFE manager points out:

they're mates, like all the chefs are all mates together well then they also talk informally as well as formally and the hotel managers as well. (p.107)

He also sees the connection as being part of a wider regional cooperation: “working with industries and the community and so on and make sure that the institute does its work in the economic development of the community” (p.105).

2. The whole operation seems to hinge on the personality and the credibility of the TAFE trainer who is a well respected local as well as being at the top of his field professionally. The TAFE manager points out the relevance of the trainers background: “he's a chef and they've got close relationships with a lot of the chefs and some many instances where he's actually trained these chefs” (p.106).

The trainer himself is aware of the flexibility that being in charge of the course gives him, and that he has the credibility, both within the industry and within the TAFE system, to implement changes that he sees as necessary for the success of his courses: “we've actually rewritten a lot of our own assessments and we're rewriting the whole cookery structure at the moment for implementation next year” (p.119).

3. As a regional rather than urban site, the company is unique in the context of this research because it brings geographical factors to bear.

The demographic pull factors of Adelaide compare unfavourably, in this case, with the almost individual attention that learners get in the small groups that this TAFE institute can offer, as well as the personal counselling available to learners by virtue of the small population of the area. While this appears typical of most regional TAFE's, the institute under consideration is geographically relatively remote and has been forced, by the circumstance of distance, to offer personalised small group training to its learners, particularly to the hospitality cohort.

4. Every graduate from the program gets employment within the industry if they are not already employed. While not a TAFE mandate, the trainers in these course have taken it on themselves to act as a de facto employment agency, all by word of mouth and mostly, but not exclusively, within the local area.

This informal job placement exercise has done much to boost the credibility of the hospitality course lecturers whose credibility relies on the quality of graduates whom they have recommended for employment.

The company spokesperson, as an employer of the TAFE graduates, is appreciative of the necessarily specialised training that the learners receive, particularly because the relative remoteness of the area means that he has a very small pool of potential employees to call on.

Case study D

The company

The enterprise under consideration in this case study is a large suburban hotel and entertainment complex prominently situated on a main highway in an outer Melbourne suburb. It comprises a number of bars, gaming rooms and restaurants, along with a small motel. The enterprise employs in excess of eighty staff, most of whom are rostered on a casual basis, in a variety of hospitality functions including the service of food and beverages, as well as gaming and reception duties.

Most of the staff live locally and many use their casual employment to subsidise their tertiary studies.

The TAFE institute

The TAFE Institute associated with the enterprise is one of Australia's premier multi-purpose institution that prides itself on its ability to deliver a broad range of vocational education and training services. It has four main campuses located in the inner suburbs of Melbourne.

With more than 33,000 student enrolments each year with an increasing number coming from overseas, the Institute claims to be a leading provider of tailored national and international quality training services for government and industry.

The TAFE Institute strives to be Australia's leading provider of vocational education and training, through its development of students and staff.

An essential ingredient in achievement of this goal is the development, formation and nurturing of industry partnerships. These partnerships have no specific formula other than the common theme of mutual benefit of the partner organisations and their people.

The Institute has a long history of working with industry. Training packages are developed and maintained in consultation with industry through national Industry Advisory Bodies to meet the training needs of specific industries.

The liaison between the enterprise and the TAFE institute has been formulated through the Hospitality and Tourism Studies department.

Training

Prior to the company's liaison with TAFE early in 2001, training at the worksite was performed by section managers on an ad hoc basis, where and when needed.

The TAFE institute became involved with the training of twenty four staff members to Certificate 2 standard in hospitality modules, a course that was completed the same year. These trainees went on to undertake Certificate 3 in Hospitality Operations in 2002.

At the beginning of 2003, a new staff intake at the company made up the cohort of twenty one trainees to commence Certificate 2, a move that was endorsed and heavily promoted to staff by the company's managing director.

From the point of view of TAFE operations, the company has chosen to adopt a 'traineeship plus' scheme which enrolls trainees on a roll in basis. The program is largely self-paced, with trainees expected to attend periodic seminars at the worksite. TAFE offers the program to the company with the government funding subsidies available to employers who choose to put all their staff through this type of accredited training.

The trainees themselves are signed up by TAFE to three year contracts to complete certificate three, but informal individual goals and periodic deadlines are introduced into the course to make the self-paced learning less challenging.

Perspectives

The TAFE manager

The TAFE manager involved in this case study was instrumental in setting up the liaison with the company at the beginning of 2001 as part of the larger move by TAFE into the area of worksite traineeships:

when this whole traineeship thing come on board it was like a big, it was a very rapid growth and everybody jumped on the wagon (p. 156)

She notes that the general employer acceptance of the scheme was driven by the availability of training subsidies at the time: 'once employer incentives became reasonable to take on trainees, then the potential for huge growth was there' (p. 149), but observes that sometimes staff are not as willing to take up the offers of training:

quite often with the traineeship, what you find is that employers are quite in favour with the incentives being attached to it, so, but the individuals, the employees are not always keen to go ahead, especially the ones that have been working in the venue for fifteen years (p.152).

She realises, however, the importance of adapting training methodology to suit the recipient:

in workplace training it's important to be extremely flexible into how it's interpreted ...because the clients needs are ultimately better met that way. I think the flexibility in that is critical to success, the success of the programme (p. 151)

She is aware, also, of the need for TAFE trainers to build effective lines of communication within the company:

there's a whole range of people that are involved in the organisation that will be at different levels, and so [the trainer's] ability to relate to those individuals at an appropriate level and in an appropriate manner is I think quite critical (p. 151)

and is appreciative of the work that the trainer is doing to this end within the company:

a number of the venues have reported to me, when I've gone around with them, that he's really made a difference to the way people view their work and so I suppose from it affecting individuals within the organisation that obviously has an impact on the overall culture and climate (p. 152)

It is this change in the culture of the worksite that the TAFE Manager sees as being changed by the introduction of an accredited training scheme: 'there's a huge majority of people that even if they're reluctant starters they end up being very positive about the programme' (p.153), although she understands the covert and overt compulsions on staff to participate in the training:

the employees are not always exactly knocking on the door wanting to go onto the programme but the employer will apply some pressure for that to occur (p. 153)

and:

it helps if employers 'incentive-ise' their employees to go through the programme as they're being 'incentive-ised' to put them through, if they could pass some of that onto the employees then obviously that helps buy their commitment (p. 155)

An area about which she has some concerns is the problem of managing a staff that is spread through an ever-widening network of enterprise worksites. She regards the difficulty of overseeing the TAFE trainers who work offsite as being potentially problematic:

[TAFE] being an educational structure, we operate like a business but it's still an educational structure so they all report to me. It's not possible to necessarily to have a great deal [of oversight] but, should I be asking them to report back more to me, you know, it's a control issue I suppose and I guess my concern there lies not in that I distrust these trainers because I have every faith in what they do whenever I've gone out with them to their clients their clients have been absolutely glowing about their work, it's not that, but it's more if there were some sort of an accident somewhere, I wouldn't even know in any one day where they were or what they were doing (p.156)

The TAFE trainer

The TAFE trainer has been associated with the enterprise in question since accredited training was introduced there in 2001. He notes that there were early organisational difficulties:

We made it up as we went, because there was nothing there for people to go out to a venue and do these packages, even though the government was offering incentives but TAFE Australia had very little packages and also the institutes didn't have that much in regards to doing things off site and flexible delivery in the year 2000 was still a new thing, now it's a different ball game (p. 159)

He is aware that every training site has its own way of working, and that it is important to be flexible to meet the specific training needs of each worksite: 'we change things and every venue has a different approach' (p.158), because 'it's so volatile and the people that work in here are under extreme pressure and you really do have to perform otherwise I mean you'd be out in two days flat' (p.159).

The pressure to perform is due, for the most part, to the management style: 'the management here is very hard lined, they're your old fashioned type of managers but the people here they really say it as it is and they're pretty blunt and ruthless' (p.160).

The training results are communicated to senior management on a regular basis: 'I only deal with [the General Manager] on three monthly reports, I give him findings and recommendations from how my training is operating' (p.160).

His day-to-day training, however, impinges far more on section and middle managers who are directly responsible for their staff. The trainer regards this nexus, and the active support of management at this level, as vital for the training to be effective: 'we see that is a very important that what is done in the classroom needs to be enforced by them in the workplace' (p.165), although he feels that he has to modify his approach to management in each worksite: 'it's very different in every venue because each manager has his or her own way for the way they see it happening in their business' (p. 162).

The trainer feels that it is important to retain this flexibility of approach because of the changing needs of the industry itself: 'it has changed over the last three years because their requirements have changed. So what we try do is fit our syllabus and our criteria's to the way they operate their business, and obviously business has changed' (p.158), observing that: 'you really don't know where you are every time you walk in because two weeks in here is a long time' (p.164).

The success of the worksite training so far has led to articulation by some staff onto a further level of relevant vocational education: 'what we're toying with, is a Monday night group of workplace trainees to get a group together to start moving on from these cert three into cert four and then moving onto a associate diploma' (p.161), but there are still problems with the training of a workforce that is predominantly employed on a casual basis:

sixty percent of the staff that are employed in hospitality are doing it because they're going to do another degree, or they're doing it because they're doing something else (p. 166).

This is because the government has changed the rules that apply to subsidised funding for traineeships:

we've had a huge growth the last three years but there's been new rulings put in, in July, so no longer can casuals sign up in traineeships, so you only put permanent staff part time and full time. What the government needs to understand is that our industry is full of casual staff (p. 166).

The result of this, he notes, is that: 'we'll be moving away from employees who we know are the ones that need it, but there's no funding for them' (p.166). The trainer regards this move as being counterproductive for the industry because worksite training is effective, in his opinion, in retaining staff within the industry: 'I've had employees in the last three years who did hospitality because they were studying to be nurses, studying to be other things and then left that and stayed in hospitality because they enjoyed it' (p.166).

The Company manager

The Company manager's view of the vocational training is, necessarily, very much that of an efficient and effective management: 'we just have to sit down with the staff and say you either learn and you learn it how we want it or if you're not happy with it then the doors always open' (p.178), and is quite open about his motivation of trainees to participate in training: 'the staff come because I've actually told them to come' (p.178).

He is concerned with a standardisation of all worksite operations, and sees the training as an ideal way of achieving this: 'it's one unique standard, everyone is learning them, we're enforcing them' (p.173).

To this end, he is appreciative of the methodology and approach used by the TAFE trainer because: 'He teaches the right way of doing things but we actually emphasise our procedures that we've got here' (p.173), and regards the training as being equally as valuable to the company as to the trainees 'because they actually will work together as more of a team' (p.174).

He also approves of the up-to-date content knowledge that the TAFE trainer brings to his teaching sessions: 'He actually is fully aware of what is going on in the hotel industry, in the hospitality industry' (p.174), and notes the enthusiasm that this engenders in the trainees' attitude to learning: 'they enjoy coming to his classes because they know what they have to learn' (p.174).

It is the immediate working relevance of the training to the learners that the company manager regards as important:

they found out learning that way it's becoming a lot easier for them to work in this industry and it's also with the new health regulations being the biggest one, they're broadening their minds to say, I understand why we're doing it this way and they enforce it without themselves realising it and it's easy because they're working with it (p.176)

as well as the fact that many of the newly learned skills are transferable: 'I say to them, the more you learn through us the better you become and the more you can benefit in other workplaces, you can use those as you get older' (p. 174).

He also notes the beneficial effect of the training on management: 'Management, well life for them has become a lot more easier' (p.176), and would like to conduct regular meetings between the TAFE trainer and section managers:

With the managers he actually would like to sit down together to show them exactly what's been taught, but time and situation at the moment is just stopping us actually coming

together to say right this is what's being taught, this is what we'd like to be enforced.
(p.175)

Issues

During conversations with stakeholders from the company, the VET practitioner and TAFE management, one major issue became apparent.

Organisation

The introduction of New Apprenticeship Centres into the bureaucratic relationship between employers, trainees and training providers is what the TAFE manager has called 'The diamond of trouble' (p.154). She explains that:

one of the big problems is this seemingly difficult communication relationship between the employer the trainee and TAFE and the New Apprenticeship Centre, and that sort of communication, if it could be smoothed out somehow it would make things a lot easier, because that's where the problems come, that's what causes the hiccups. It is the bureaucracy with the new apprenticeship centres ... the TAFEs could just do all that side of it as well, it would be a lot easier (p. 154)

and suggests 'abolishing the NACs and just leaving it to the TAFEs' (p.154).

The TAFE trainer agrees, noting that:

we have a three way thing, and that is you have the employer, you have the NAC, new apprenticeship centre, and you have the RTO, until the government wakes up to themselves and realises that you don't need three, you need two (p. 169)

Another organisational aspect that has proved problematical is the question of teaching resources: 'there's a lot of money that's spent on centres producing resources for the national training packages and but it's marketed dreadfully to teachers' (p.155), and in terms of the ownership of those resources,

you have issues of intellectual property and you still have some teachers that believe even though they've worked here [at TAFE] for fifteen years that what they've developed five years ago for the programme is theirs and they don't want to share it (p. 155)

One other organisational issue is that of the operating costs implicit in maintaining the efficiency of the TAFE trainer. From the TAFE manager's point of view, the cost benefit of some worksite training is debatable:

there's travel costs, mobile phones, and admin costs and customer liaison costs, then the equation doesn't look so pretty necessarily, so I think the cost side of the equation is one that becomes questionable sometimes, in some venues (p. 156)

To cut some of these operating costs and to mitigate some of the absentee problems inherent in the organisation of worksite training, she also suggests that: 'we might have to begin to reduce the customers expectation of the visitation and they might have to start putting in a bit more of organising their employees to be free at certain times' (p.156).

Case study E

The enterprise

The enterprise in this case study is a cinema group that employs over thirteen hundred staff across seventeen sites in Melbourne. The site under consideration is the head office of the group

and is situated in a large new inner suburban shopping and entertainment complex. Staff based at this location comprise head office personnel including the Training and Development Section, departmental managers and workers for the eleven cinemas at the site, ninety per cent of whom are tertiary students and are employed on a casual basis.

The TAFE Institute

The TAFE institute involved with this study is a multi-discipline organisation, based in the north-west of Melbourne. With more than 24,000 students across six main campuses, the institute provides industry-designed, nationally accredited vocational training for a broad range of occupations.

The institute is one of Victoria's largest providers of trainee and apprenticeship training and VET in Schools education, and is a major training provider for the automotive, aerospace and polymer industries. It was named Training Provider of the Year in the 2001 Victorian Training Awards, and a Finalist in the 2001 Australian Business Excellence Awards,

Training

Prior to the liaison between the company and TAFE, the only in-house training at the site under study was undertaken informally and incidentally by section managers and an ad hoc buddy system. The employment of a new Human Resources Director early in 2002 led to the introduction of the concept of accredited training for cinema staff because of the funding available in this area. To this end, the National Training Manager was asked to investigate the whole area and its relevance for company staff.

This led to an approach to a learning broker and a subsequent selection process to find a suitable training provider. The TAFE institute that was finally chosen showed an awareness of the needs of a commercial operation, along with a flexible attitude to conventional training methodology.

After discussions between the two stakeholders, it was decided to form an in-house training section, termed the 'Talent Academy', using a mixture of TAFE and company trainers, and providing a structured pathway for learners to progress through a series of accredited modules and certificates. Emphasis was placed, when constructing the curriculum, on transferable skills through the adoption of modules that were generic in nature rather than being industry or site-specific.

Initially intended to cater for approximately two hundred staff, the acceptance of the training promoted to staff has expanded exponentially to the point where, midway through 2003, nine hundred and thirty staff were participating voluntarily in the courses offered by the 'Talent Academy'.

The training is currently carried out by both company and TAFE trainers who liaise with the Training Manager and the TAFE manager at four hour monthly meetings at which the previous month's achievements are reviewed, and the following month's work is planned. Although the content of the modules is prescribed, the nature of the training methodology is constantly being adapted to the needs of the learners. Much stress is placed on a flexible, activity-based approach to teaching

Actual training sessions are of two types. Much of the curriculum is taught in small groups of from five to twelve learners for two hours at a time, while larger workshops for up to forty learners are also held on a regular basis. Individual coaching sessions are held with learners that may need assistance with specific topics within a module.

Perspectives

The Company National Training and Development Manager

The National Training and Development Manager for the enterprise under consideration is the initiator and driving force behind the 'Talent Academy' that provides accredited training to company staff. Her background is in the cinema industry and she is aware of the nature of the corporate culture within which she operates:

I think, (the company) is an incredibly reactive company and everybody who works in it is very used to the rules changing at the last second and they're very used to being flexible, we're forced to be flexible, one of our values is restless and brave, and we actually pride ourselves on you know, changing things and pushing the boundaries and doing things differently and stepping in where angels fear to tread (p. 183)

Having been tasked to investigate the possibilities of staff training by an external provider:

we ended up with TAFE because they were far and away the best applicant. They seemed to really understand where I was coming from, the vision that I had. And they particular understood our operation needs and that we needed training that wouldn't interrupt our business and wouldn't disadvantage our customers or staff in any way (p. 183)

Subsequent meetings with TAFE personnel began to turn the initial concept into practical terms:

after talking with the TAFE, we started getting really excited about the idea and you know, talking about our vision and talking about how we'd all make it work and that's when it really became about the learning more so than, you know, how can we get these dollars in the door to pay for that learning. (p. 183)

She found, however, that despite her 'vision', and the selection of a training provider, that 'staff weren't particularly receptive to the new way of doing things initially. They looked at it like, oh, what I've got to just work harder now and not get paid more for it' (p.183).

To offset this initial lack of enthusiasm on the part of staff, she insisted that both company and TAFE trainers in the 'Talent Academy' adopt teaching methods that reflect the flexible and 'restless' nature of the worksite and the industry as a whole because:

ninety percent of our staff are casual-and along with casual hours comes a casual attitude and this is probably one of our biggest hurdles, how do you get so many staff to be excited and motivated and interested in their job, when often they're working one shift a week or they only work school holidays and you might not have them for two months at a time and it's very, very difficult to communicate to that broader base and to get them excited and engaged (p. 183)

The 'Talent Academy' concept boomed despite apparent attitudinal problems, to the point at which the numbers staff applying for training far outgrew the intended two hundred:

I just knew what we needed to get these kids to be able to do but I didn't particularly know how we were going to do that, so within three months of taking on the role here we are with this vision of the Talent Academy within a year we have more than a vision we have an actuality and you know that's been absolutely enormous (p. 190)

Organisational difficulties expanded with the boom in numbers:

We got massive quickly and didn't have the infrastructure in place to support that, in terms of policies and procedures. That's been put in place over the past six months and that's been an operational nightmare for them [TAFE] because it's been an absolute nightmare for me so I can only assume they feel the same (p. 189)

She is well aware of the difference in corporate cultures between the company and TAFE:

I imagine that the TAFE people sometimes feel their hair standing on end about the way that we do things around here. And on the flip side of that, I can get frustrated with the

bureaucracy of the TAFE and I get you know, really, really frustrated at the amount of paperwork that needs to be generated, this constant paper trail of signatures and double and triple checking things, and you know, we just don't operate like that in this business. (p. 189)

but is aware of the intangible returns implicit in the relationship: 'there's been some terrific benefits of working with the TAFE, I suppose initially the fact that they were able to grasp what I wanted so quickly' (p.184).

The fact that the 'Talent Academy' has grown so quickly both in scope and in numbers is bringing about the sort of cultural change that she looked for when initiating the concept:

Nearly every staff member is involved. Only about half the staff in the Academy are actually attracting funding, the other half we're paying for them to go through with the access money. And it needed to be that way, we didn't want a two class system that was the first concern and secondly we can't achieve a culture change if we don't have big numbers in this thing (p.185).

The TAFE manager

The TAFE manager has been involved with the organisation of accredited training at the company from its inception. Noting that at the enterprise 'there's lots of commitment to training' (p.220), she became the main link between TAFE and the company when setting up what later became the 'Talent Academy'.

It quickly became apparent that existing TAFE curricula and VET modules would have to be adapted to suit the specific needs of the client:

I did a lot of the research of what already existed and sent it to her [the Training Manager] and she would write them and then once the draft version was done we would send it to the [company trainers] so they'd have a look and give us the (company) expertise sort of information that we incorporate (p. 221)

She arranged to have some of the curriculum content specially formulated: 'I actually hired a curriculum development person to write a lot of the materials' (p.221), justifying this by observing that 'it's customised so that it suits the client, and also not just the client but the actual people that you're training because it needs to be relevant' (p.221).

The practical realities of providing training in new areas to an unexpectedly large number of client learners has necessitated a flexibility of approach: 'we're trialling as we go and then we'll review what we've done' (p.222), but is quite prepared to admit to and to cope with the problems that this flexibility can present:

we're really in the middle of implementing it and getting it off the ground so there's a lot of operational things going but you need someone to sit there and think of strategic future stuff and that's happened but it's happened slowly because we've just been under a whole lot of stress (p.228).

She is, however, concerned that her function as a training provider is being hindered by wider policy issues that are forced on TAFE administration: 'government policies are not really in place to support TAFE to deliver training in an enterprise' (p.225).

She also notes that it is not just TAFE that is affected by the apparent unpredictability of changes in government policy:

I think that (the company) and other enterprises are very frustrated with the changes in government, they change, you have a system and you know this is the way it is and within a month or three it could totally change which therefore means all must change and you know, it's very difficult. (p. 225)

The company trainer

The company trainer was a member of the enterprise's casual staff while a tertiary student. On finishing her degree in human resources management, she was recruited as part of the full-time company training team associated with the 'Talent Academy'. She is directly responsible to the National Training and Development Manager. As one of four internal trainers, she works alongside TAFE personnel across seventeen sites throughout the Melbourne area and appreciates the benefits of TAFE input: 'I've been surprised how well things have run so far. I think it's running a lot smoother with having both internal and external trainers' (p. 198), noting that the joint training includes curriculum development and planning as well as actual teaching:

they paired up a TAFE member and a company staff member and gave us a topic and said you, this is what you have to say, we want you guys to do all the development work for the actual future topics that we're doing so I think they really do value having different ideas, different input (p. 194)

Much of the success of the 'Talent Academy' she attributes to the vision of her line manager:

she came in and she was really, really enthusiastic and energised and really, really pushed for a lot more of the training, and it will take time but I've started to notice the differences and just little things that people are saying to me about how enthusiastic they are and, some of the new staff come and say "Oh, when am I having my next training session?" so they are getting enthusiastic about it, so it's all happening. (p. 194)

She has noted some ambivalence in the attitude of management to the training: 'you've got a few people, not a lot, of management kind of people here, it's sort of old school, they'll do it [training] because they have to, but they're still not convinced about the merit of it just yet' (p.192), but is heartened by the fact that a growing number of lower and middle level managers are taking up the training option in management topics in order to further their own careers within the company: 'not only are they encouraging the staff to do the learning but they want to do the learning themselves' (p.192), while senior managers are apparently more cautious about the innovations:

the senior managers are just giving it a go to see how it works and there's more and more coming on side but now they're seeing how enthusiastic the middle managers and the line managers are about the Talent Academy and its diploma (p. 193)

To offset this attitude of 'just giving it a go to see how it works' on the part of company senior management, the trainer has noted the success of her trainer colleagues, both internal and external, in gaining the confidence of their participant learners. This has been achieved, she observes, through their enthusiasm and effective communication:

all the [trainers] have made a really big effort to get to know the participants sort of one on one and so that they are more accepting when you come up and talk to them, it's not just like, you're here to do this ... and that's all you care about. It really is about forging relationships and ninety nine percent of the participants are forging those relationships with their trainers (p. 196)

The VET practitioner

The VET practitioner in this case study is one of the sessional trainers specifically employed by TAFE to work with company training staff in the operations of the 'Talent Academy'. She is responsible to the National Training Manager for whom, like the rest of the staff, she has a very high regard: 'her support has been magnificent' (p.211).

As well as teaching VET modules to cinema staff, her role 'is to provide ongoing day to day administration type tasks that pull together this huge project' (p.209). She is comfortable in this

role, commenting that the informality of the training she gives has broken down any differences perceived by the learners between internal and external trainers:

I just find that when staff are together for a training session it tends to be a very laid back, they feel laid back, I can sense that they're feeling comfortable with this whole, the whole idea and it just creates a nice atmosphere in the workplace, and as a trainer I feel like I'm actually part of the site, that I'm not external. (p. 217)

The VET practitioner regards the 'Talent Academy' project as being very successful because:

I have seen a change in staff, more so the staff that I work directly with, that I train and some of those changes are actually includes their confidence levels, their ability to work directly with people. And I guess the work morale (p. 217)

quantifying this by explaining that: 'There are good results coming out of this and those results are quite evident in the training, that that happens, as well as the trainer's comments and feedback, participant's feedback too' (p.209).

She attributes part of the success of the 'Talent Academy' to the learning resources available to her as a trainer: 'I would say certainly the learning material is fantastic' (p.216), and to the staff relationships in the worksite: 'there's a relaxed atmosphere, and managers tend to work well with the employees' (p.211).

There, however, some drawbacks inherent in such an ambitious project: 'there are the real negative attitudes of some staff who perhaps not as excited as undertaking the training as what other staff may be' (p.216), and that some of the administrative tasks implicit in her role do not make her job any easier: 'if there was less paperwork the [Talent Academy] would be great but it's the nature of it, it's everywhere, it's not just us' (p.217).

She also comments that, despite the recent innovations in training organisation, remnants of the previously accepted 'buddy system' are still in use and represent the informal learning carried out in each worksite:

it depends on individual sites and how extremely big they are, but generally if a new staff member comes onboard there is a staff member that's allocated to them for that shift for example to support them, or buddy up with them (p. 216)

The learners

The three learners interviewed at the enterprise are all tertiary students and are casual shiftwork employees on the cinema staff performing various front-of-house and retail functions. They are unanimous in their approval of the 'Talent Academy' project, and the opportunities that its training offers them. They are particularly appreciative of the transferable nature of much of their learning:

the things that we're learning in Talent Academy are things that are applicable to everyday work, so they can come and assess us and ask us questions about things that we really do need to know anyway, so I guess if they spot weaknesses or something that's going to actually help (the company) as well because there areas, there are lots of things that I've learnt (p 201).

One of the learners compares the new training system to previous methods:

I guess there's a lot more on the job training. When I first started here about four years ago, during that time it was more of a buddy system so you'd actually be on shift with someone experienced and just learning from them. (p. 200)

and goes on to endorse the new training methods:

I think it's a fantastic opportunity for people because there's obviously a lot of jobs in different industries that don't provide any training past what's actually required for a specific task and so for a company I think to just offer it to you is great and especially when it is transferable across industries and different jobs. (p. 205)

One learner displayed some confusion about the nature of staff enrolment in the 'Talent Academy':

when I started it didn't really seem like there was an option, it seemed like that was just it, you just did it, because I've just been rostered into it, they didn't push, it just appeared on the roster that I was going to a training thing (p. 204)

while another commented that: 'I was quite happy to sign up, didn't feel like I was pushed into it' (p.205).

All the learners approved the use of external TAFE trainers because of the 'outside' view that they bring to company training: 'you do need someone who is sort of more aware of what's happening in the sort of real world just to teach you the stuff that you need to know beyond (the company)' (p.208), observing that:

one of the things that helps them[TAFE trainers] definitely is being onsite so that they have that contact with the people that they're actually teaching or providing training for and they can see what we, the modules that we go through they can see how that relates to the specific tasks that we have to do (p. 203)

Both internal and external trainers, however, were praised on their approach to their teaching:

I don't think I've ever asked our particular trainer a question that she hadn't been able to answer and even if she hasn't been able to answer she's come back to me with an answer a day later or something (p. 206)

Issues

During conversations with stakeholders from the company, the VET practitioner, TAFE management and the learners, a number of issues became apparent. These include:

Organisation

Personnel

Attitudes towards training

Communication

Organisation

The organisational aspects of introducing TAFE delivery of accredited modules into this workplace environment have not been without problems. The comparatively short lead time proposed by the company left TAFE few options but to arrange a framework, formulate the delivery of the first few modules, and then constantly liaise with the company about future content and methodology.

In order to customise the content so that, where necessary, each VET module would be industry specific, the TAFE manager contracted a curriculum writer to develop suitable material for the then embryonic 'Talent Academy'. This material was workshopped by the trainers, and then trialled and, where necessary, modified for use at the worksite.

This worksite specific adaptation of content led to an examination of relevant methodology. Joint meetings between TAFE managers and trainers and the company trainers evolved a

direction for the teaching sessions that necessitated an informal atmosphere and an emphasis on interaction.

All stakeholders associated with the concept, development and practice of the 'Talent Academy' appear very positive about the way in which the organisation of the training at the enterprise has taken place. Each appreciates the values and professionalism that the others have brought to the training:

when it comes to practical things and this is just what I've noticed, the staff are more likely to ask the company trainers about worksite specific things, because now they know that's what we've got the experience in, but in general training things, the TAFE trainers are very effective in getting the message across (p. 195)

The training manager, for her part, was complimentary about the way in which TAFE has carried out its side of the organisation: 'I think that if we'd gone with a private training organisation we would have hit the wall long ago and there is no way we would have had nine hundred participants, no way' (p.185).

Personnel

The nature and drive of the personnel involved with the TAFE/company joint training enterprise has been vital to its success. Much of this is due to the energy that the National Training Manager has directed into seeing the project through to its current state: 'she's very dedicated and very, very committed to this project' (p.211).

Her enthusiasm led not just to the inception of the 'Talent Academy', but also to the rapid growth in learner numbers that marked the first few months of the scheme:

I remember saying I don't want anymore than two hundred and fifty, we can't handle anymore than that and I was putting sort of restrictions on it at the start because it was such unknown territory and then the thing just got bigger and bigger, the word got out, staff were approaching us about hey, I'm not eligible but I want to be in it (p. 185).

The training manager's vision of the training scheme had a corporate motive, in that she expected the results of the training to effect a change in the way that staff viewed and performed their various functions:

we need to have it this large to begin with to achieve the culture change that we want but in an ideal world it would probably be better to have that nice two hundred and fifty or three hundred staff in it so that we could really devote our time and attention to the key people (p. 190)

The bringing of the 'Talent Academy' concept to reality also owes much to the TAFE manager who brought an innovatively entrepreneurial approach to a totally new situation. Without her personal skills, the commercial culture of the enterprise could not have been meshed so successfully with the essentially institutional nature of TAFE operations.

Attitudes to training

The change within the company from an informal 'buddy' system of training staff to an adoption of accredited national standards came about because of the government's financial incentives offered to employers: 'initially the idea of accredited training came up because financially we thought it would be a good idea for our company to be able to spend more on training and it wasn't money that we had in our training budget' (p.182).

But, despite the burgeoning success of the 'Talent Academy', the Training Manager is aware that such innovations are accepted slowly by a management that traditionally is only used to operations that are tied to profit: 'I don't particularly feel that training, not just training, HR as a

function, is truly understood by this organisation and, as such, is not embraced to its full potential' (p.183), although a change in management attitudes to the successful training offered by company and TAFE staff is gradually becoming apparent:

From managers I hear "It's great having trainers at site" we're doing about two hundred and eighty hours a week of face to face training. And that's an enormous amount of training when you consider six or eight months ago we had virtually no training going on at site. There was just a little bit that was in-house run by managers or site trainers, so you know that's a big step up in suddenly having very qualified and very competent people working side by side with staff while they're actually on shift. (p. 182)

The TAFE manager, on the other hand, is very focussed not only on the organisational aspect of the training, but also on the value to the enterprise of the quantifiable product of staff learning:

as I believe that if you train these people in the skills that are essential to, give you a retail qualification ... then you actually go on to have those skills to put into practice in a workplace which then at end result has committed staff and work production is actually happening at a high level (p. 221)

Communication

It is not unusual for communication between a training providers and their clients to be ineffective. In the case of the enterprise under consideration and the training package offered by TAFE, the success or otherwise of the scheme depended solely on the maintenance of operative communication between all the stakeholders. Regular and frequent meetings between management and worksite trainers are held to formulate policy, to refine module content for specific worksite purposes, and to discuss appropriate teaching methodologies. This close and frequent communication has made the essential differences between a commercial organisation and an educational institution clear to the TAFE manager: 'I think that we could both help and learn from each other, you know, TAFE being a little bit more business like maybe' (p.226).

Case study F

The enterprise

The company is a large wholesale paper distributor that is part of a multinational paper manufacturing conglomerate. The company conducts its operations in an outer Melbourne industrial suburb, and contracts some of its training in the warehousing and transport area to the TAFE institute.

The TAFE Institute

The TAFE Institute associated with the enterprise is one of Australia's premier multi-purpose institution that prides itself on its ability to deliver a broad range of vocational education and training services. It has four main campuses located in the inner suburbs of Melbourne.

With more than 33,000 student enrolments each year with an increasing number coming from overseas, the Institute claims to be a leading provider of tailored national and international quality training services for government and industry.

The TAFE Institute strives to be Australia's leading provider of vocational education and training, through its development of students and staff.

An essential ingredient in achievement of this goal is the development, formation and nurturing of industry partnerships. These partnerships have no specific formula other than the common theme of mutual benefit of the partner organisations and their people.

The Institute has a long history of working with industry. Training packages are developed and maintained in consultation with industry through national Industry Advisory Bodies to meet the training needs of specific industries.

The liaison between the enterprise and TAFE has been formulated through the TAFE institute's Transport Studies department.

Training

TAFE onsite training has been undertaken with the company for the past three years. As the company manager points out: 'We were looking at multi-skilling of people giving them some sort of formal training so we just started looking at some options ... and looked at a few organisations' (p.247).

The company's previous experience had been with management training provided by external trainers, but this had not proved as industry specific as expected.

we just find that a lot of the training that you send out to these external organisations, it's great that your supervisors get to mingle with other people from other industries and so forth, but I think it gets lost in generalisation, it doesn't get down to the specifics of what they need to do to perform their job better here (p.250)

TAFE was selected to provide specialised training because of its flexibility of approach, along with the fact that a trainer could be placed within the working environment to supply specific work skill training at the worksite when needed. The experiment has proved successful in that company management have become aware of the need for continuous worker training to maximise efficiency and, therefore, profits.

the attitude towards training has changed and is in the process of changing because they now know that if they want to do something down there they need to train their people to be more efficient at doing it. It's no good just bringing in a system and expecting the person to pick it up as they go, they've got to train the person to do the job (p.246)

The close working relationships that have been built up between the TAFE manager, the company manager and the TAFE trainer have enabled the partnership between the institute and the company to become a positive one, within which both parties are content with what they perceive as constructive and encouraging outcomes.

Perceptions

The TAFE manager

The TAFE manager who oversees the TAFE trainer at the company worksite was responsible for setting up the training partnership between TAFE and the company. Of prior training, he notes that: 'before [the trainer] started working down there, they had a fairly haphazard method of training and it just seemed to be that they'd pass the person a book and say read this, sign off here and it's done' (p.232).

However, close consultation with the company before the onset of TAFE training identified the need for a specific and personalised approach: 'we've adapted the content to be specific to that particular workplace [and] actually made it so it looks like it belongs to that company' (p.232).

The curriculum content itself was also changed where necessary:

In a couple of places we've increased the level of content because the company particularly wanted to address issues while we were there and we've actually lifted the level of what the people had to know to be deemed competent for that unit (p.233)

The TAFE manager has been made aware of the increased support of the company to the training provided: 'we're always welcome there and we get the cooperation of everybody' (p.232), despite the fact that 'there are some issues down there and we're aware of those when we're working down there but I think [the trainer]'s got a pretty good handle on that' (p.232).

He is also appreciative of the qualities of the trainer, whose personalised approach to the on site training has bridged the gap between the industrial and the TAFE attitudes to the training cooperation. The trainer, he maintains, 'could probably just about step into the warehouse manager's role' (p.231), giving credibility to his role in the workplace. He is also of the opinion that the trainer's ability to form relationships with the learners is of a high standard:

the organisation has a number of people there with severe literacy problems and after his first meeting with those guys they actually front up and want to be trained and want to be assessed, they don't step back they actually step forward because they know how he adapts it to suit them. (p.233)

The TAFE manager appreciates that there are problems in trying to fit time for workers' training into a busy schedule and to minimise downtime in the warehouse. The most pressing of these problems is discussed in 'Issues' below, but the difficulty of dealing with learner insecurity is an important matter for resolution by the company:

sometimes you have to actually let them go back to their job location to have a look to make sure it's running okay and then they come back and they're quite happy after that, so there's a bit of anxiety there from the student (p.235)

The TAFE trainer

The TAFE trainer has been involved in industry training with this particular worksite since its inception three years ago. Officially, he works sixteen hours at the site, full time for two days each week, as well as the extra time that he feels are needed for him to remain abreast of advances in industry technology.

He was instrumental in developing the specifically tailored program to fit the company's needs: 'we'd need to develop a training programme to suit just (the company) and then do that training and then go back and do a reassessment to make sure that trainings gone in' (p.237), and then 'the next step will be, once we've completed this programme with them, is to sit down and identify how we're going to continue this improvement all the time and not expect the staff to stop learning' (p.240).

Initially, he felt that 'the biggest thing I had to do was to convince the people what I was there for and explain to them why I was there' (p.237), but, since the program has developed into a successful training cooperation, the emphasis, as he notes, has changed:

I try not to interrupt their flow of work to any great extent, I try to fit into their flow of work and if I have a problem with trying to get people out of the workforce to do a particular unit and it is not something that will flow in with their activity at the present time, then I'll go and talk to the warehouse manager and say look, I've got this problem, I need this person to come out of there or is there something else I can do to fulfil my time because there's no good me standing there for eight hours a day doing one or two assessments (p.242)

The trainer is also aware of the constant need to modify the training program to reflect the changing needs of industrial technology:

it was all paperwork and we were able to set up our units of assessment and training around the [old] system, now the systems changed we've got to go back and reassess what we do and how we do it so it reflects their new system of computerisation (p.238)

The changing attitude of company management to worksite training is, the trainer feels, proving to be a positive element in the training equation:

the company has identified a requirement for their staff to be on a learning curve all the time ...and ... what we've been doing with this programme is starting to help them identify where their structure is and what they need to do as far as trainings concerned ... so it's a learning curve from both sides, both from the workers themselves and the employer. (p.239)

He has also found it beneficial to work within the existing informal networking structure of the workgroups at the site: 'I've now pinpointed a couple of people there that I can go and say something to and they will go and talk to the people rather than me because they'll listen to them probably more than what they will me' (p.243).

This is particularly important when dealing with reluctant trainees:

you're going to have one or two who are going to have a difference in attitude about different things, and I found that hard to accept sometimes, so I've got to learn why they think they way they do and try to understand it (p.241)

In essence, the TAFE trainer feels that his responsibility lies in:

trying to identify what skills they've got and does that skill level and knowledge level that they've got meets company's expectations and once we've explained that to them and it wasn't going to be a fail or pass it was just an identification of skills level and then we could then put into practice to then bring it up to the company's expectations (p.241)

The company manager

The company manager expresses the importance of the enterprise's involvement in training in terms of maximising the efficiency, and therefore, the profits of the company: 'training that helps them [the workers] perform their job more productively, efficiently and safely' (p.250).

Necessarily, this is not a short-term view: 'in the long term they see that it's improving peoples' performance' (p.251), and the formalising of what was, previously, informal training has had an immediate impact on worker attitudes to learning:

for too long these people have had these skills, you know, communication ... and all the other facets of the business that they deal in ... that they didn't have any recognised paper for it or certificate, it's good finding that they'll get that at the end of the training so, at first the attitude wasn't that flash but now they're seeing that it's relevant to their job (p.250)

and

to see a couple of them aspire and achieve, it's created a different feeling out on the floor, like, hey we're just not down there, we can get up there, and I think this training shows some sort of commitment to 'hey we'd like to help you'. (p.254)

He recognises, however, that the very nature of competency based training can make it appear threatening to some learners: 'we don't sort of talk about it as pass or fail just ... that needs to be done so it doesn't squash their confidence' (p.249).

He is appreciative of the personal and professional qualities that the TAFE trainer brings to the training: '[the trainer] has become like a part of our company and a person that people know and also trust and when he does his training people are not scared to put up their hand and say okay I don't know' (p.251), but is aware of some of the issues that can make the realities of worksite

training frustrating for all parties involved: 'one of the biggest things that affect us is absenteeism, when you've got four or five off the floor you can't send people off for training, just like that' (p.253).

Issues

The major issue that arises from this case study is the immediate effect that crises or emergencies in the day-to-day company workload mean that it is often difficult to schedule training at times to suit everyone concerned. Frequently scheduled training sessions are interrupted when workers need to be called back into the production line to fill gaps caused by absenteeism or a sudden rush of incoming orders.

The TAFE manager recognises that this is often due to the company policy of minimum staffing 'because they work like most organisations these days, with probably one person less than they really need' (p.234), and is aware of the frustration that this can bring to the TAFE trainer: 'that's often the hindrance - he's got to stop what he's doing and wait for them to go and do something else and come back' (p.234).

The TAFE trainer agrees that frequent breaks in training can adversely affect its quality: 'It's not just a matter of just having them pop in and pop out whenever they've finished their job, I mean, it's a continual learning process' (p.241).

Company management is also aware of these frustrations, and is taking steps to minimise the unavoidable breaks in training time: 'they're now looking at hiring casuals to fill those blocks so they can release the people, so the company is cooperating as much as they can' (p.234).

This would also obviate the problem of workers being worried, during training sessions, about the effect that their absence is having on the production line. He feels that it is essential 'to have the people a bit more removed from their actual day to day jobs so they're not worried about the job while they're trying to do the learning' (p.235).

Appendix D: Tables of interview data

Tables 1 and 2 are presented in the final report. This appendix contains tables 3 to 10.

Table 3: To what extent does [the TAFE practitioner] mix with (a) managers and (b) workers in the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
With managers:							
TAFE practitioner	3	3	2	1	1	3	2.17
Company staff	3	1	2	5	2	3	2.67
With workers:							
TAFE practitioner	3	3	3	1	1	5	2.67
Company staff	3	1	2	5	2	3	2.67

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerably; 3=to some extent; 2=slightly; 1=very little to not at all

Table 4: How much do you think [the TAFE practitioner] knows about the internal workings of the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
Organisation of work:							
TAFE practitioner	3	3	2.5	5	3	3.5	3.33
TAFE manager	5	-	5	5	2	4	4.20
Company staff	4	3	5	3	4	4	3.83
Company learners	3	2	-	4	5	-	3.50
Types of work:							
TAFE practitioner	3	3	2.5	5	4	4	3.58
TAFE manager	5	-	5	4	3	5	4.40
Company staff	4	3	5	5	5	4	4.33
Company learners	4	3	-	4	5	-	4.00
Management structures:							
TAFE practitioner	4	3	2.5	4	3	3	3.25
TAFE manager	4	-	5	5	1	4	3.80
Company staff	3	3	3	3	3	3	3.00
Company learners	3	3	-	4	3	-	3.25
Relationships between workers & management:							
TAFE practitioner	4	3	4.5	4	2	4	3.58
TAFE manager	5	-	-	4	2	3.5	3.63
Company staff	4	5	4	4	3	5	4.17
Company learners	5	3	-	5	3	-	4.00

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerable; 3=to some extent; 2=slight; 1=very little to none

Table 5: How much do you think [the TAFE practitioner's] knowledge of these internal workings influences his/her role in the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
TAFE practitioner	4	4	3	5	1	4	3.50
TAFE manager	5	-	3	5	1	4	3.60
Company staff	4	4	3	2	2	3	3.00
Company learners	4	1	-	3	2	-	2.50

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerably; 3=to some extent; 2=slightly; 1=very little to not at all

Table 6: How valued do you think learning is in the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
TAFE practitioner	3	4	3	3	4	3	3.33
TAFE manager	na	na	na	na	na	na	-
Company staff	3	4	3	4	5	4	3.83
Company learners	2	3	-	4	4	-	3.25

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerably; 3=to some extent; 2=slightly; 1=very little to not at all

Table 7: In this company, how much influence do you think [the TAFE practitioner] has on ...?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
What the learners learn:							
TAFE practitioner	5	5	4	5	3	5	4.50
TAFE manager	4	-	4	3	1	4	3.20
Company staff	1	4	5	3	2	4	3.17
Company learners	1	1	-	3	3	-	2.00
The way learning is organised:							
TAFE practitioner	5	5	4	5	3	3	4.17
TAFE manager	4	-	4	5	3	4	4.00
Company staff	2	3	4	4	3	3	3.17
Company learners	3	4	-	4	4	-	3.75
The pace of their learning:							
TAFE practitioner	5	5	4	5	1	3	3.83
TAFE manager	2	-	4	4	2	3	3.00
Company staff	2	5	3	4	3	3	3.33
Company learners	3	3	-	4	4	-	3.50

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerable; 3=some; 2=slight; 1=very little to none

Table 8: What impact do you think you have on the informal learning that takes place in the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
TAFE practitioner	3	1	4	5	2.5	1	2.75

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerable; 3=some; 2=slight; 1=very little to none

Table 9: How much influence do you think [the TAFE practitioner] has on the internal workings of the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
Organisation of work:							
TAFE practitioner	1	1	2	3	1	1	1.50
TAFE manager	2	-	3	2.5	1	3	2.30
Types of work:							
TAFE practitioner	1	1	2	3	1	1	1.50
TAFE manager	2	-	3	4	1	3	2.60
Management structures:							
TAFE practitioner	1	1	2	1	1	1	1.17
TAFE manager	2	-	3	4	1	3	2.60
Relationships between workers & management:							
TAFE practitioner	1	1	2	3	1	1	1.50
TAFE manager	2	-	3	3	1	3	2.40

Legend: 5=a lot; 4= considerable; 3=some; 2=slight; 1=very little to none

Table 10: How effective do you think [the TAFE practitioner] is in carrying out the following aspects of his/her role within the company?

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
Delivering training:							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	4	5	5	4	4.50
TAFE manager	3.5	-	5	5	4	5	4.5
Company staff	5	5	5	5	4	4	4.67
Company learners	4	5	-	5	4	-	4.5
Facilitating learning:							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	4	5	5	4	4.50
TAFE manager	3.5	-	5	5	4	5	4.5
Company staff	5	5	5	5	4	4	4.67
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25
Assessing learning:							
TAFE practitioner	5	5	5	4	5	4.5	4.75
TAFE manager	4.5	-	5	5	4	5	4.70
Company staff	5	5	5	5	4	4.5	4.75
Company learners	4	4	-	5	4	-	4.25
Coaching learners:							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	4	5	5	3.5	4.42
TAFE manager	4.5	-	3	5	4	5	4.30
Company staff	5	5	5	5	4	4.5	4.75
Company learners	3	5	-	5	5	-	4.50

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
Establishing and maintaining good relationships with the people learning							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	5	3	5	4.5	4.42
Company learners	3	5	-	5	3.5	-	4.13
Giving feedback and encouragement to learners							
TAFE practitioner	3.5	5	4	5	5	4.5	4.50
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25
Establishing expectations about requirements for assessment							
TAFE practitioner	4.5	4	4	5	5	3.5	4.33
Company learners	4	4	-	5	4	-	4.25
Listening to the concerns and difficulties encountered by learners in the workplace							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	5	5	5	4	4.67
Company learners	4	5	-	5	3	-	4.25
Encouraging learners to take on more complex and difficult work tasks over time							
TAFE practitioner	4.5	5	5	3	5	3	4.25
Company learners	3	5	-	4	3	-	3.75
Encouraging learners to practise their skills							
TAFE practitioner	4.5	5	5	5	5	3.5	4.67
Company learners	3	5	-	4	3	-	3.75
Helping learners to solve problems							
TAFE practitioner	4	4	5	5	5	3.5	4.42
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25
Correcting the mistakes made by learners							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	3	3	5	4	4.00
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25

Case studies	A	B	C	D	E	F	Mean
Talking to learners about what they would like to learn							
TAFE practitioner	3	5	-	5	5	4	4.40
Company learners	3	2	-	3	3	-	2.75
Explaining to learners why things are the way they are as well as how things work or are done							
TAFE practitioner	4	4	2	5	5	3	3.83
Company learners	2	3	-	3	2	-	2.50
Ensuring assessment takes place when the learner feels ready							
TAFE practitioner	4	4	5	5	5	5	4.67
Company learners	4	5	-	4	3	-	4.00
Providing opportunities for learners to ask questions							
TAFE practitioner	5	5	5	3	5	4.5	4.58
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25
Providing opportunities for learners to share ideas and learning with other learners							
TAFE practitioner	4	5	5	5	5	3.5	4.58
Company learners	3	5	-	5	4	-	4.25

Legend: 5=very; 4= considerably; 3=to some extent; 2=slightly; 1=not really at all

Appendix E: Helps, hindrances and strategies

This appendix contains tables 11 to 13.

Table 11: What three things *help* the TAFE practitioners most in their role in the company?

	Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
TAFE practitioner	Knowing what the needs are Materials ready and lead time (though don't happen often)	T & D Coordinator's support Relationships with learners Strength of training culture Good working conditions Passionate about working there Training manager negotiating with own team leaders and area managers	Relationships with staff there Keeping pace with the industry – trends and law changes	General management support Honest relationships with junior managers	Learning materials Sites are supportive Support from company Training Manager	Own experiences e.g. in TAFE for 18 years) Understanding of people's role in the company Own patience with people
TAFE manager	Needed a mentor, someone strong on pedagogy Personal attributes: enthusiasm and passion Comprehensive paperwork Good sense of 'methodology'		Credibility Knowledge Ability to impart knowledge	Employer commitment at different levels Relationship with company staff Good resources		Attitude Age Methodology Training is supported
Company members	Knowledge of industry Knowledge of this company Relationship with employees and management	Passion for seeing people grow Coaching style = 'a learning coach' Knowledge of own strengths	Student motivation Approachability Industry experience	Communication with management	Regular monthly meetings Passion of company training staff Environment for teaching – 'a bonus' Company trainers as a resource, to ask	A schedule and sticking to it Commitment from the company people

	Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
Worker-learners					Fantastic resource materials	
					Being on-site - knowing the people and tasks	
					Easier when doing assessments	

Table 12: What three things *hinder* the TAFE practitioners most in their role in the company?

	Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
TAFE practitioner	Poor communications in the company (air of uncertainty)		Learner attitudes	Space / distance	Negative attitudes of some learners	Their workload
	Lack of direction in training – ‘it’s just sort of happening’		Industry reluctance to take on apprentices	People pulled back to work out of workshops	Availability of learners	Availability of staff
	Coordinator needs motivating		Some industry managers	NACs		Attitude of some people
TAFE manager	Not dynamic, lack of presence, not ‘star-ish’ – missing star quality		Time	‘The diamond of trouble’ – NACs a problem, TAFE could do it		Workers’ workload (availability / time)
	Not a true training professional (but other virtues compensate)		Funding	‘Incentive-ise’ the learners		Shifts
	Wouldn’t commit to a PD course (too old, too expensive, time-consuming)			Training Package resources		Different systems being introduced (e.g. SAP)
				IP issues		

	Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
Company staff members	'A huge conflict' – TAFE versus industry	Not a good organiser		Manager stubbornness	Quick growth	Absenteeism
	'The TAFE machine', 'that monster' – 'really frustrating to deal with'			Staff not willing to learn	Staff availability (for learning)	Lack of facilities
	'awful administrative nightmare' – 'really frustrating'				'The learning curve'	Changes in business process
					Culture at some sites (attitudes of learners) TAFE teaching approach, too school-like – told to 'change your game'	
Worker-learners					Learners not fronting up	
					Not clear what staff were signing on for	

Table 13: How might these hindrances be minimised? / What strategies might help to make the TAFE practitioners' role in the company more effective?

	Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
TAFE practitioner	Need a 'firm, clear plan of action'		Getting around negative perceptions of TAFE: 'not just another government department' getting around 'just add water chefs' image not 'bunch of wallies'	People preparing packages better	Supporting and guiding the worker-learners	Try to fit in with workers' workload (matching learning with work), so there is little disruption to work
	Leadership		Employment role for TAFE: - advising industry - matching students to jobs - 'after sales service'	More resources	Less paperwork, less 'paper trail'	Person in the company to help him (e.g. with administration)
TAFE manager	Strengthening the mentor (TAFE) relationship (a major issue) A midway qualification between Certificate IV and degree (no satisfactory course for turning industry people into professional trainers)		Make a profit, fee for service	TAFE practitioner could be a better administrator Reduce company's expectations – TAFE is a victim of its own success! TAFE trainer could report more, lack of control		People being more available Removing people more from their actual jobs (though not going to happen)
Company staff members	Get people into TAFE who can make things happen	'Decent manager from TAFE'		Management accepting 'he's not an outsider, he is an insider' 'The only hindrance is actually us, the managers sitting down with him'	More activity-based methodology Better database Sold 'transferable skills' idea	Instilling greater commitment to training A more bricks and mortar option (though this is not going to happen - expense)

Case study A	Case study B	Case study C	Case study D	Case study E	Case study F
				Value worker-learners' knowledge	
				Joint teaching a good idea	