



Step 5 – Workplace Learning

Real competence in any occupation whether a person can apply and transfer learning at the workplace or across a variety of workplaces. Therefore the most critical component of learning in artisan development is workplace learning. During the workplace learning process the occupational knowledge and practical learning assimilated during the previous step are applied in the workplace.

The artisan learner is exposed to real life situations within the workplace including all aspects of the artisan occupation such as work ethics, safety, responsibilities and quality performance of work required by industry. In all artisan trades this is the most significant and most difficult of the various learning processes and therefore the artisan learner is supported in the workplace by a qualified workplace mentor, previously known as the journeyman.

These workplace mentors are qualified and experienced artisans in the same trade the artisan learner is registered for. In many instances there is a scarcity of these mentors in the workplace and possible processes are being considered to bring back retired artisans to fulfil the function of a mentor in the workplace. The workplace learning process known as the “on the job” learning process that allows a learner to progressively and sequentially re-learn what he learnt in the practical learning process but applied in a real workplace.

During the workplace learning, the learner must be exposed to the entire scope of the trade as pre-determined by the curriculum of the occupational trade qualification to ensure that once qualified he or she will fully be competent to become a productive worker in the industry and will only need further specific industry training. Many of the current workplace learning programmes that exist in industry today are based on historic and often outdated training schedules developed under the Manpower Training Act.

Some programmes have been updated as unit standard based programmes and are now delivered as Learnerships in some sectors. The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations in collaboration with the National Artisan Moderation Body is progressively updating all these artisan trade workplace programmes to become occupational based curriculum and qualifications.