



Practical ways to improve the retention rate of your apprentice(s)

30 % of apprentices in the traditional trades don't complete their apprenticeship.



You can be involved in a practical project to improve the retention of your apprentice – which is good for business, good for the young person and good for the economy.

Australian enterprises are continuing to face sustained skills shortages, particularly in the traditional trades. In response they are taking on apprentices in higher numbers than ever before; at 30 June 2006 there were 157,700 traditional apprentices, up 9 per cent on 2005 figures. In Vic/NSW, around 30% of those apprentices (more than 50,000) won't complete their apprenticeships and the majority of those leaving will do so in their first three to six months.

The 30% non-completion rate is an enormous cost to companies and increasing the retention rate of apprentices would make a significant contribution to addressing skills shortages.

Why young people leave their apprenticeships

When asked, young people who leave their apprenticeships offer the following range of reasons:

- Being treated as cheap labour (almost half of all apprentices had this view)
- Do not think their workplace is a good place to work (40%)
- Not happy with their boss (40%)
- A perception they weren't learning anything (29%)
- Being bullied at work (23%)

The Australian Industry Group's reducing non-completion rates of Australian apprentices in traditional trades project

The Australian Industry Group through its Group Training Company and with the support of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science & Training, is undertaking a project to look at practical ways of improving the retention rates of apprentices.

The project will;

- Better prepare apprentices for the world of work.
- Liaise with a group of up to 80 new apprentices across a range of employers to track their progress, document their issues and to test revised recruitment, induction and follow up processes.



- Better prepare employers taking on an apprentice by including advice on what to expect from a new apprentice and by providing tailored mentoring and coaching training.
- Develop materials for employers which provide information and strategies on how best to support apprentices, the early identification of problems, and strategies for resolving issues.
- Build on and extend existing resources for Australian apprentices.

The project will conclude with the preparation of a Best Practice Guide based on case studies drawn from the project to provide advice to employers on steps they can take to improve their outcomes for their business when employing Australian apprentices.

The Guide will focus on the first 100 days of an apprenticeship and will cover aspects such as motivators and inhibitors and other information on completions and non-completions.

How to get involved

Employers and their new Australian apprentices (Vic/NSW) now have an opportunity to become involved in this project which will commence early in 2007.

All employers involved will be fully briefed on the project, provided with the project materials and invited to take part in the mentoring and coaching training which will be provided at no cost to the employer.

Individual employers and apprentices will not be identified through the project and strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Regular follow ups, standardised interviews and evaluations will be coordinated and arranged directly with the employer and apprentice by the Ai Group Project Manager.

If you are an employer who has recently signed up a new apprentice and would like more information on how to participate in the project, please email Sharon Murphy to discuss your new staffing arrangements:

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Access this fact sheet online at: <http://www.aigroup.asn.au/education/training> or at <http://www.aigts.com.au/hireanapprentice>

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