



Case Study 4: Novel Solutions to Skills Development in the Pulp and Paper Sector

Pulp & Paper Innovation Working Group

Refining the focus of attention

Operating in a 'thin market' environment, development of discrete sector skills in the pulp and paper industry is compounded by the geographic separation and operational diversity of the facilities.

The Pulp & Paper Innovation Working Group sought to explore what it would take to address those challenges, focussing broadly on whole of industry and business requirements.

Building on existing leadership – the Appita relationship

ForestWorks' Innovation Skills Program (ISP) established this group with the direct involvement and leadership of the Australasian Pulp & Paper Industry Technical Association (Appita).

As an established technical association engaged in the delivery of training and as a training broker for its members (both corporate and individual), Appita was the respected and logical leadership

organisation for this working group. Importantly, in working with Appita and ForestWorks, the program was able to secure expert support from a respected and recent former CEO of a major paper manufacturer.

Defining the focus

The group commenced meeting with representatives from major pulp and paper manufacturing businesses. Initially they worked with an expert facilitator to take into consideration the broad industry issues related to skill development. The group sought to find a workplace based, industry focussed skills development solution that could accommodate all of the sector's needs.

The group initially developed a long list of initiatives they could pursue to improve skills opportunities for industry.

Undertaking examinations of the available delivery systems and materials for general training in the pulp and paper sector, the group's assessment was that there was nothing suitable or available 'off the

shelf'. Additionally, there was a concern that delivery systems, when tested between and across sites, were not adequate for a whole of industry approach.

As a result, in recognising the need to assist the participating businesses to progress in critical skills areas, the group refined its focus to leadership skills and development and sought to devise its own model for this. The drivers are explained below.

A global industry – searching for global solutions

This group recognised early in its development that it operated in a global environment, both with respect to sector developments and corporate ownerships. As a result, it engaged closely with the New Zealand industry to ensure its needs and interests were included.

The group also sought international solutions by exploring available materials and engaging in discussions with an international pulp and paper expert supplied by the ForestWorks' ISP.

It was recognised that leadership and related skills development specific to the needs of 24/7/365 operations in pulp and paper mills is a global challenge and that a solution may be of wider benefit, than just Australia (and New Zealand).

Thus, the recognition of the diversity of the leadership and skills development needs within the Australian and New Zealand industry, and considering the

plethora of options within the development sphere, altered the focus of the program to direct attention to opportunities and options within companies that seek senior management input and support.

Towards a durable solution

The group is continuing to progress development of a leadership and skills development program for application in the Australian and New Zealand industry. It has recognised that the design of the solution must be sustainable and meet both individual and business needs.

Collaboration within the sector is critical to improve workforce capability and build an effective and competitive industry.

ForestWorks' ISP enabled this industry to collaborate on identifying the best options for leadership skill development in the global pulp and paper sector.



Pulp & Paper Innovation Working members meeting in Melbourne