



CASE STUDY

EXPANDING TECHNICAL SKILLS

Tongaat Hulett is committed to growing its employee culture of continuous learning and development. An example of this commitment is the supervisory development programme which was run by its starch operation.

The programme was run over a period of 12 months from August 2016 to July 2017 and participants were required to attend weekly training presentations. The objective of the programme was to build supervisory capacity that enables and encourages high performance, as well as improving organisational structures. The programme consisted of nine course modules, ongoing presentations and assignments, where selected candidates were given Business Improvement Projects as part of ensuring skills application in the work environment. This required that the candidates use existing work-related challenges that needed solutions. During the programme they were partnered with line managers and mentors who were required to provide ongoing support and guidance.

Programme participants from all five of Tongaat Hulett's starch mills were selected from disciplines in the production and technical

environment. The candidates selected were in the engineering, materials, production, laboratory and sales and marketing fields and varied in gender and race. Further considerations during the candidate selection phase included supervisors in mission critical positions; scarce occupations whose skills are needed for the achievement of the company's strategic goals; existing supervisors with technical expertise requiring coaching skills for knowledge transfer to their younger team members; supervisors who were recently appointed and employees who showed potential to be supervisors in the future. The programme has been successfully rolled out as evidenced by the fact that many existing supervisors have now increased their scope of work, some participants are now in acting supervisory roles and other participants have taken on more creative roles within their areas of the business.

In addition to the supervisory development programme, Tongaat Hulett's starch operation also rolled out a production learnership apprentice programme with the objective of building a pipeline of critical and scarce skills that is racially and gender diverse to support operational excellence. The 24 candidates were selected from all 4 of the operation's mills with 4 from the Bellville mill, 10 from the Germiston mill, 5 from the Kliprivier mill and 5 from the Meyerton mill. Since the conclusion of the programme, 5 candidates have been appointed to permanent positions at Tongaat Hulett.