



Case study

Zimbabwe skills training programmes

Managing succession and retention gaps for critical positions remains a key HR focus area. In Zimbabwe we have a range of interventions that assist in this management process, informed by skills gap analyses.

The graduate learner programme aims to equip the trainees with the requisite competencies and skills required for each employee role and this is achieved through classroom theory and hands on experience. In 2019, 22 graduate learners from various disciplines, half of which were female, were engaged to begin their two-year learnerships. Coaches selected from qualified and highly experienced company managers will coach and mentor the candidates as part of the programme. At the end of the two years those learners who meet the set requirements may be absorbed into the organisation into roles identified during the assessment phase.

To prepare them for the managerial function, the learners undergo off-the-job leadership and management training programmes. Ongoing evaluation after the learnership period will allow us to identify those learners with leadership qualities and equip them in preparation for promotion into supervisory and middle management levels. Previously conducted programmes produced mill engineers, IT engineers, and senior finance personnel.

Apprenticeship training targets the creation of a talent pool for those scarce technical skills needed primarily in Agricultural Engineering and Mill Engineering. Aligned with government's manpower development agenda, we recruit high school graduates for a four-year training programme that includes a combination of on-the-job training and classroom training, conducted at the Industrial Training Centre situated at the Hippo Valley Estates operation. At the end of the programme they will qualify as Class One artisans after successfully passing the Government Industrial Training Department's trade test. At the end of the financial year the company had 57 apprentices, 13 of which were females. As an indication of the success of this programme, as at 31 March 2019, of the 220 artisans that were in our employment, 134 were graduates of the internal apprenticeship training programme.

To further improve technical skills, our training team conducts technical skills training for engineers, artisans, operators, handymen and assistants from the mill operations and transport maintenance departments in electrical, mill operations, instrumentation, automotive, boiler making and fitting, and machining skills.

These programmes are generally one to five days in duration, and are aligned to the outcomes of the training needs assessment. Handymen and assistants from different departments also attend skills enhancement training to prepare them for government trade testing in a class of their choice.