



## **HEB Construction**

### **INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE**

#### **MEDIUM-LARGE ORGANISATION WINNER**

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### **THE STORY**

Concerned with the lack of career growth opportunities for a large proportion of its workforce, HEB Construction amended its foundational learning programme to ensure it opened up pathways to formal qualifications and leadership roles.

HEB Construction has been in business in New Zealand since the late 1970 and is a nationwide operation that designs and builds structures and infrastructure that address major societal issues - global warming, population growth, burgeoning urbanisation and increasing mobility.

Understanding that literacy problems could be a barrier to workplace health and safety and career development, HEB launched a Safer People communication course several years ago. Delivered by training provider Upskills, it was designed to ensure staff could complete important health and safety paperwork, were confident to ask questions in meetings and could develop problem-solving skills.

Improving literacy and numeracy skills also provided more people in entry level positions at HEB a pathway to achieving a trade qualification or similar.

The learning and development team realised it could secure this pathway further by embedding a Limited Credit Programme (LCP) into Safer People. Last year it linked Safer People to an LCP in Infrastructure Works, offering learners the opportunity to earn 24 New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) credits.

This means as well as building learning in health and safety, communication and the basic skills required in most areas of the business, the programme also gives participants a taste of success through achieving credits, and, therefore, confidence they can achieve vocational qualifications or complete an apprenticeship at NZQF levels two to four.

HEB takes a collaborative approach to employee engagement in this programme - for example, Upskills facilitates co-design workshops with stakeholders, management and the participants themselves to ensure the programme content meets the diverse needs of the group.

Changes to the delivery model of the programme increased attendance to 80 per cent, which was significant when the impact of the Covid-19 lockdowns and red-light settings was taken into account.

The Safer People component of the programme is done in small groups of around five people which allows further opportunity to tailor training.

Participants work on a group improvement project that is relevant to their own workplace. Managers are involved in the selection of the topics for the project. This ensures management engagement in the project and gives participants confidence that the work they are doing is beneficial to their HEB team.

As employees progress into the practical and technical components of the programme, they are supported by in-house training advisors who run regional sessions and with one-to-one coaching and mentoring on the job.

To date 70 learners have participated in foundational learning programme, with 37 of those taking part in the LCP-integrated version.

Metrics from the 2021-22 year indicate that 93 per cent of learners are thinking about enrolling in further qualifications and 79 per cent have more confidence to offer ideas about ways of doing things at work and are more confident to participate in HEB's Health and Safety Critical Risk Programme.

All learners indicated they were more confident they had the skills to do their job. The Limited Credit Programme has been completed by 65 per cent of learners, with 35 per cent achieving partial credits, demonstrating educational success.

It is expected that in addition to gaining apprenticeship qualifications, there is an opportunity for some of these people to transition into a leadership pathway with the NZ Certificate in First Line Management at Level 3.

Learning richness is further reflected in the following participant comments:  
"Today I learned about assertiveness and how it benefits me in communication."

"Any learning for me is helping my growth as a person. It is important to me."

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## THE AIM

HEB Construction wanted to offer all employees, even those in entry level roles, the opportunity for career development and a pathway to leadership.

## STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Embed a Limited Credit Programme (LCP) into a previously successful literacy programme
- Take a collaborative approach to employee engagement in this programme through co-design workshops with stakeholders, management and the participants themselves
- Support learners through the technical and practical components with in-house training advisors who run regional sessions and with one-to-one coaching and mentoring on the job.
- Ensure small groups for group work to allow for tailored training
- Involve line managers, middle managers and senior managers in progress and graduation events to celebrate the learners' hard work



## RESULTS AND BENEFITS

- A total of 37 learners have taken part in the LCP-integrated learning programme
- All learners indicated they were more confident they had the skills to do their job as a result of the programme
- Most learners (93 per cent) are thinking about enrolling in further qualifications and 79 per cent have more confidence to offer ideas about ways of doing things at work and are more confident to participate in HEB's Health and Safety Critical Risk Programme
- The Limited Credit Programme has been completed by 65 per cent of learners, with 35 per cent achieving partial credits, demonstrating educational success.

## KEY LEARNING

Combining the ability to achieve formal qualifications with a foundational learning programme provides entry level employees confidence to embark on a career growth pathway.

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