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**IN OTHER NEWS**

**The Opportunity that was!**



How many missed opportunities must the industry go through before everyone gets sick of it?

As most of you know New Zealand Qualifications Authority qualifications for Plumbing Gasfitting and Drainlaying have been under review for a number of years and the Federation has fought hard for change but it would seem we are getting much of what we already have and the process has ended up with a repacking of the old with only minor tweaks.

We believe there are some gains but don't feel there are enough to take the industry

**The Five Year Apprenticeship (Start Reverse Planning)**



After all these years you would think we would have the best apprenticeship scheme in the world but are we just producing apprentices to throw to the sharks?

Are we creating a lot of trainees that aren't work place competent and end up feeding them to the sharks?

Let's look at reverse planning where we start at the end. Let's start where we want to finish. Start with the end product which is what the Government wants.

**So what does the Government want?** We believe they want well trained competent trades people and an increase in productivity. They legislate for that by having the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 with its purpose being to protect the health and safety of members of the public by ensuring the competency of persons engaged in the provision of sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying services; and to regulate persons who carry out sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying.

To achieve that the Government has the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board. They rely on the end product that the industry produces.

**What does the Board want?** Well trained competent tradespeople.

As a regulated industry it's our responsibility to meet the needs of the Board by producing those well trained competent tradespeople.

**What does the industry want?** Well trained competent tradespeople.

A lot of the older people in the industry think they have survived in

forward to where we should be. Repacking the same faults doesn't make them better it only makes it harder to get rid of them because they become ingrained into the system.

The worst thing is that we are probably stuck with the changes for years now so it makes the last four years a waste of time and holds the industry back.

Real training and systems were needed to move the industry forward and we still fear we are ending up with a product The Skills Organisation wanted not what the industry wanted.

Yet again the industry is in a position of having to accept minor changes to suit everyone else's needs and yet again we have let the opportunity for real improvement slip away.

Our industry is too divided and doesn't have a single voice to represent us. The Bureaucrats and suppliers know this so they play sectors of the industry off against each other and if they don't get support from one sector they use industrial exclusion (don't communicate with them excluding them from the process).

Very soon we should all hear about what is happening to apprenticeships next

the industry by being well trained, experienced and knowledgeable. So we need to look at how they get there and what systems were in place.

**What do employers want?** Well trained competent tradespeople who don't need constant supervision.

**What do trainees want?** To be well trained and qualified so they can apply their trade without supervision.

To become that they must be qualified and obtain Board Registration, (Assessment to meet the Boards Registration needs). For arguments sake they qualify as a Registered Plumber, Registered Gasfitter, Registered Drainlayer or a combination. They also have trade skills and know their responsibilities (experience). These tradespeople are positioned to take on greater responsibility in year 5.

Trade Skills Years 3 & 4 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass) Trade skills and knowledge relating to the trade/trades chosen. The employer will have someone with knowledge of the three related trades but is concentrating on the chosen trade and specialist activities of the employer. Specialist hands on skills. The trainee concentrates on employers activities such as plumbing, gas fitting or drainlaying and can return to other trades later to get experience. Employer now has an individual who has the trade skills and is positioned for passing on the knowledge to others.

To get to a level where they can understand the trade skills and knowledge they need Core Skills years 1 & 2 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass). Core skills that are generic to all three trades such as welding, pipe installation, trade science, jointing, hands on skills taught at tech. Not all firms do all things. Gives knowledge and skills of all three related trades. The employee is useful to employer as they have skills and basic knowledge of all three trades whilst concentrating on the firm's needs.

That's reverse order, meeting the needs at every stage and guess what , it's still easy and meets the needs when we flip it around.

- Recruitment
- Core Skills years 1 & 2 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass)
- Trade Skills Years 3 & 4 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass)
- Board Registration Year 5 (Assessment to meet the Board's Registration needs)
- Meets the Board's needs.
- Meets the legislative needs

year and also the Level 5 Qualification (Certifiers) pathway which should be implemented within a couple of years. A couple of years doesn't seem that long but considering the Certifiers (old craftsman) qualification was implemented in 1976 and has operated without a formal pathway since then, two years will take us out to about 43 years.

43 years and it is still being developed so is it really needed? We don't think so. We would have thought all our qualifications would meet industry needs by now but alas no.

How many times do we have to go through this process of starting again?

We simply wish that people would stop pissing around with our industry and give us what the industry wants and needs.

- Meets the Government's needs

The link to achievement is **TRAINING**. If our training courses provide competent apprentices then the re-enforcement training they get from workplace experience and practice stand them in good stead to meet the Board's needs and guess what – if our training and systems produced good quality apprentices there would be no need for exams for Registration. So it's up to the industry to push hard for change next year when the Board consults of Classes of Registration.

It's also up to the industry to demand better training. You have to remember you are paying for the training so you should be getting the best not this half baked failing system we have now.

We've talked about the 5 year apprenticeship before and we are repeating it as its important to get an apprenticeship that will move us forward, provide a stock of tradespeople that can full trade gaps within a couple of years. It's a system that can easily bring people back into the industry and get them assessed to slot into different stages to continue on with their training. We need to change or give up.

When the opportunity to have your say comes up make sue you take it! Don't be fooled by cheap imitation ideas that offer a half hearted solution to this either.

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