**Identifying Foundation Skills in Job Descriptions**

**What was the workplace issue?**

A paper manufacturing company was keen to adopt an employment model where workers could identify the particular area of the mill they would like to work in, and the job role. Management were keen for this to happen, acknowledging that moving workers around the worksite would increase their operational knowledge and understanding of processes within the mill.

When workers enquired about the skills and knowledge required in different jobs, they were given inconsistent information.

**What was the impact of the issue on the workplace?**

Workers did not feel confident to move to different job roles in the mill as they did not feel they had the skills required. This was reinforced by inconsistent advice from trainers and supervisors about potential job roles they were interested in, and what training would be required of them to undertake the new role.

**What was the foundation skills gap?**

The worksite did not have written job descriptions that described the various foundation skills required in job roles. Job descriptions promote an individuals’ understanding of themselves as workers.

This skill gap is incorporated into the ACSF skill of Learning, at all levels.

**What was a possible solution?**

The company set about defining job roles and writing job descriptions that included not only practical tasks, but with specific information about the foundation skills tasks that were integral to the job. The company used the ACSF skills and levels to help define the requirements.

**How did the solution change practices?**

The job descriptions are now consistent across the company and workers have a clear understanding of the tasks and expectations of different jobs. This consistency allows workers to feel more confident about undertaking further training to move into new job roles.

The fact that the job descriptions define the foundation skills, or core skills, required for different jobs, also raises awareness about the importance of these skills, and discussions about how to address LLN skills have become part of the regular approach to training.

*“People move within the mill going from one department to another and people would say, that training is completely different to the training in my last role. Now when we have people moving from area to area, we give them a training guide. Even though the job requirements are different the format is the same, people are not surprised by what is in the document, they feel comfortable, they knew this was what was going to be required of them,” says a workplace training manager.*

**Resources**

Sample – Job description.