

New learning centre for Europcar

Europcar officially opened its learning centre in Meadowdale Johannesburg, to benefit both its staff and unemployed school leavers through a variety of short courses and learnerships. The 1 600m² building has had R7 million invested into it.



Osman Arbee (CEO of the Car Rental and Tourism division of Imperial Holdings), Dawn Nathan-Jones (CEO of Europcar), Hubert Brody (CEO of Imperial Holdings)

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"By developing our staff through learnerships, short courses and training programmes, we keep our employees abreast of the latest developments within our industry," says Europcar CEO Dawn Nathan-Jones.

"An employee with the correct training ensures a better quality of service for our customers and a higher level of professionalism. Our newly-opened Learning Centre supports our vision of being recognised as an investor in people and employer of choice."

The centre will host the training for Project Evolve, which covers 1100 employees, the largest business transformation project the company has undertaken in its 33-year history. It encompasses the redesign and development of people, processes and systems that will enable the company to be better equipped as a sustainable business in the future.

Some of the highlights for the year include 17 candidates from around the country who will be attending the management development programme and 20 learners will benefit from adult basic education and training. The company would like to achieve accreditation as a training provider by 2014.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as well as the training courses and facilitators accredit all of the learnerships offered by the Learning Centre. Accredited training providers conduct more than 60% of all the training, once the courses at the Learning Centre are underway, motivational and specialist guest speakers will be invited to do presentations.

Unemployed Learnership Programme

"In addition to improving the quality of our own staff, we are also offering learnerships to unemployed school leavers who are looking to enter the tourism industry," says Nathan-Jones.

As part of its overall strategy to improve the travel sector's skills development, the Learning Centre will be running an Unemployed Learnership Programme that benefits school leavers through a qualification in general travel.

The National Certificate in General Travel qualification is an NQF level 5 programme that equips achievers with the qualification to work in any business that is part of the tourism sector. The qualification also includes the opportunity to gain relevant work experience, which will open up doors to the tourism industry.

While there is a no work-back obligation for learners after they qualify, on completion of the programme, these candidates will be considered for vacancies within the company.

"We will be training 1100 people this year. One hundred of these people, who may not necessarily be employees, will be formally trained as per the National Certificate in General Travel. We plan for each employee to attain an average of five training days per year, resulting the company providing an average of 44 000 learning hours per annum," says Nathan-Jones.

"Our greatest asset is our people and while we believe in continually investing in their abilities, we also recognise the importance of developing future talent for the tourism industry as a whole and job creation."

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