

Eveready implements extensive training programme

Alkaline battery manufacturer Eveready has implemented an extensive adult basic education and training (ABET) programme at its Port Elizabeth plant to increase staff literacy and numeracy.



"We found 30% of the workforce were illiterate and innumerate. This limited the ability to implement globally competitive and benchmarked lean manufacturing systems," said Eveready HR director Charles du Toit. As a result, the manufacturer introduced an ABET programme and encouraged all previously disadvantaged employees to participate.

A foundation for initiatives

Today, 86% of the company's staff are literate and this has provided a foundation for implementing a range of initiatives, including lean manufacturing and continuous improvement to processes. As a result of improving the basic education level of its staff, at least 70 employees are currently participating in learnership programmes that have been put in place, 16 are on apprenticeships and many others are enrolled in graduate or intern programmes.

The ABET courses, which are presented by a local service provider, teach grade one to four literacy and numeracy, including basic reading, writing and counting, as specified by the South African Qualifications Authority. "Over ten years we have educated 250 employees with each programme or level taking a year to complete. The training is extremely practical and includes workplace and life skills," Du Toit added.

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