

PROCONICS BLAZES THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAIL



Melvin Jones, MD for Proconics

Any person or organisation involved in skills development in South Africa knows and agrees that employer involvement in skills development is paramount, particularly when it comes to providing young people with much-needed work experience.

The reality, sadly, is that not enough employers are opening up their places of work as places of training and this remains one of the biggest challenges in the country's skills development landscape.

Proconics, a South African based Engineering company that executes agile multi-discipline engineering projects, has risen to the skills development challenge through hosting structured and effective learnership programmes across many divisions within its business.

In 2019 and 2020, Proconics successfully submitted a workplace skills plan and annual training report. The result has been substantial

mandatory grant refunds and then in 2020, the ability to apply for discretionary grant funding. The result of this DG application was a project that would see the EWSETA co-fund 42 learnerships, out of a cohort of 46 learners hosted by Proconics.

The 46 learners, who are being put through their paces under the watchful eye of several highly qualified and competent mentors, stem from 14 different higher education and training institutions across the country. Their journey commenced in March 2021 with a detailed induction session that set the tone for their tenure with the company.

Melvin Jones, MD for Proconics, reflects on the company's approach to skills development: "Proconics is an engineering company - and at its heart engineering is all about solving problems. We accept that accelerating technology cycles and environmental challenges have made our world a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) place. In a VUCA world we cannot sit back and rely on the skills and talents that solved yesterday's problems. Each Proconics employee needs to continuously develop their skills to remain relevant. We must continuously learn, develop and improve. Only then will we be able to solve the new problems tomorrow will bring."



The Vanderbijlpark induction session

“The relationship we have entered into with Proconics is a prime example of the type of programme that will not only make a real **impact on the lives** of the young people participating in this learnership programme, but will also **boost South Africa's** need for qualified, trained and competent engineering skills that have been identified as a **critical resource** constraint in the energy and water sectors,” says Mpho Mookapele, CEO for the EWSETA. ”



The Secunda induction session

A factor that plays an important role in the success of a learnership is the mentor who will be responsible for the learner during their time with the organisation. Proconics employs highly qualified and experienced professionals who are not only able to effectively share knowledge and experience with the learners, but who understand their role in developing much-needed skills in the country.

Morne Rossouw, a professionally registered Electrical Engineer and Department Manager at Proconics in Secunda, is a big Richard Branson fan who is well known for his quote: "Train people well enough so that they can leave, treat them well enough that they don't want to."

On this note, Morne says: "This speaks to everything we are trying to achieve in the different teams. From building today's trainees to be tomorrow's new leaders and creating a dynamic working environment that retains talent."

Commenting on his experience as a mentor, Martinus Beumer, Electrical Engineering Department Manager at the Vanderbijlpark office says:

"There is something so profoundly rewarding in seeing someone you mentored, guided or coached maximise their true potential. These eager minds of today will become the wise greyheads of tomorrow!"

"TRAIN PEOPLE WELL ENOUGH SO THAT THEY CAN LEAVE, TREAT THEM WELL ENOUGH THAT THEY DON'T WANT TO."

– Richard Branson

About Proconics

Proconics is a South African based Engineering company, established in 1995. The company executes agile multi-discipline engineering projects, with a typical lifecycle of 12-18 months, to clients with critical infrastructures. These projects consist of modifications done to existing factories, as well as greenfields and renewable projects. Project executions range from pure design, up to total EPC (Engineering, Procurement & Construction).

They take pride in their employees' talents and encourage professional growth. Proconics employs 42 ECSA registered Professional engineers; is affiliated with the SAIEE, SaiMechE, SAIMC, SAGA and SABS Workgroups; is ISO 45001:2018 registered and have NOSCAR status.

Proconics is a 51% Black-owned, 30% Black female-owned company and BBEE Level 1 contributor.

The EWSETA is very excited about this project and will throughout its duration profile the young people who have been provided this wonderful learning opportunity.