



# CHRO

FOR HR EXECUTIVES  
2 | 2020 | CHRO.CO.ZA

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## TANTASWA FUBU COMING UP FOR AIR

CHRO partner

# L&D OVER A GLASS OF VINO

Learning and development (L&D) budgets are often the first to be cut when companies attempt to survive harsh economic conditions. But Skillological is working with Winetech to redefine return on investment of L&D to ensure it continues to build its people capacity despite the current economic reality.

**T**he SA Wine Industry has to survive in such harsh conditions, initially brought about by the ongoing drought and recently by the implications of the lockdown-related regulations. Winetech learning and development manager Kachné Ross is responsible for promoting competence in the industry by making sure L&D initiatives address the needs of the industry. They enlisted the help of HCM Solutions provider Skillological to enable their workforce to be more resilient.

Kachné is a qualified viticulturist but because of her passion for people development, she spent most of her career educating the wine industry. She lectured at the Agricultural College Elsenburg for six years and focused on farmworker development for two years thereafter at Vinpro. Her dream is for her department to provide development opportunities, through L&D systems, for the entire industry.

"A fresh look at defining return on investment (ROI) of L&D seems to be vital for ensuring the industry continues to build its people's capacity despite the adverse economic realities," says Kachné.

### The four stakeholders

To get them right, Kachné says skills development initiatives are dependent on buy-in and support of four stakeholder groups, namely, providers, employers, learners/employees, and sponsors and industry bodies.

"Each of these stakeholders has a different perspective on what they 'invest' in addressing competency needs and what is perceived to be the 'return' on the investment made," she says.

Understanding and addressing these perspectives is vital in ensuring the four stakeholder groups remain committed to building or enhancing competence in the industry.

### 1 Providers

Kachné says the learning offered by providers should be cognisant of workplace needs. This implies a concerted effort to ensure the learning programmes being offered are not only focussed on filling seats and generating revenue but also on impacting the critical knowledge, skills and attitudinal aspects of

practitioners. Providers' initial investment in developing programmes needs to be followed up with an ongoing confirmation that their programmes address workplace needs.

## 2 Employers

Workplace support in identifying and addressing competency gaps and encouraging the integration of newly developed skillsets is a vital component in promoting productivity and reaping benefits from time and resources spent on people development.


"Besides encouraging employees to pursue lifelong learning principles, workplaces are indispensable for entrenching newly developed skill sets," says Jurie van Zyl, Skillogical's people development advisor, adding that workplaces will only be willing to support and participate in the development of people if there is a clear link between the time supervisors and employees are expected to devote to skills development and productivity and profitability.

Furthermore, direct financial support and sponsorship to minimise direct training cost is not enough motivation to encourage employers to participate in skills development initiatives. Employers will only invest if their return is articulated in terms of measurable cost saving and an increase in productivity.

## 3 Learners/employees

Kachné says the effort expected of people to actively participate in learning and development initiatives goes beyond financial cost. Family time, extra workplace effort to complete portfolios of evidence and dedicated time to study requires sacrifice.

Says Kachné: "These mentioned sacrifices or 'investments' need to be outweighed by an increase in workplace confidence and employability brought about by a curriculum vitae that not only contains formal qualifications but also testimonials of workplaces vouching for competence and ability to contribute to healthy workplace interaction, cost-saving and productivity. Increased employability is the



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only return that justifies the investment made by employees and learners."

## 4 Sponsors and industry bodies

Employer interest in skills development pivots on productivity as the driving consideration and for employees it is employability. National socio-economic imperatives form the third set of drivers for skills development.

"The emphasis on achieving targets should balance work placement with the traditional learner throughput focus. Financial aid from sponsors is important, but the impact of creating employment opportunities and supporting work-integrated learning as additional 'investment' seems to be the vital

aspect that could support the investment made by the other three stakeholder groups," says Kachné.

## ROI metrics

Jurie emphasises that the key to developing a process for recording and reporting on L&D ROI is the development of metrics that can be quantified by stakeholders. Metrics are defined as standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, progress, or quality of a plan, process, or product can be assessed.

"Winetech is proposing a process and a system that will allow stakeholders to record their specific 'units of measure' before, during and after learning interventions. The following table suggests the units of measure for the four stakeholder groups," says Jurie. ●

STAKEHOLDER	UNITS OF MEASURE	CALCULATION METRICS
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost of training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time and cost to develop learning programmes</li> <li>Man-days to facilitate and assess learning</li> <li>Cost of supporting infrastructure such as e-learning platform</li> </ul>
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various units that could ultimately be related to monetary value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workdays allocated to learning &amp; development</li> <li>Wastage</li> <li>Breakages</li> <li>Work procedure turnaround time</li> <li>Applicability of outcomes to workplace requirements</li> <li>Manager/supervisor support time</li> </ul>
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicability to work</li> <li>Personal benefit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfaction with the learning programme</li> <li>Worktime used</li> <li>Personal time used</li> <li>Application to workplace</li> <li>Employability</li> </ul>
Sponsors & industry bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learner targets &amp; cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of learners completing the course &amp; employed after a year</li> <li>Cost per programme</li> </ul>

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