

A Workplace Skills Plan For Enhanced Service Delivery
at Nigel Local Municipality

Easter Ballies - BA Hons (NWU)

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requirements for the degree

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Development and Management

School for Basic Sciences

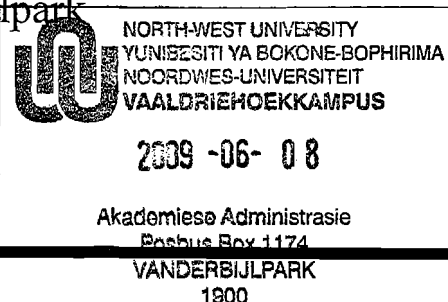
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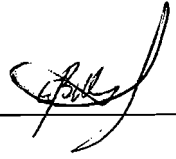
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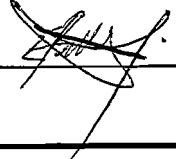
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife

Daphne
and children
Wesley and Janice

I appreciate your support and prayers

ABSTRACT

The importance of human resource development as a means of ensuring that the organisation and institution maintain their competitiveness cannot be over-emphasised. Training and development of employees are critical to organisations, because it ensures the acquisition of required skills, which is paramount for the provision of effective service delivery, in particular local sphere of government.

The Workplace Skills training that refers to the strategic human resource training and development, aims at developing the workforce, labour skills capacity, thereby achieving the institutional goals, policies and objectives of the institution. The Workplace Skills Plan is the key strategic planning document relating to workplace training, career pathing and employment equity for the Municipality. It details the training planned by a municipality in a given financial year as legislated by the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA).

Workplace Skills Plan, through LGSETA, the Skills Development Legislative framework and the Employment Equity Act, makes provision, ensuring that employees in the public service should enhance their skills in order to deliver effective services to its customers, the public.

For quality and effective service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality to take place, the implementation of the Workplace Skills training is imperative for the enhancement of a skill workforce that will be able to ensure that the customer is satisfied with the product and service rendered by the employees.

Workplace Skills training is of paramount importance for effective service delivery.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality comprise of eleven local authorities: Alberton, Benoni, Boksburg, Kempton Park, Tembisa Germiston, Springs, Nigel, Brakpan, Lethabong, Kyalami and the Eastern Gauteng Municipality. The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is committed to realising its vision of building the smart, creative and developmental city, while its emphasis on development is clearly evident in its mission of providing sustainable and people-oriented developmental services that are affordable, appropriate and of high quality (www.ekurhuleni.com).

Nigel, as part of Ekurhuleni serves the communities of Alra Park, Mc Kenzieville, Nigel Suburb, Dunnottar and Duduza under its jurisdiction. As local institution it employs 730 employees of diversified groups and levels.

1.2 ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

Organisations engage employees to execute certain activities in order to achieve their goals and objectives. It has been emphasized a number of times that irrespective of the nature of these goals and objectives, organisations must have competent employees to perform the tasks and to accomplish them. Although well thought-out strategies and efficient human resource planning, recruitment and selection initially provide an organisation with the required employees, additional training is normally necessary to provide them with job specific skills, which enable them to survive over time (Swanepoel et al, 2000 : 493).

The importance of human resource development as a means of ensuring that organisations maintain their competitiveness in an ever-changing environment cannot be overemphasized. The country's history, technology innovations, competitive pressure, restructuring and downsizing, the low level of literacy and numeracy

(especially in the South African context) and the increasing diversity of the workforce are some of the important challenges that employees are ready to face and prepare themselves for the future accordingly.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme recognize the contribution that education, training and development will make towards job creation, enhanced productivity and rebuilding South Africa's economy. It envisages an integrated programme of education, training and development managed in a holistic way and linked to a national qualification network. This ranges from the early stages of education, including adult basic education through to higher-level education. Companies and organisations will therefore find over time, either via persuasion or compulsion that they need greater efforts on the training and development of their employees (Swanepoel et al, 2000: 496). The Skills Development Act (1998) also provides an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce.

Training and retraining are critical to organisations because they provide the skills needed both now and in the future. Together training and development ensure the acquisition of the required skills and employee commitment, which are essential for the provision of high quality goods and services and thus competitiveness and survival. Because training and development are both important and costly, institutions would want each to be as effective as possible (Bezuidenhout et al, 1998:108).

A major purpose of training and development is to remove performance deficiencies whether current or anticipated that may cause employees to perform at less the desired level. Training and development thereby enable employees to be much more productive. Training and development are vital if organizations wish to be able to adapt and be competitive. Employees' level of commitment to the organization will increase and their perception will change that the organisation is good to work for. Increased commitment can reduce turnover and absenteeism, thus increasing the organisation's productivity (Roux et al, 1997: 512).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Nigel Local Municipality implemented the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) that is approved by the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) for training and development of employees. Through analysis of the Plan, the following problems were encountered (Workplace Skills Plan, 2007): the skills planning and needs analysis were done in an haphazard manner; no evidence was found that suggest that this plan was derived from the strategic direction given in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the municipality; the plan is not aligned to the IDP; there is a lack of short, medium and long term skills requirement expressed in terms of levels of complexity or strategic human resource processes focusing on the acquisition of skills.

The Workplace Skills Plan is imperative to provide training and development for enhancement of skills that is vital for effective service delivery.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

The Workplace Skills Plan may lead to training and developing of skills for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the problem statement, the research will attempt to find answers to the following questions:

- What is meant by Workplace Skills Plan?
- What is the extent of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality?
- What could be the impact of the Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality?
- What recommendations can be offered to add value to improve service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To give a theoretical exposition of the concept Workplace Skills Plan.
- To provide an overview of the extent of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality.
- To investigate the impact of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality.
- To provide a set of recommendations for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research made use of the following methodology for gathering information:

1.7.1 Literature Review

The theoretical approach of the research was sourced from the literature obtained from the books, legislatures, news, papers, electronic data and reports.

1.7.2 Empirical Research and Design

Under the guidance of the supervisor semi-structured interviews were conducted with respondents from senior management, employees at different levels, the public and representatives from SAMWU. This included qualitative questionnaires to obtain their opinion on the impact of the Workplace Skills Plan that is attributed to the lack of service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality. The following were interviewed:

- Head of Departments to determine the impact of Workplace Skills Plan and its impact on the productivity levels of the organisation.
- Supervisors and employees in regard to their recommendations or inputs in order to improve the implementation of Workplace Skills Plan for increased productivity of the organisation.
- Community members to determine the extent of service delivery in Nigel Local Municipality.

1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

To pursue the above departmental research, the following chapters are covered:

- Chapter 1 : Orientation and Problem Statement.
- Chapter 2 : Theoretical exposition of concept Workplace Skills Plan and service delivery.
- Chapter 3 : An overview of the extent of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality.
- Chapter 4 : Empirical Study: The impact of Workplace Skills Plan on effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.
- Chapter 5 : Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL EXPOSITION OF CONCEPTS WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN, TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is characterised by rapid change in almost every area of society. This leads to numerous issues and challenges. Public institutions have been created to address specific social issues. The personnel responsible for the activities of these institutions should have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to regard these issues as challenges and to confront them (Cheminias *et al.* 1998: 187). The ongoing training and development of public managers is vital to create a favourable climate in which the human resources of public institutions as learning organisations are enabled to address environmental challenges. Personnel managers should make important contributions in this regard (Cheminias *et al.* 1998: 187-188).

South Africa needs trained municipal employees if it is to meet the challenges and unfulfilled needs of its population. The demand for service is there, and unless municipal employees are properly and adequately trained, service standards will decline and in extreme cases, some services may cease altogether. Productivity is a problem in South Africa, and without training and efforts to increase productivity the municipal organisation cannot be fully successful (Craythorne, 1997: 212-324).

The Workplace Skills Plan matches strategies and activities in the workplace to the skills that the workers require. The Workplace Skills Plan is important in identifying training requirements (Sector Education & Training Authorities, 2005: 9).

This chapter is a theoretical exposition on the importance of Workplace Skills Plan. It also elaborates on the concept of training, development and service delivery and explores the regulatory framework of the related concepts.

2.2 DEFINITION OF WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN

The Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) refers to the strategic human resource training and development aim of developing the workforce skills capacity and thereby achieving the institutional goals contained in the policies and business plan of the specific institution (Erasmus *et al.* 2005: 333).

The Workplace Skills Plan is the key strategic planning document relating to workplace training, career pathing and employment equity for the municipality. It is related to the key municipal Integrated Development Planning (IDP) objectives, and to the priority training areas identified in the sector skills plan. The Workplace Skills Plan details the training planned by a municipality in a given financial year. To qualify for the mandatory grant, an employer must, in addition to submitting the WSP, submit the Annual Training/Implementation Report to the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) by 30th June each year. The implementation report details the actual training conducted, against the training in the WSP (www.labour.gov.za).

A Workplace Skills Plan identifies training needs and further integrates strategies and activities in the workplace to the skills of workers.

2.3 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT TO WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN (WSP)

The LGSETA was established in 2000 in terms of the Skills Development Act of 1998 with a vision “to the success of enhance skills development strategies and the development of local government ..., frontline development agencies, integrating the activities of all spheres (levels) of government for the overall social and economic upliftment of communities. This will be realised through delivery of basic services ... and all other basic human rights which the State has an obligation to realise (Understand LGSETA, 2006: 1).

In terms of its mission LGSETA is to ensure more effective co-ordination of capacity building and skills development initiatives between government departments, local government, and to create synergies (working relationship) between different elements of the development project.

LGSETA is to promote leadership, skills development programmes and other education interventions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of:

- Delivery of basic social services;
- Government and administrative, financial, planning and project management and to develop an ethos of public service amongst all municipal and water institution staff in accordance with the principles of *Batho Pele* (People First);
- To involve all the stakeholders in the sector in the development, implementation and annual evaluation of the Sector Skills Plan, and
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the LGSETA (Understanding LGSETA, 2006: 1).

The LGSETA is poised to be the first among the best in skills development in the period 2005 – 2010 (Understanding LGSETA, 2006: 1-4).

2.3.1 Functions of the Authority of the LGSETA

The functions of the LGSETA as contemplated in the LGSETA Constitution and the Act is summarised as follows:

- Develop a sector skills plan within the framework of the national skills development strategy.
- Implement its sector skills plan by establishing learnerships, approving workplace skills plans, and allocating grants in the prescribed manner and in accordance with any prescribed standards and criteria to employers, education and training providers.
- Promote learnerships by identifying workplaces for practical work experience, supporting the development of learning materials, improving facilitation of learning and assisting in the conclusion of learnership agreements.
- Perform such functions as may be assigned by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- The authority may fund a skills programme if they are occupationally based and when completed it will constitute a credit towards qualification registered in terms of the National Qualification Framework (Understanding LGSETA, 2006: 8).

2.3.2 Sector Skills Plan

In terms of the Skills Development Act, a SETA (Sector Education and Training Authorities) is obliged to among other activities to:

- Research and develop a Sector Skills Plan;
- Receive and evaluate Workplace Skills Plan and Annual Training reports/implementation reports from employers;
- Identify and develop strategic projects arising from skills needs within the sector, funded by discretionary grants;
- To register, train and Support Development Facilitators within the sector (www.labour.gov.za).

The activities listed above are the function of the Sector Skills Plan (SSP) department within the LGSETA.

The purpose of the SSP is to ensure that the LGSETA has relevant, up to date information and analysis to allow it to perform its strategic skills planning function for the sector and to maximise participation by employers in the National Skills Development strategy through the efficient use of resources available for training within the sector.

The SSP is an analysis of the labour market within the local government sector which gets compiled once every five years, and submitted to the Department of Labour, and is updated annually. The Sector Skills Plan provides the:

- Profile of the labour-force within the sector by province, race, age, gender, qualification and occupational category;
- It monitors the supply of, and demand for labour within the sector;
- It tracks the absorption of new labour market entrants into the sector;
- It identifies areas of skills growth and skills need;
- It identifies opportunities and constraints on employment growth in the sector (Department: Labour, Republic of South Africa).

The SSP forms the strategic analysis guiding the implementation of training and skills development within the sector.

In terms of the Skills Development Levies Act employees, including municipalities, are obliged to register with the SA Revenue Service and pay 1% of the monthly pay roll as skills levy. Upon the submission and approval of the Workplace Skills Plan and the Annual Training/Implementation Report by the municipality to the LGSETA, the municipality becomes eligible for both the mandatory training grant, and the discretionary training grant from the LGSETA (Grobler *et al.*, 2002: 350).

The Workplace Skills Plan and the Annual Training / Implementation Report must be completed by each employer and submitted to the LGSETA by the Minister of Labour and no extension may be granted.

The Workplace Skills Plan as stated, details the training planned by a municipality in a given financial year.

The following would disqualify an employer from receiving mandatory training grants:

- Non-payment, or irregular payments of the skills levy;
- Non-submission, or late submission of the WSP;
- Non-submission or late submission of the implementation report;
- Both the WSP and the implementation report must be submitted timeously to release the payment of the mandatory grant (Department: Labour, Republic of South Africa).

The discretionary grants may be applied for by compliant municipalities to engage in training to fulfil strategic sectoral objectives, for example: Adult Basic Education & Training (ABET) Learnership and certain skills programmes.

The Sector Skills Plan for the LGSETA has been written within the framework provided by the Department of Labour's National Skills Development Strategy, the

Department of Provincial and Local Government's National Capacity Building Framework (version 1.7), and the Demarcation Board's analysis of municipal performance for 2004. Where appropriate, reference has been made to other pertinent strategic documents and research, such as the Department of Provincial & Local Government (DPLG) Project Consolidate (October 2004) findings and proposed action plan. The document has been structured in accordance with the Department of Labour's guidelines on the development of Sector Skills Plans as issued in August 2005 (Understanding LGSETA, 2006: 13).

The SSP, its importance and essence is to ensure that the LGSETA has relevant, up to date information and analysis to allow it to perform its strategic skills planning function for the sector and to maximise participation by employees in the National Skills Development Strategy through the efficient use of resources for training in the sector.

2.4 DEFINITION OF TRAINING

Several terms are used to describe the various training approaches. Increasingly, employee education is used to describe basic skills training programmes. Labour economists divide training programmes into general and specific training programmes. General training refers to training in which employees gain skills that can be used at most workplaces. Employee education involving basic skills would qualify as general training. For instance, learning how to improve reading and writing would benefit any employer for whom the individual might work. Specific training refers to training in which employees gain information and skills that are tailored specifically to their own workplace. (Grobler *et al*, 2002: 314). Historically, the term training has been used to designate the acquisition of technically oriented skills by non-management personnel (Carrel *et al*, 1998: 308).

Training can be seen as the systematic process of changing the behaviour and/or attitudes of people in a certain direction to increase goal achievement within the organisation. Laird (1978: 9) defines training as “.... an experience, a discipline, or regimen which causes people to acquire new predetermined behaviours”. It is also suggested that the mission of training is “.... to bring about the behaviour changes

required to meet management's goals. It is seen as an essential component of the organisation" (Van Dyk et al, 1997: 227).

According to De Cenzo and Robbins (1994: 255) training is a learning experience in that it seeks a relatively permanent change in an individual that will improve his or her ability to perform on the job. Training can therefore be regarded as a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skilled behaviour through learning experience so as to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation. Training brings about behaviour changes required to meet management's goals for the organisation. It is thus a major management tool to develop the full effectiveness of the organisation's most important resources, its people.

Training is executed to ensure that a task is performed correctly, and therefore the behaviour change brought about by training must be measurable in terms of an organisation requirement. Consequently, training must be result orientated, it must focus on enhancing those specific skills and abilities to perform the job, it must make a real contribution to improving both goal achievement and the internal efficiency of an organisation (Nel et al, 2004: 426).

Training "is a process to modify or bring about change in attitude, knowledge, skilled behaviour or through learning experience to achieve effective performance and is considered a major management tool used to develop the full effectiveness of the organisation's most important resource : its people. (Van Dyk et al, 1992: 148).

Considering the training of government employees, "the Public Service Staff Code (April 1995), Chapter C, section 3.1 (g), training is defined as all those planned and purposeful activities which improve the knowledge, skills insight, attitudes, behaviour, values and working and thinking habits of public servants or prospective public servants in such a way that they are able to perform designated or intended tasks more effectively. This can be achieved through education, development and teaching support" (Van der Walddt and Du Toit, 1997: 394).

2.5 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT TO TRAINING

The training environment should not be viewed in isolation, but against the background of current economic, technological, social and political factors that are in the process of transforming the working world. The responsibility of reforming the training system in response to changing demands rests with the state. In fulfilling this core function the state is faced with the dilemma of increasing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, equality and sustainability of the training system to meet new requirements at a time of reduction in public spending (Van Dyk *et al.* 1997: 81). The training system in South Africa receives severe criticism for lacking relevance to marked demands.

The Government in South Africa is further faced with the challenge of balancing the demands for a skilled and flexible labour force to make industries in the country more competitive, on the one hand, and on the other hand, to ensure equal access for all citizens to training opportunities as well as to redress disadvantages faced by particular groups (Gerber *et al.* 1998: 432). To influence the training system and bring about the necessary changes to meet new challenges, the state is compelled to take the lead in developing policy that is supportive of the economic and social changes the country is facing (Nel *et al.* 2004: 412).

To improve the challenges, relevant legislations were adopted that went through different stages, each being characterised by the political climate of the day. Prior to 1981, racial discrimination was still entrenched in training legislation, making it illegal for blacks to be indentured as apprentices. Arising from the Wiehahn Commission's report in which it was recommended that industrial relations be deracialised, the Manpower Training Act was passed in 1981. For the first time training legislation did not particularly refer to racial categories. The Act also introduced for the first time a tripartite forum, namely the National Training Board, to advise the relevant Minister on training matters. In 1991, the Manpower Training Act was amended to make provision for the establishment of Industry Training Boards (ITB). ITB's were made responsible for the training of all workers in their respective industries, including the management of apprenticeships and trade testing. The

foundation for the current training legislation was laid by the work of a representative Task Team, consisting of four constituencies, namely business, trade unions, the state, and providers of education and training. The Task Team conducted its work in accordance with the following vision: a human resource system in which there is an integrated approach to education and training and which meets the economic and social needs of the country and the development needs of individuals! (Nel et al, 2004: 412-413).

Arising from the Task Team's report, three totally new pieces of training legislation were developed and enacted by Parliament, namely the Skills Development Act, Skills Development Levies Act and the South African Qualification Authority Act (Nel et al, 2004: 412-413). The Skills Development Act is related more closely to training and skills enhancement of the South African workforce.

2.5.1 The Skills Development Act and Strategies

South Africa has a poor skills profile as a result of the poor quality of general education for the majority of South Africans, the low relevance of much publicly funded training, and the low level of investment by companies in training. This poor profile inhibits productivity growth in companies, new investment prospects, and employability of the young and unemployed. The sustainability of small and medium sized enterprises is similarly impaired (Nel et al, 2004: 413).

The Skills Development Act (97 of 1998), signed by the President of the Republic of South Africa on 20 October 1998, ensures:

- to develop the skills of the South African workforce;
- to increase the levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to inform the return on investment;
- to use the workplace as an active learning environment to provide employees with the opportunities to acquire new skills to provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain experience;
- to ensure quality of education and training in and for the workplace etc. (Swanepoel et al, 2000: 480-481).

The Act seeks to develop the skills of the South African workforce and there increase the quality of working life for workers, improve the productivity/service delivery of the work-place, and promote self-employment and the delivery of social services (www.labour.gov.za).

The Act also seeks to encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment and to provide opportunities for new entrants to the labour market to gain work experience (Swanepoel et al, 2003: 438).

A special focus in the Act is to improve the employment prospects of previously disadvantaged persons through education and training. The employment services are to focus on help work-seekers to find work, retrenched workers to re-enter the labour market, the employers to find qualified employees (Grobler et al, 2002: 350).

Alignment of the Skills Development Act and the South African Qualification Authority Act is ensured so as to promote the quality of learning in and for the labour market. The Act also gives organised employers and workers greater responsibility for ensuring the relevance of training, which will enhance Quality of learning (Nel et al, 2004: 413)

In terms of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS), skills for productive citizenship for all summarises the vision for the future. The vision includes the following:

- Skills: Skills development is about empowering and enabling individuals to acquire skills and competencies that are in demand.
- Productive citizenship: Citizenship includes the right to actively contribute to and participate in making decisions that effect investment and work.
- For all: The strategy provides opportunities for those in work as well as for the unemployed, for new entrants to the world of work as well as for older people, for woman as well as men, and for people with disabilities (Swanepoel et al, 2003 : 423–424).

The vision is underpinned by six guiding principles:

- Life-long learning : Continuous upgrade and improve of skills;
- Promotion of equity : Provide opportunities for disadvantage groups;
- Demand – led : Skills and competences required to support productivity, international competition, the mobility of workers and self employment;
- Partnership and cooperation : Implementation of strategy should be based on partnership between social constituencies;
- Efficiency and effectiveness : The delivery of skills development programmes must be characterised by cost effectiveness and should lead to positive outcomes;
- Flexibility and decentralisation: The role of Government to provide the framework direction and coordination and to monitor implementation (Swanepoel et al., 2003: 424).

The mission statement, to encapsulate the goals of the NSDS, reads as follows: To equip South Africa with the skills to succeed in the global market and to offer opportunities to individuals and communities for self advancement to enable them to play a productive role in society (Nel et al., 2004: 416).

It is evident that from the National Skills Development Act and National Skills Development Strategy that the training of skills are of paramount importance within the workplace. The development of skills improves the quality of life of the employee and further leads to high productivity and enhanced service delivery.

2.6 DEFINITION OF DEVELOPMENT

Development is aimed at employees serving in a managerial capacity or preparing for managerial posts within an organisation. It is essentially directed towards preparing supervisory and managerial staff for subsequent levels of management. It can be seen as a process whereby managers obtain the necessary experience, skills and attitudes to become or remain successful leaders in their organisation (Nel et al., 2004: 426).

De Cenzo and Robbins (1994: 255) maintain that “development focuses on future jobs in an organisation. As the individual’s career progresses, new skills and abilities are required, for instance, for management positions”. Development thus refers to development possibilities within a job or position for a specific employee, with reference to the employee’s personal growth and personal goals (Gerber, Nel & Van Dyk, 1995: 49).

Should every manager be appointed in an organisation solely for aspiring towards its objectives, it might be concluded that considerable demand are made on management. To fulfil this task efficiently, managers must keep abreast of new developments in technological, economic, political, legislation and social fields, as well as contemporary personnel management practices. Due to pressure of work, this is not always possible and management often becomes obsolete in its outlook. This effects an organisation detrimentally since it persuades the whole organisation and result in stagnation. One of the general objectives of development is the prevention of obsolescence. Obsolescence occurs when the person in a particular post lacks the current skills or knowledge generally considered by the other managers as important and vital if the person is to remain effective in performing his/her work (Van Dyk et al. 2001: 148).

For an organisation to survive in a highly competitive and developing market, it is essential to prevent obsolescence and develop managers to keep abreast of new challenges.

Management development is therefore an organisational development intervention at the individual level to strategically align an organisation’s management potential according to the demands that flow from a proactive business strategy (Nel et al., 2004: 427).

There are three objectives in terms of management development:

- To promote the effectiveness of managers and professional employees;
- To promote employee satisfaction;

- To reduce or overcome obsolescence in management (Van Dyk et al. 1992: 149).
Distinction can be made between development and training. The two concepts are not identical or the same. Three main differences can be identified:
- Training focuses on current needs; development focuses on projected needs;
- Training is task oriented, development is personnel oriented;
- Training is directed at specific job requirements; development is directed at institutional requirements (Cheminias et al. 1998: 190).

When we refer to development, then we mean the continuation of education and training for the purpose of acquiring sufficient experience, skills and the right attitude to be appointed to the highest managerial position (Andrews, 1988: 140).

2.7 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the establishment of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) (1995), South Africa perceived to have:

- Poor global competitiveness and low productivity;
- No progression and adult-based education;
- A fragmented educational system;
- Little or no integration of training and education (including training and development in the public sector);
- No formal qualification systems and no national standards (Cheminias et al. 1998: 219).

With the framework of the NQF, the Green Paper on Public Service Training and Education (GPPSTE), 1997 was drafted to facilitate training and education in South Africa. The vision of GPPSTE states:

“The development of a dedicated, productive and people-centred public service staffed by public servants whose performance is maximised and whose potential is fully developed via the comprehensive provision of appropriate and adequate training and education at all levels” (Gerber et al. 1998: 437).

The principle aim of the GPPSTE is to establish a clear vision and policy framework to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies, procedures, legislation aimed at transforming public service training and education into a dynamic, needs-based and proactive instrument, capable of playing an integral and strategic part in the processes of building a new public service for a new and democratic society in South Africa. The anticipated outcome will be a new system of public service training and education that will strategically linked to broader processes of transformation, institution building and human resources development within the public service (Cheminias et al, 1998: 222).

In working towards these outcomes, the GPPSTE recommends a number of important innovations and changes in the direction, management and operation of the system of training and education which are consistent, with the policy environment set by the new Constitution of 1996, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Macro economic Strategy for Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GE&R), the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service and the human resource development strategy proposed in the Department of Labour's Green Paper on a New Skills Development Act (Cheminias et al, 1998: 223).

The Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) also makes provision for an Employment Equity Act (Plan) (No. 55 of 1998) with the aim to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination, and the implementation of affirmative measures to redress disadvantages experienced by designated groups (Grobler et al, 2002: 54).

The Employment Equity Act (Plan) must include the following:

- affirmative action targets
- measures to identify and eliminate employment barriers
- measures designated to promote workforce diversity, and
- measures to retain and develop people from designated groups and to implement measures in terms of the Skills Development Act (Erasmus et al, 2005: 188).

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 has both anti-discrimination and affirmative action components. “It obliges every designated employer to put measures in place to ensure that suitably qualified persons from designated groups are afforded equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels of the workforce. These measures include the elimination of barriers, the furthering of diversity, making reasonable accommodation for persons from designated groups, training and establishment of numerical targets...” (Coetzee *et al.*, 2005: 4-5).

Affirmative action forms part of an employment equity programme, and according to Bendix (2001), is the last step towards achieving true employment equity. Employment equity will exist when all discrimination barriers and past imbalances have been eliminated and everyone is able to compete on an equal footing.

It should be clear that the intent of affirmative action programmes is not to further the interest of a particular group but to eliminate discrimination. Consequently an affirmative action programme is seen as a temporary intervention designed to achieve equal employment without lowering standards and without unfairly hindering the career aspirations or expectations of current organisation members who are competent in their jobs (Coetzee *et al.*, 2000: 7).

The importance of acquiring competencies and skill needs to be emphasised. The legislative framework that relates to training and development the Skills Development Act, the Employment Equity Act, as stated above, makes provision to ensure a skilled, workforce/place that have the capacity and ability to deliver effective/productive service to its customers, the public.

2.8 DEFINITION OF SERVICE DELIVERY

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) published on 24 November 1995, sets out eight transformation priorities, amongst which Transforming Service Delivery is the key. This is because a transformed South African public service will be judged by one criterion above all; its effectiveness in delivering services which meets the basic needs of all South African citizens. Public

services are not a privilege in a civilised and democratic society, they are a legitimate expectation.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 stipulates that public administration should adhere to a number of principles including that:

- a high standard of professional ethics be promoted and maintained;
- services be provided impartially, fairly and equitably and without bias etc. (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: 107).

In line with the Constitutional principles, the WPTPS (1997) calls on all national and provincial departments to make service delivery a priority. The departments need to develop departmental service delivery strategies. These strategies will need to promote continuous improvements in the quantity, quality and equity of service provision. Chapter II of the WPTPS requires national and provincial departments to identify, among other things, a mission statement for service delivery, together with service guarantees. A service standard, defined outputs and targets and performance indicators benchmarked against comparable international standards. The WPTPS further states that improving service delivery calls for a shift away from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, and a search for new ways of working which put the needs of the public first, is better, faster and more responsive to the citizens' needs. It also means a complete change in the way that services are delivered (Draft White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997).

Service delivery cannot only be implemented by issuing circulars. It is not only about rulebooks and prescripts, it is not just an administrative activity. It is a process out of which a completely new relationship is developed between the public service and its individual clients (Draft White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997).

To define the concept of Service Delivery, we can summarised it by stating that service delivery calls for a shift from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, and a search for new ways of working which puts the needs of the public first. It is the rendering of service that is better, faster and more responsive to the citizens' needs. It is a complete change in the way that services are delivered.

2.9 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT TO SERVICE DELIVERY

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, section 32 provides for the universal right of access to information held by the State to facilitate the exercise or protection of any right by citizens eg. to access public services in an equitable, convenient and cost-effective manner. (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: 15).

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service of 1995 (WPTPS), and the Public Service Regulations of 1999 and 2001, seek to transform a culture of public service delivery from prescribing service packages to citizens, to putting citizens at the centre of service delivery. Accordingly, all government departments both national and provincial are compelled to align their service delivery mandates and service delivery improvement plans with the overall service delivery priorities of the Government based on the needs of the citizens. (www.info.gov.za).

The White Paper in Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997, urgently seeks to introduce a fresh approach to service delivery. An approach which put pressure on systems, procedures, attitudes and behaviour within the Public Service and reorients them in the customer's favour, an approach which puts the people first. This does not mean introducing more rules and centralised processes or micro-managing service delivery activities. Rather, it involves creating a framework for the delivery of public services, which treats citizens more like customers and enable the citizens to hold public servants to account for the service they receive. A framework, which frees up the energy and commitment of public servants to introduce more customer-focused ways of working. This approach is encapsulated in the name, which has been adopted, by this initiative – *Batho Pele* (a Sotho adage meaning 'People First'). The *Batho Pele* policy framework consists of eight service delivery principles derived from the policy goals set out in Chapter 11 of the WPTPS (www.info.gov.za).

2.9.1 The Service Delivery Principles of *Batho Pele* (People First)

Eight *Batho Pele* principles were developed to serve as acceptable policy and legislative framework regarding service delivery in the public service.

The *Batho Pele* principles are as follows:

2.9.1.1 Consultation

There are many ways to consult users of services including conducting customer surveys, interviews with individual users, consultation with groups, and holding meetings with consumer representative bodies, NGO's and CBO's. Often, more than one consultation will be necessary to ensure comprehensiveness and representativeness. Consultation is a powerful tool that enriches and shapes government policies such as the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and its implementation in Local Government sphere.

2.9.1.2 Setting service standards

This principle reinforces the need for benchmarks to constantly measure the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the service or products they receive from departments. It also plays a critical role in the development of service delivery improvement plans to ensure a better life for all South Africans. Citizens should be involved in the development of service standards.

Required are standards that are precise and measurable so that users can judge for themselves whether or not they are receiving what was promised. To achieve the goal of making South Africa globally competitive, standards should be benchmarked against these used internationally, taking into account South Africa's current level of development.

2.9.1.3 Increasing access

One of the prime aims of *Batho Pele* is to provide a framework for making decisions about delivering public services to the many South Africans who do not have access to them. *Batho Pele* also aims to rectify the inequalities in the distribution of existing services. Examples of initiatives by government to improve access to service include such platforms as the Gateway, Multi-Purpose Community Centres and Call Centres. Access to information and services empowers citizens and creates value for money and quality services. It reduces unnecessary expenditure for the citizens.

2.9.1.4 Ensuring courtesy

This goes beyond a polite smile, 'please' and 'thank you'. It requires service providers to empathize with the citizens and treat them with as much consideration and respect, as they would like for themselves.

The public service is committed to continue honest and transparent communication with the citizens. This involves communication of services, products, information and problems, which may hamper or delay the efficient delivery of services to promised standards. If applied properly, the principle will help demystify the negative perceptions that the citizens in general have about the attitude of the public servants.

2.9.1.5 Providing Information

As a requirement, available information about services should be at the point of delivery, but for users who are far from the point of delivery, other arrangements will be needed. In line with the definition of customer, managers and employees should regularly seek to make information about the organisation, and all other service delivery related matters available to fellow staff members.

2.9.1.6 Openness and transparency

A key aspect of openness and transparency is that the public should know more about the way national, provincial and local government institutions operate, how well they utilise the resources they consume, and who is in charge. It is anticipated that the public will take advantage of this principle and make suggestions for improvement of service delivery mechanisms, and to even make government employees accountable and responsible by raising queries with them.

2.9.1.7 Redress

This principle emphasises a need to identify quickly and accurately when services are falling below the promised standard and to have procedures in place to remedy the situation. This should be done at the individual transactional level with the public as well as at the organisational level, in relation to the entire service delivery programme.

Public servants are encouraged to welcome complaints as an opportunity to improve service, and to deal with complaints so that weakness can be remedied quickly for the good of the citizen.

2.9.1.8 Value for money

Many improvements that the public would like to see often require no additional resources and can sometimes even reduce costs. Failure to give a member of the public a simple, satisfactory explanation to an enquiry may for example, result in an incorrectly completed application form, which will cost time to rectify.

These principles are aligned with the Constitutional ideals of:

- Promoting maintaining high standards of professional ethics;
- Providing service impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;
- Utilising resources efficiently and effectively
- Responding to people's needs; the citizens are encouraged to participate in policy making; and
- Rendering an accountable, transparent and developmental oriented public administration (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: 107).

It is important to know that the *Batho Pele* principles are not only align with the Constitutional ideals as stated above, but the objective is to ensure the introduction of a new approach to service delivery, which put people at the centre of planning and delivery of service. It is to improve the face of service delivery by fostering new attitudes such as increased commitment, personal sacrifice, dedication and an improved image of the Public Service (Draft White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 9 May 1997).

2.10 CONCLUSION

It is evident that for effective service delivery to take place, training and development of employees is of utmost importance. If the local municipalities, being closest to the communities, are to address the needs of the public and to achieve the goal of making South Africa compete with international standards, then employees within the local

municipalities should have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the demands of the day.

Training and development of employees will ensure a workforce that is able to meet the goals of the organisation. It is an effective management tool that can enable and ensure the full effectiveness and competence of its employees.

With legislative framework in place that seeks to ensure the improved productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employees; and the continuous improvement of the delivery of service and to use the workplace as an active learning environment.

Effective service delivery to the public should be characterised by service that is better and that meets the needs of the public.

CHAPTER 3

THE WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN OF THE NIGEL (EKURHULENI) LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Quality skills development that makes a measurable impact in the organisation requires proper planning and preparation through a structured process of analysis, design, development and implementation. This must be followed by the evaluation of the quality and relevance of all learning programmes, as well as the evaluation of the value added to the entity by the process of developing the Workplace Skills Plan. (www.skillsportal.co.za).

One of the most important requirements for sustainable local economic growth is an appropriately skilled local work force. Skills capacity and capability is a key determinant of human development (Draft Integrated Development Plan 2007 – 2011, February 2007: 184). The role that local authorities can play in developing human resources begins with their own staff. Local authorities can make a big contribution to institutional capacity by developing the skills of their own labour force, for effective job performance or service delivery (Development Economics For Public Management. 2004: 29).

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, through JIPSA, - the Joint Initiative For Priority Skills Acquisition is committed to focus on skills and education initiatives directed at addressing the shortage of suitable qualified labour. In the workplace skills plan the training of officials, in the transport, communication, city and regional planning, managerial etc. is identified by JIPSA, is being implemented. Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality GDS (Growth Development Strategy) focus area, is to have a skilled community, exhibiting capabilities in self-reliance, innovation and continued re-skilling to meet the need of a growing economy (Draft Integrated Development Plan 2007-2011, February 2007: 4).

This chapter will focus and examine the Workplace Skills Plan within the Nigel local municipality.

3.2 NIGEL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY – LOCALITY AND DESCRIPTION

In December 2000, the nine towns of Alberton, Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Edenvale, Germiston, Kempton Park, Nigel and Springs and two administrations in Gauteng were amalgamated and given metropolitan statutes. The area is now known as the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality differs from other municipalities in that it does not have a dominant urban core, but instead consists of small town centres with major decentralised nodes, such as the Wadeville Alrode Industrial Corridor and the O R Tambo International Airport Complex (Cities Network – Ekurhuleni, 2008: 4).

The history of the area is characterised by themes of struggle and eventual peace that have included militant action for recognition of workers' rights and the protracted struggles for housing, democratic education and an end to apartheid. The choice of the new name for the East Rand as Ekurhuleni, the place of peace, is a realisation that the violent past was over and that a new identity could be forged (Cities Network – Ekurhuleni 2008: 4).

Currently, Ekurhuleni, with an estimated 826 000 households and a population of 2.6 million, aims to be the smart, creative and developmental city of South Africa. To help achieve this, the municipality works with values such as performance excellence, integrity, community centeredness, transparency and cooperative governance (Cities Network – Ekurhuleni, 2008: 5).

Nigel, as a City and part of Ekurhuleni, serves the communities of Alra Park, Mc Kenzieville, Nigel Suburb, Dunnottar and Duduza under its jurisdiction. As local institution it employs 730 employees of diversified groups and levels (www.Ekurhuleni.com).

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is the business and industry hub of South Africa, if not of the entire continent, with the main areas of business expansion in

Nigel and Lesedi. This year, 2008, the workforce of Union Carriage in Nigel is expected to double. The company is re-investing and expanding their current operations. Union Carriage collaborates with the city to see how to develop Nigel not only economically, but also socially. Sixty percent of employees are from informal settlement and the municipality is looking at a programme for social development, according to the present Ekurhuleni Executive Mayor, Mr Duma Nkosi (www.ekurhuleni.com).

- While Nigel and Lesedi are growing rapidly, other areas in Ekurhuleni also welcome new businesses and the expansion of existing ones Nampack, Element 6, Consul Glass and Union Carriage have all expanded, fuelling economic growth.
- Growing the manufacturing sector to stimulate economic growth is dependent not only on adequate infrastructure of basic services, but also on a steady supply of skilled workers. Ekurhuleni is committed to develop skills needed by business and industry (Cities Network – Ekurhuleni. 2008: 8).
- Community participation for the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is of extreme importance for democratic governance, since this is where the understanding of governance is shaped and defined.
- In line with this, the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is busy instituting the Municipal's 88 Ward Committees, reflecting their commitment to public participation and good governance.

The role of Ekurhuleni is to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, to provide democratic and accountable governance in all its communities and to secure social, economic and political justice.

In its provision of service, the Municipality places the highest emphasis and priority on operating in such a way as to benefit the entire community in all its actions (Draft Integrated Development Plan 2007-2011, February 2007: 22).

3.3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT NIGEL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Training and development or the acquisition of productive skills by employees are fundamentally important, adding value to them as individuals, as well as enhancing their worth to the public institution. Public servants are obliged to improve their skills and abilities.

The lack of education, training and development may keep people in subjugation, because they do not have the necessary skills to fend for themselves. It is also contended that increased training and development will help increased productivity, or the level of service delivery within the public service. Training and development of employees should be seen as an investment (Hilliard, 1995: 72).

Efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, performance improvement, creativity and ultimately results or maximised performance can be achieved through competent staff, or workforce (Forsyth, 2001: 2).

Training and development should always make a difference, a positive difference that can help make an organisation stronger, more effective and better able to cope with the challenging environment (Forsyth, 2001: 2).

The Workplace Skills Plan process for 2007/8 has been a daunting task that demanded HRM & D: ETD (Human Resource Management and Development Education Training Department) to consult broadly with all stakeholders to ensure that the WSP document, detailing all training needs is submitted as required by legislation LGSETA (Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority) before the deadline (WSP – Ekurhuleni, 2007/8).

The Workplace Skills Plan report that details the need for training, and the level of training and development conducted within the given year, is inclusive, covering the whole of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

The Workplace Skills Plan report for training and development for Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality do not define or give any breakdown of training and

development done at the various service centres, Nigel in particular of which we will not have a clear picture or accurately determined training and development done at Nigel local municipality.

The level of training and development within the Nigel local municipality can only be determined and assessed by looking at training and development within the Eastern Service Delivery Region (ESDR).

According to ETD (Education, Training and Development) Manager, Mr Thami Sidzamba (Eastern Region) (interviewed 3rd July 2008), training and development for the Eastern Service Delivery Region that includes the Nigel local municipality (service centre) is the following:

Table 3.1: Training and development for the Eastern Service Delivery Region

Training Programme	Provider	Number to be trained	Date
Telephone Etiquette	-	15	21–22 January 2008
		15	11–12 March 2008
Customer Care Handle of Public	-	15	12–13 January 2008
		15	21–22 January 2008
			07–08 April 2008

Source: www.nelson@ekurhuleni.com

Supervisory Skills as development programme was presented on two occasions, dated 21–23 January and 27–29 February respectively to 30 learners / delegates within the Eastern regions and Customer Care Centres. From the report of those who attended the course, Nigel as service centre (municipality) did not have any learner / delegates represented. The Eastern Service Delivery Region was represented by Brakpan, Benoni and Springs (www.nelson@ekurhuleni.com).

According to Mr Morris within the Human Resource Training Department, (interviewed 18 June 2008) two training reports for the Eastern Service Delivery Region, dated 11–12 March 2008, 13 –14 March 2008, dealing with Assertiveness Skills, and the other dated 10–11 April 2008, dealing with Time Management training programmes were conducted respectively.

The Assertiveness Skills Programme, provided and presented by Corporate Business Management Training Consultants, was attended by 23 delegates representing the Eastern Service Delivery Region, with no specific details of area or CCC's (Customer Care Centres) (www.cbm.training.co.za).

According to Corporate Business Management training report, Nigel, as local municipality (service centre) could not be positively identified as part of any training or development.

The training report for Time Management – learning programme, provided by Ngema Business Enterprise, dated 10-11 April 2008, was attended by 27 delegates of projected 30 delegates, representing the Eastern Service Delivery Region. The report also does not give any breakdown or specific details of learners/delegates from the different service centres within the Eastern Service Delivery Region (www.ngebuse.co.za).

The level of training and development within the Nigel local municipality (service centre) can thus not be positively being assessed.

The importance of training and development cannot be over emphasised. Training and development is about empowerment. It is the process of creating an environment where people are willing, able and allowed to perform to their potential. It is a planned, professional attempt to grow individuals and organisation to enable people to choose to be productive, or enhance their performance, and to continually grow their jobs (Bhengu, 1996: 45).

The level of training and development within the Nigel local municipality (Service Centre) can only be determined from the response from the employees within the service centre through questionnaires. With training being centralised and concentrated at one training venue, and with the information and data based on the training reports, for all training conducted, the assessment for the level of training and development for Nigel will be difficult for the study.

3.4 THE WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN (WSP) OF THE NIGEL (EKURHULENI) MUNICIPALITY

In terms of the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme), it states that, “We must develop an integrated system of education and training that provides equal opportunities to all irrespective of race, colour, gender, class, language, age, religion, geographical location, political or other opinion. It must address the development of knowledge and skills that can be used to produce high-quality goods and service in such a way as to enable us to develop our culture, our society and our economy (The Reconstruction and Development Programme - A Policy Framework, 1994: 60).

The democratic government has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the human resources are developed to the full. Education, training and development opportunities must be provided in accordance with predetermined or prescribe standards (The Reconstruction and Development Programme – A policy framework, 1994: 60).

In terms of the Ekurhuleni Growth and Development Strategy, 2025, 2 August 2005: 31 Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is committed to improving skills levels. The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will feed input regarding the local needs and priorities into the national skills development strategy, as well as the priority programmes of the various SETA’s (Sector Education and Training Authority (Ekurhuleni Growth and Development Strategy, 2025, 2 August 2005 : 31).

An indication of the Workplace Skills Plan for the Nigel local area will be reflected in the WSP report for the Eastern Service Delivery Region.

3.4.1 The Workplace Skills Plan Process

The Workplace Skills Plan process for 2007/8 for the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, started with ETC (Education and Training Department) consulting all stakeholders on how the process will be conducted and the time frames that need to be adhered to in order to meet the deadline as prescribe by the LGSETA (Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority).

All departments were expected to submit a draft document first and on the advice of the ETD (Education and Training Department) officials amend or alter were necessary and thereafter continue with the process of engaging their departmental teams until the final submission of the document is made and heads of the departments had to sign a pledge of commitment to the process (WSP – Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, 2008: 1).

However, the Workplace Skills Plan process for 2007/8 encountered some pitfalls that include the following:

- Low submission of WSP drafts;
- The introduction of a new template by the LGSETA;
- Department not meeting set timeframes (WSP – Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, 2008: 1).

The Workplace Skills Plan for the Nigel local municipality will be significative of training and development by looking at the total picture for intended training for the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

According to the Workplace Skills Plan report the total number of employees to receive training within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is the following:

Table 3.2: Total number of employees receiving training

Employment Category	African		Coloured		Indian		White	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Legislators	28	29	0	0	1	0	0	2
Directors & Corporate Managers	23	46	1	0	1	0	10	13
Professionals	130	270	19	20	10	6	95	41
Technicians & Trade Workers	737	142	76	8	31	7	300	75
Labourers	722	295	46	2	1	0	7	2
Clerical & Administrative Workers	462	604	30	47	6	16	56	218
Community & Personal Service Workers	779	294	86	11	41	7	498	63
Apprentices	27	5	2	0	1	0	5	0
Machine Operators / Drivers	163	24	0	6	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3 071	1 709	260	94	92	36	971	414

Source: WSP Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality 2008.

The above table is an indication of the total number of employees to receive training within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality for the period 01 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, as prescribe by Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority. It is also a reflection of the employment category, the race groups and their gender (WSP Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, 2008).

According to the WSP report, the Sector Priority Skills Areas for the period 01 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 is demonstrated in the table below.

Table 3.3: The Sector Priority Skills Areas

TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS PRIORITY NO.	GENERAL UP TO NQF LEVEL 1	FET			HIGHER ET				UN-KNOWN	TOTAL
INTERVENTIONS IN THE AREA OF			NQF LEVEL 2	NQF LEVEL 3	NQF LEVEL 4	NQF LEVEL 5	NQF LEVEL 6	NQF LEVEL 7	NQF LEVEL 8		
ABET	11	4									4
ADMINISTRATION	10	-		3		12			2		25
CLIENT SERVICE	4	-	2						1		10
COMPUTER LITERACY	9	5	5	5					5		25
CORPORATE, LEGAL & SUPPORT	-	-	-								0
FINANCIAL	6	-	-			2					7
INFORMATION TECH.	8	-	-			18	6				30
LIFE SKILLS	5	6	6	5	6						24
MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP	3				1	12	22	6	18		62
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH/ SAFETY	7					1	1	1	1		5
POLICY DEVELOPMENT	-				1	1					1
PROJECT MANAGEMENT/ PLANNING	5					1	1	1	1		4
SOCIAL / COMMUNITY / ECONOMIC	-				20						0
SPECIALIST TECHNICAL	1		29	35		77	60	20	12		295
TRAINING SKILLS	12					5					9
SPECIAL SKILLS REQUIRED BY LEGISLATION	2				28	3	5			15	39
TOTAL		15	42	48	109	129	90	28	40		

Source: WSP Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, 2008.

Table 3.3 illustrates priority training and skills development interventions for the period 01 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, for Ekurhuleni employees. It is an illustration of the priority areas for training/development and the number of interventions planned for the period July 2007 to June 2008. It is also an indication of the level of training and development to be implemented (Workplace Skills Plan Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, 2008).

3.4.2 Objectives of Workplace Skills Plan

In terms of the Draft Integrated Development Plan (2007-2011) Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality Strategic objectives is to facilitate the acquisition of economic skills. As Interventions Plan Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will ensure the skills development priorities set with SETA (Sector Education and Training Authority) and Department of Labour. Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will engage in partnership /agreement for sustainable development with academic institutions (Wits and Tshwane University) (Draft Integrated Development Plan, 2007-2011: 339). Ongoing analysis of the economy will inform on the gap between supply and demand for skills required to boost competitiveness in the various sector of the economy. Entrepreneurial skills development for cooperative and start-up businesses as well as holistic skilling of labour will be encouraged as a key requirement for the mainstreaming and formalisation of the second economy;

Library services will be an important part of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality's skills development strategy. In order to achieve the vision of an information empowered and developed community, the focus will be on innovative and dynamic ways of cognitive and skills development. The challenge is to provide 24 hours access to services by means of virtual reference libraries and automated circulation services.

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will lobby for tertiary learning institutions and research and development facilities to support the growing economy.

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will ensure that skills transfer forms part of its procurement policy (Ekurhuleni Growth and Development Strategy, 2025: 32).

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is committed to fully implement the Workplace Skills Plan as submitted by each department.

3.4.3 Key Performance Indicators

The Key Performance Indicators in terms of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality CDP (Contractor Development Programme) is the alignment of local skills development to national, provincial and local GDS (Growth Development Strategy). Economic Information provision aimed at empowerment of local citizens.

All stakeholders within Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality especially unemployed citizens, Small Micro Enterprises that require improvement in capacity and skills transfer in order to achieve sustainable growth. These persons will be identified and sourced from the following areas:

- Informal settlements,
- Previously disadvantage residential areas

3.5 THE WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN IN RELATION TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The rendering, supply of effective / good / service depends upon people. It is clear that the more competent the people, employees, the better the institutions or business. The most important investment any organisation makes, is therefore in the people, who work for it. Everyone in the institution or organisation must know, understand and agree what is required of their job, and how to do their job (www.labour.gov.za).

The Workplace Skills Plan as defined in the proceeding chapter, is the key strategic planning document relating to training, career pathing and employment equity within the municipality (www.labour.gov.za).

The Workplace Skills Plan relates to the key municipal IDP objectives, and to the priority training areas identified in the sector skills plan. The WSP details the training planned by a municipality in a given financial year (Understanding LGSETA, 2006 : 12).

“In so far as local government is concerned, there is nothing as urgent and as critical as the training of its employees. Their ability to work with the communities in partnership for development, are skills that should be build more intensively”. (Nelson Mandela, Opening Speech to Parliament, 1997.)

The Workplace Skills Plan is important in making decisions about the priorities of skills development and the identification of skills within the workplace. The Workplace Skills Plan (must) matches strategies and activities in the workplace to the skills that the employees require.

For any Workplace Skills Plan (programme) to be of any effect, training and development should occur and be implemented. To ensure that people are able to deliver, or perform at their best, there is a need to undertake whatever necessary steps to meet that objective. Training and development is therefore crucial. The development and training of employees is essential, in order to maximise their performance.

A Workplace Skills Plan is not only imperative in identifying the necessary training / development within the work environment, of equal importance is to ensure that it is implemented to achieve its intended objectives in terms of training and development.

3.6 SERVICE DELIVERY AT NIGEL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Measuring service delivery in the public sector, at local municipal level in particular, is not necessarily an easy task because various qualitative aspects have to be considered, in addition to the output of goods and services that is only rarely

quantified. These qualitative aspects could be rather complex and even intangible, such as the general welfare of a community (Hilliard, 1995: 1).

Increasing effectiveness, efficiency and economy is not just a question of reducing resource input; in governmental circles it is also a matter of inordinate flexibility and adaptation in the face of change (Metcalf & Richards, 1990: viii – ix).

The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service, Chapter 3, *Changing the human resource management culture* envisage the development of a service delivery-oriented, multi-skilled and multicultural workforce. A service delivery-oriented skilled workforce that continually drive for efficiency and effectiveness (Department of Public Service and Administration, 3 December: 1997).

The current Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality service delivery concept is one of Service Delivery Regions (SDR's) and Customer Care Centres (CCC's). This concept, specifically the Service Delivery Regions is currently being re-assessed as part of the institutional review, and may change in future.

In order to ensure quality service delivery, Customer Care Centres (CCC's) have been established throughout the Municipality to ensure that the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, that includes every local council, applies the principle of Batho Pele (People First).

The CCC's will be instrumental in making the service more accessible to communities. It is intended that these centres should function as one-stop information and problem resolution centres where members of the community can be quickly assisted without unnecessary red-tape procedures (Ekurhuleni Growth and Development Strategy, 2025: 52).

The functions of CCC's will be to:

- Ensure consultation;

- Provide access to information;
- Be responsive to the need of communities;
- Deal with complaints handling; and
- Receive suggestions from communities (Ekurhuleni Growth & Development Strategy, 2025: 52).

The main focus of the CCC's is to bring service delivery closer to the customer and they will be supported by a sound customer management system (Ekurhuleni Growth, Development Strategy, 2025: 52).

Whether these directives will be translated into actual service delivery at local level (municipalities) can only be determined by the public / communities, the recipients, customers who received service from the provider, council / municipalities.

The level of service delivery at the Nigel local municipality (service centre) will be measured and assessed through the use of interviews / questionnaires in order to obtain responses from the public / communities.

3.7 CONCLUSION

To ensure effective and improve service delivery within the Nigel local municipality (service centre), it is incumbent that the employees are equipt with the necessary skills, capabilities and know-how through training and development.

The Workplace Skills Plan does not only identify the need for training within the work environment, Nigel as local municipality (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality) in particular. With the commitment from the council (municipality) to ensure the implementation of the Workplace Skills Plan, efficiency, effectiveness and good service delivery to the community / public can be realised.

CHAPTER 4

EMPERICAL STUDY ON WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN FOR THE EFFECITVE SERVICE DELIVERY AT NIGEL (EKURHULENI) LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to report the findings of the empirical research that was conducted at the Nigel Local Municipality. Information was gathered from employees at different levels, positions within the municipality, members of the public of diverse race groups, and representatives of the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU). The purpose of the empirical research was to determine the implementation of Workplace Skills Plan in order to provide training and development for effective service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality.

4.2 PERMISSION

With the research conducted in the local municipality, it was therefore necessary to first request permission from the Director: Research and Development, Mrs Elizabeth Ramaoka at the Benoni Head Office. A formal application for necessary permission was written and submitted to the Director for approval and signature. Both copies, the letter of application and the response on the application are enclosed (Appendix A).

With the permission granted by the Director, the Head within the Human Resources Management and Development, and the Head of the Nigel Customer Care Centre were visited with the intentions to clarify and discuss what the research will entail.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The most time consuming part of research is the collection of data. This must, however, be done because without data it will not be possible to broaden one's understanding, to explain the "unknown" or to add new knowledge to existing knowledge (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 27).

Research methodology is the how of collecting data and the processing thereof within the framework of the research process. Research methodology, or methods of collecting data, necessitates a reflection on the planning, structuring and execution of the research in order to comply with the demands of truth, objectivity and validity. Hence, research methodology focuses on the process of research and the decisions, which the researcher has to take to execute the research project. For example:

- Which decision(s) need to be taken as the research progresses?
- Which methods and techniques for data collection and data analysis should be selected?
- Which factors play a role in the design of a research project?
- What influence does the particular purpose of the research project have on the selection of methods and techniques?
- Which factors play a role in the process of research and how do these factors influence the methodology of the researcher? (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 28-29).

In the human sciences two basic methodological research methods or methodologies can be distinguished: Qualitative and Quantitative methodology or methodological models.

4.3.1 Quantitative methodology

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative research marks a series of differences in approaches to research. At the most surface level, quantitative and qualitative researchers base their conclusions on different kinds of information and employ different techniques of data analysis.

Quantitative researchers collect data in the form of numbers and use statistical types of data analysis (Terre Blanche et al. 2006: 47). Quantitative research is associated with analytical research and its purpose is to arrive at a universal statement (Mouton, 1983: 128). In quantitative methodology the researcher assigns numbers to observations. By counting and measuring “things” or “objects”, data is produced. Quantitative research is underpinned by a distinctive theory as to what should pass as warrantable

knowledge (Bryman, 1984: 77). It requires methods such as experiments and surveys to describe and explain phenomena. The methods could include techniques such as observation, pilot studies, quantitative analysis and questionnaires (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 29).

4.3.2 Qualitative methodology

Qualitative methodology refers to research, which produced descriptive data – generally people’s own written or spoken words.

The indispensable condition or qualification for qualitative methodology is a commitment to seeing the world from the point of view of the actor or participant. Because of this commitment to see through the eyes of one’s subjects, close involvement is advocated (Bryman, 1984: 78). Qualitative research entails discovering novel or unanticipated findings and the possibilities of altering research plans in response to accidental discoveries. The fundamental theme of qualitative research is a phenomenological one, where the actor’s perspective is the empirical point of departure. It is a focus upon the real-life experience of people.

Qualitative methodologies allow the researcher to know people personally and to see them as they are, to experience their daily struggles when confronted with real-life situations. This enables the researcher to interpret and describe the action of people (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 29-30). Qualitative research is naturalistic, holistic and inductive, providing a detailed (“thick”) description of phenomenal (Terre Blanche et al. 2006: 49).

4.4 RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

The most frequently used techniques of data collection within the two basic research methods referred to above are review / scrutiny of relevant literature; interviews; and questionnaires. These techniques are briefly discussed below:

4.4.1 Review of relevant literature

Successful research depends on a well-planned and thorough review of the available / relevant literature. Such a review usually entails obtaining useful references or sources and studying these.

In Public Administration not only books on aspects of public administration should be consulted, but also the documents and files of public institutions. It is only by casting the 'research net' wide that the researcher in Public Administration will be able to determine the truth about phenomena in the public sector. Literature is reviewed for the following reasons: to obtain perspective on the most recent research findings related to the topic of the research; to obtain an indication of the best methods, instruments for measurement, and statistics that can be used; to improve the interpretation of one's own research results; and to help determine the actuality of research on a particular topic (De Wet et al., 1981: 39-41).

Finding a primary source includes the following: demarcating and determining the research topic; writing down relevant bibliographical references as fully and as accurately as possible and determining where they can be found; deciding on particular sources, which can be consulted; obtaining the sources either from an academic information centre or library or elsewhere; and studying the sources and noting relevant information (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 31).

The advantage of a review of literature is that the daily activities of participants in the research are not disturbed. Data can be easily obtained as everything is in writing. The disadvantage of this technique is that the review of numerous books, reports, documents and Acts is time-consuming. Furthermore, written material is not regarded as first hand material as opposed to, for example interviews or personal observation (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 31-32).

4.4.2 Interviews as research technique

Researchers in Public Administration are advised to make widespread use of the interview, not because other methods of data collection are inadequate, but rather

because the interview is an extremely useful method by which valuable material can be secured.

Personal interviewing is a survey technique in which a trained interviewer visits the respondent and administers the questionnaire in a face-to-face setting (Fox and Bayat, 2007: 100).

When interviews are used to collect data, caution should be exercised when gathering statistical and fiscal data. Do not rely on the memory of an interviewee for factual data – he or she could be in error as to the recollection of dates and amounts. Also be constantly on guard against the bias of the interviewee. Irrespective of the negative points, interviewing as a device for tapping the experience of those who have actively participated in the process of public administration, should be used to a much larger extent by researchers in this field than what was hitherto the case. The usefulness of interviewing in stimulating thought cannot be overemphasised. The contact of two minds in a face-to-face conversation frequently illuminates a problem and could have a positive effect on the administrator being interviewed – by “opening up” with a flood of opinions, and case instances, and taking a genuine interest in the professional aspects of public administration. At the same time talking to a public official could recharge the interviewer’s “batteries” (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 32).

4.4.3 Site of Data Collection

Employees, in their respective position and levels at the local Municipality were selected as the site of data collection because it was convenient for the employees. Employees in their respective position and levels at the local Municipality, and members of the public were selected as the site of data collection because the workplace was a convenient place for the employees to fill in the questionnaires, as the residential homes were convenient to members of the public. Questionnaires were delivered and collected from the respondents.

4.4.4 Questionnaires as a research technique

A questionnaire can be defined as a group of written questions used to gather information from respondents, and it is regarded as one of the most common tools for

gathering in the social sciences. A questionnaire usually consists of a number of measurement scales, open-ended items for qualitative responses, and other questions that elicit demographic information from respondents (Terre Blanche et al. 2006: 484). The purpose of a questionnaire is to clarify the reason for the study; determine the information required from the respondents; list the research questions to be answered with the questionnaire; and to identify any additional information required to address the research questions (Terre Blanche et al. 2006: 485).

Structured questionnaires can also be used in the place of interviews. It is necessary to supply respondents with standardised instructions on how to complete the questionnaire and to explain what is expected from them. The advantage of a questionnaire is that the respondent has time to think about the answers to questions in the questionnaire. Moreover, a large number of respondents distributed over a large geographical area can be reached. The disadvantage is that the researcher is not at hand to explain uncertainties, which may result in biased or distorted answers by the participant. Furthermore, using questionnaires could be costly, especially where large numbers of respondents have to be reached in order to minimise percentage error in the results obtained (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 38-39).

4.5 SAMPLING

Sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, and involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours, and/or social processes to observe. Exactly who or what will be sampled in a particular study is influenced by the unit of analysis. If your research question is about household poverty, you would select a sample of households, but if your question were about poverty and homelessness, you would select a sample of individuals (Terre Blanche et al. 2006: 49).

The main concern in sampling is representativeness. The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions. Representative samples are especially important in descriptive surveys that are used to estimate accurately the properties of populations. To achieve representativeness, researchers draw random samples. A second concern is the size of

the sample; a very small random sample may be quite unrepresentative, and the same is true for a large non-random sample. The researcher must ensure that the sample is large enough to allow him or her to make inferences about the population (Terre Blanche et al, 2006: 49).

A sample of a population is used to: simplify the research - it is easier to study a representative sample of population than to study the entire population; save time - studying an entire population could be time-consuming, especially if the population is very large, or distributed over a large geographical area; and cut cost - observing, interviewing or using questionnaires to collect data from every element of a population could be very costly if the population is large and geographically distributed over a large area (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 43).

4.5.1 Population

Any group of, say, individuals, events or objects that share a common characteristic and represent the whole or sum total of cases involved in a study is called the universum or population. The separate individuals or objects belonging to the population are called the elements of that population. A population can be finite, i.e. all the elements can be ordered and counted (Fox and Bayat, 2007: 52).

For the purpose of sampling, “population” does not refer to the population of a country but to objects, subjects, phenomena, cases, events or activities. i.e. all the objects, subjects, events, phenomena, activities or cases, which the researcher wishes to research in order to establish new knowledge.

The following are examples of “populations”: individual human beings, such as university students; organisations or institutions, such as commercial banks or government departments; social activities or events, such as abduction, robbery or murder; inventories, such as training programmes (Mouton, 1996 : 134); and the daily work of an employee, consisting of activities such as answering a telephone, making an inspection, filling out a form or marking examination papers (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 44).

The purpose of the research determines which subjects, objects, phenomena, etc. are to be chosen as the “population” from which the sample is to be selected (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 44).

4.5.2 Ethical Requirement for Research

The essential purpose of research ethics is to protect the welfare of research participants. Research ethics, however, involves more than a focus on the welfare of research participants and extends into areas such as scientific misconduct and plagiarism (Terre Blanche et al, 2006: 61).

There are two overarching ethical requirements for researchers: honesty and confidentiality. Honesty pertains to the manner of reporting. A researcher should at all times and under all circumstances report the truth, and should never present the “truth” in a biased manner. The truth can usually be verified, for example by checking whether a specific document does exist and what is being reported by the researcher is indeed the exact truth as contained in the particular document. Research should be conducted in a responsible manner. Researchers may stumble upon data of a confidential nature, the publication of which could be harmful to the person or group involved. Researchers should remember that the interest of the participants always prevails and that no confidential data should be recorded or published (Botes, 1995: 137).

This research considered these ethical issues. The anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of information were assured.

4.6 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews as part of data collection technique. Through interpretation and analysis of responses, the research deduces conclusions on the implementation of WSP for training and development for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality. The copy of questionnaire is enclosed (Appendix B).

4.7 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED TO MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES OF NIGEL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The following information was obtained through questions related to Workplace Skills training at Nigel Local Municipality.

4.7.1 Extent of Workplace Skills Training in the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.1 Extent of Workplace Skills training in the Nigel Local Municipality

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	1	10%	4	40%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	4	40%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	2	20%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	9	90%	0	0%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.1 indicates that a great number (90%) within management level are in agreement that Workplace Skills training is taking place, while a small number (10%) are in disagreement, believing that no Workplace Skills training is taking place.

The employees indicate mixed responses in regard to Workplace Skills training. A number of respondents (40%) showed concern, as there is no Workplace Skills training programmes at the Local Municipality. A similar number (40%) are of the view that Workplace Skills training is taking place. Another smaller number (20%) of respondents could not respond positively or negatively, or remained unsure whether Workplace Skills training is taking place.

With almost everyone in agreement it cannot be refuted that training is taking place at management level. In terms of employees at lower level the municipal council needs to communicate effectively with employees in order to make them aware regarding the training programmes available for enhancement of skills.

4.7.2 Extent of how often training is offered

Table 4.2 Extent of how often training is offered

	Management		Employees	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes	2	20%	3	30%
Seldom	2	20%	3	30%
Always	2	20%	1	10%
Often	4	40%	3	30%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.2 indicates diverse opinions in how often training are offered. A fairly large extent (40%) within management is of the view that training takes place very often. A further small number (20%) thinks that Workplace Skills training takes place sometimes. An equal number (20%) are of the opinion that training takes place very seldom, while a further number (20%) of respondents believe that training always takes place.

A small number of employees (30%) believe that training takes place sometimes. A similar number (30%) believed that training often takes place. An equal number (30%) believe training seldom takes place, while a small number (10%) of respondents are of the view that training always takes place.

Based on the responses from both management and employees, there is no consistency in terms of training for lower levels of employees, and management does not always seems to be informed in terms of Workplace training at Nigel Local Municipality. There is a lack of communication that needs improvement.

4.7.3 Extent of training that is relevant to work situation

Table 4.3 The extent of training that is relevant to work situation

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	2	20%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	8	80%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	0	0%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.3 indicates that management (100%) is of the view that Workplace Skills training is relevant to their work situation.

A great majority of employees (80%) are of the view that their training is relevant to their portfolios. A smaller number (20%) are of the view that training is not relevant to their assigned tasks. Training programmes is either incompatible or it is non-existent.

With a great majority (100%) within management level, and with almost a similar response (80%) from the employees who are in agreement that the training offered is relevant to their jobs, it can be deduced that there is a commitment on the part of the council to ensure that employees are competent in what they do.

4.7.4 The extent to determine whether training is accessible to all levels of employees

Table 4.4 The extent of whether training is accessible to all levels of employees

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	5	50%
	Only to a limited extent	2	20%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	8	80%	5	50%
	To a very large extent	0	0%	0	0%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

A great number of respondents at management level (80%) as indicated in table 4.4 are of the view that training is accessible to all levels of employees within the Nigel Local Municipality, while 20% disagrees.

Employees within the lower level (50%) believe that training is not accessible or offered to all employees, while an equal number (50%) believe that training is offered to all levels of employees.

With the majority within management level and with 50% of employees in lower level suggest that training is accessible to all levels of employees.

4.7.5 The extent of determining the source or provision of training

Table 4.5 The source or provision of training

Training Providers/Source	Management		Employees	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Consultants	3	30%	1	10%
The Training Department	3	30%	5	50%
Both Consultants & Training Department	4	40%	3	30%
Don't know / can't tell	0	0%	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.5 indicates various opinions in regard to the provision of Workplace Skills training. A large extent within management (40%) was exposed to training by Consultants and by the Training Department. A smaller number (30%) had their training by Consultants (external), while an equal number (30%) had their training in-house (internally) by the Training Department.

Employees at lower level (50%) had their training offered by the Training Department. A smaller number (30%) had their training provided by both Consultants and the Training Department. 10% of respondents are not aware of any training opportunities, with a similar (10%) who had their training provided by consultants.

The different training programme needs determine to a large extent the provision of training.

4.7.6 The extent that training can enhance and increase career progression of employees

Table 4.6 Extent that training can enhance and increase career progression of employees

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	10	100%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.6 indicates that respondents at the management level (100%) were in agreement that training enhances and increases career progression of employees.

Employees (100%) collectively suggest that training should be a prerequisite and ultimate requirement to enhance and increase career progression of employees.

Both management and the employees acknowledge that training is paramount to enhance and increase career progression.

4.7.7 The extent that training improves self-esteem and the quality of life of an employee

Table 4.7 The extent that training can improve self-esteem, the quality of life of employees

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	10	100%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.7 indicates that respondents (management) (100%) are of the view that training consequently improves the self-esteem and self-confidence of employees.

Employees (100%) believe that by acquiring the necessary tools through training improves the self-esteem and the quality of life of employees.

Training is not only essential to improve self-esteem and confidence of employees, it ultimately enable employees to provide quality service to the community.

4.7.8 The importance of monitoring and assessment of the impact of training

Table 4.8 Extent of monitoring and assessment of the impact of training

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	10	100%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.8 indicates that management (100%) is in total agreement regarding the importance of monitoring and assessment of the impact of training.

Employees (100%) also expressed similar views regarding the importance of monitoring and assessment of the impact of training.

The efficiency of employees in the execution of their duties and the improvement, growth and the impact of training offered, can be determined through monitoring and assessment techniques. The resources utilised for training purposes should have the desired outcome and impact.

4.7.9 The extent of understanding the importance of consultation on the choice of training programmes

Table 4.9 Extent of understanding the importance of consultation on the choice of training programmes

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	10	100%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.9 is an indication from all respondents (management) (100%) that consultation is important in determining the choice of training programmes.

Similar views are expressed from employees (100%) who also believe that consultation on the choice of training programmes is essential.

Consultation with employees is an important process that can adequately address the need regarding training of employees that will improve service delivery.

4.7.10 The extent of understanding how training should be compatible with the municipal mission, strategy, goal and culture

Table 4.10 Extent of how training should be compatible with the municipal mission, strategy, goals and culture

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	0	0%
	To a very large extent	10	100%	10	100%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Management (100%) in table 4.10 indicates a positive attitude in regard to training that should be compatible with the mission, strategy, goals and culture of the municipality.

Employees (100%) collectively agreed in regards to the importance of training that should be consistent with the municipal mission, strategy, goals and culture.

In order to achieve the strategic objectives of the council, it is imperative that the training offered should be compatible with the mission, strategy, goals and culture of the municipality.

4.7.11 The extent of how the public appreciate the quality of services rendered by the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.11 Extent of how the public appreciate the quality of service rendered by the Nigel Local Municipality

		Management		Employees	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	6	60%	5	50%
	Only to a limited extent	4	40%	0	0%
	Do not know/Cannot tell	0	0%	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%	5	50%
	To a very large extent	0	0%	0	0%
Total		10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.11 expresses various and mixed opinions of respondents at management level. A large number (60%) of respondents are of the view that the public is not satisfied with the quality of services rendered by the Municipality. A smaller number (40%) is however, convinced that the public do appreciate the quality of service rendered by the Local Municipality.

Employees (50%) believe that the public is not satisfied with the service rendered by the council. An equal number (50%) however, is of the view that the public is satisfied and appreciative of the service rendered by the Local Municipality.

Service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality is not meeting with the desired outcome and thus is not appreciative of the public regarding the quality of service. There is a need to improve the quality and delivery of services in order to receive appreciation from the satisfied end users.

4.7.12 The extent of shortcomings evident at the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.12 Extent of shortcomings evident at the Nigel Local Municipality

Shortcomings evident at Nigel Municipality	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of basic education among employees	3	30%
Lack of customer care to members of public	1	10%
Racial prejudice still exists in terms of training	2	20%
Complacency amongst employees	1	10%
Batho Pele are not applied by employees	1	10%
Training should be localised	2	20%
Total	10	100%

These shortcomings listed in Table 4.12 are indication of challenges exists at Nigel Local Municipality. Strategies need to be formulated in order to improve the situation.

4.7.13 The extent of recommendations that can add value in an effort to accelerate training

Table 4.13 Extent of recommendations that can add value in an effort to accelerate training.

	Management		Employees	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Employees should be recognised for training completed	2	20%	0	0%
No discrimination against race groups	1	10%	0	0%
Sufficient information regarding training programmes	1	10%	0	0%
Audits to determine training needs	1	10%	2	2%
Training should be accessible to all levels	2	20%	0	0%
Training to be localised	2	20%	0	0%
Training should take place at constant intervals	1	10%	5	50%
No recommendations	0	0%	3	30%
TOTAL	10	100%	10	100%

Table 4.13 is an indication that management and employees are aware of the challenges exists at Nigel Local Municipality. The Council needs to consider the recommendations that may add value to accelerate training for improved service delivery.

4.8 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED TO COMMUNITY OF NIGEL LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The following information was obtained through questionnaires that relate to Workplace Skills training for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality. A random survey was conducted with thirty-five respondents from different backgrounds, language, race groups and gender.

4.8.1 The extent that Workplace Skills training of employees with the Local Municipality can improve service delivery

Table 4.14 Extent of Workplace Skills training that can improve service delivery

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	35	100%
Total		35	100%

Table 4.14 indicates that respondents (100%) believe that Workplace Skills training of employees would indeed improve on the delivery of service within the Municipality. The public consider training as contributive factors for improve service delivery.

4.8.2 The importance of training for the development of employees

Table 4.15 Extent of training for the development of employees

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	35	100%
Total		35	100%

Table 4.15 indicates 100% agreement that training is imperative for the development of employees. Trained employees can provide effective services to the community.

4.8.3 The extent of services offered by the Nigel Local Municipality to the public, making the public to look forward to receive good services

Table 4.16 Extent of services offered by the Nigel Local Municipality to the Public, making the public to look forward to receive good service

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	20	60%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	15	40%
	To a very large extent	0	0%
Total		35	100%

Table 4.16 indicates that a great number (60%) of respondents are not satisfied with the quality of service rendered by the Local Municipality. A smaller number (40%) of respondents, however, are satisfied with the quality of service rendered by the Local Municipality. The Municipality needs to obtain information regarding the needs and expectations of the community. This information will assist the Municipality to render quality services to satisfy the community.

4.8.4 The importance of regular customer surveys to assess service that the public want to receive

Table 4.17 Extent of regular customer surveys to assess service that the public want to receive

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	35	100%
Total		35	100%

Table 4.17 indicates that respondents (100%) are of the view that regular customer surveys can serve as an important tool to measure and assess the level of service by the Nigel Local Municipality. Regular assessment of services will assist the service provider and the service users to improve and maintain the standards of service delivery.

4.8.5 The extent of quality service from the Nigel Local Municipality irrespective of background, gender, colour or creed

Table 4.18 Extent of quality service from the Nigel Local Municipality irrespective of background, gender, colour or creed

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	15	40%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	20	60%
Total		35	100%

A majority of respondents (60%) enjoy quality service from the Nigel Local Municipality, irrespective of their background. A smaller number of respondents

(40%) do not enjoy any quality service from the Local Municipality based on their background, colour and creed. Based on the opinions of the majority of respondents the service rendered by employees should be commended. Through consultation process the Municipality needs to discuss the issue with the community in order to reflect its objective view to render service beyond the boundaries of any form of discrimination.

4.8.6 The extent that Nigel Local Municipality employees strive for excellence in service delivery

Table 4.19 Extent that Nigel Local Municipality employees strive for excellence in service delivery

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	20	60%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	15	40%
	To a very large extent	0	0%
Total		35	100%

A great majority of respondents (60%) are of the view that the employees within the Nigel Local Municipality do not portray or strive towards excellence in service delivery. A smaller number of respondents (40%) believe that employees do strive for excellence in service delivery, and they are satisfied with the performance of employees. There is a need for employees to modify professional attitude in order to achieve performance excellence.

4.8.7 The standard of quality service delivery by the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.20 Extent of quality service delivery by the Nigel Local Municipality

	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	0	0%
Good	10	20%
Average	15	60%
Poor	10	20%
Can't tell	0	0%
Total	35	100%

Table 4.20 indicates the different responses in regard to the quality of service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality. A great number (60%) rate the quality of service offered by employees as average. A smaller number (20%) believe the quality of service is good, while an equal number of respondents (20%) believe the level of service rendered by the employees within the Local Municipality is very poor.

The Municipality needs to set a benchmark to provide quality services to the community. It further requires relevant training being offered to employees for improving service delivery.

4.8.8 The extent of interaction between the public and employees within the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.21 Extent of interaction between the public and employees within the Nigel Local Municipality

	Frequency	Percentage
Friendly	15	55%
Lazy	10	20%
Racist	3	8%
Unfriendly	5	10%
Disrespectful	2	7%
Rude	0	0%
Total	35	100%

A majority of respondents (55%) believe employees within the Nigel Local Municipality are friendly in their interaction with the public. A smaller number (20%) of respondents believe employees portray a lazy attitude when dealing with the public. The smaller number (10%) is also of the view that employees are very unfriendly when interacting with the public. The employees of Nigel local Municipality (8%) also seem to be racially prejudice towards the public. 7% believe that employees show disrespect to the public. The Municipality needs to adhere to the Batho Pele principles to show respect to the customers. The employees need to understand the mechanisms of customer care to develop respectful interaction with the public.

4.8.9 The extent of commitment from the Nigel Local Municipality for continuous service improvement

Table 4.22 Extent of commitment from the Nigel Local Municipality for continuous service improvement

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	25	70%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	10	30%
	To a very large extent	0	0%
Total		35	100%

Table 4.22 indicates that a great majority of respondents (70%) believe that there is no commitment from the employees for continuous service improvement. A smaller number (30%) however, are of the view that there is commitment and effort from employees for continuous service delivery improvement. The attitudes of employees (majority) suggest a possible problem of accountability and the need to realise the importance of service standards as encapsulated in the Batho Pele principles.

4.8.10 Respondents were asked to make recommendation in order to add value for improve service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.23 Recommendations to improve the service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality

	Frequency	Percentage
Employees should be more accountable	12	25%
Be courteous, showing respect to the public	10	20%
Employees should realise that they are employed to provide effective service	15	45%
Employees within Nigel Local Municipality should portray a more positive attitude towards customers	10	20%
Training of employees should be prioritise	15	45%
Council should make services more accessible to the public	5	10%
Swift response to queries	10	20%
Employees should work with more speed and effectively	5	10%
Training of customer care are also needed	5	10%
Communication with the public to determine the need of the public	12	25%
More staff at pay points, this will help with customers who had to spend time in long queues	15	45%
Residential areas are not always well maintained	3	7%
Pollution within residential areas that posed a health risk	10	20%

Table 4.23 is an indication that community wants to develop a co-operation relationship with the Municipality through effective dialogue. The Council needs to consider the suggestions and recommendations of the community in order to improve the service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.

4.9 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED TO SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPAL WORKERS UNION (SAMWU)

The following information was obtained through questionnaires that related to Workplace Skills Plan for effective services delivery posed to SAMWU Branch Secretary representative.

4.9.1 The extent of Workplace Skills Plan at the Nigel Local Municipality

Table 4.24 Extent of Workplace Skills Plan at the Nigel Local Municipality

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

Respondents (100%) are of the view that Nigel Local Municipality does have a Workplace Skills Plan in place.

4.9.2 The extent of how often training is offered

Table 4.25 Extent of how often training is offered?

	Frequency	Percentage
Annually	1	100%
Seldom	0	0%
Always	0	0%
Often	0	0%
Total	1	100%

The respondents (100%) are satisfied as training is offered on an annual basis. What is not highlighted or emphasised by the respondent is how often training is offered. The Workplace Skills Plan is an annual programme and there is no clarity to determine the frequency of training programmes offered at the Municipality.

4.9.3 The extent of training that is relevant to the Workplace

Table 4.26 Extent of training that is relevant to the Workplace

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

Respondents (100%) are of the view that the training offered is relevant to their work situation and related portfolios.

4.9.4 The source and provision of training

Table 4.27 The source and provision of training

Training Provider	Frequency	Percentage
Consultants	1	100%
The Training Department	0	0%
Both Consultants and Training Department	0	0%
Can't tell	0	0%
Total	1	100%

Respondents are of the view that the training offered to employees are conducted and offered by consultants only. The Training Department needs to reconsider its status and start offering training at Municipal Department level.

4.9.5 The extent that training improves productivity

Table 4.28 Extent that training improves productivity

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

Respondents (100%) believe that training contributes towards improvement of service delivery. Skilled and trained employees are able to perform efficiently in terms of service delivery.

4.9.6 The extent that employees gain skills through training

Table 4.29 Extent that employees gain skills through training

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

Table 4.29 indicates that respondents (100%) are of the view that employees gain the necessary skills through training programmes. Skills training of employees are a definite necessity.

4.9.7 The extent of training methods used for Nigel employees

Table 4.30 Extent of training methods used for Nigel employees

Training Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Computer	0	0%
Video	1	50%
Team building	0	0%
On-the-job training	0	0%
Off-the-job training	1	50%
Total	1	100%

According to respondents training methods used for training purposes are the utilisation of videos (50%), and off-the-job training (50%).

Response to the use of other alternative methods for training is not clear.

4.9.8 The importance of training venue

Table 4.31 The importance of the training venue

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

Table 4.31 indicates that respondents (100%) believe in the importance of venues and suggested that it should be suitable, easily accessible and equipped with the necessary resources.

4.9.9 The extent of the budget to be redirected to training needs

Table 4.32 Extent of the budget to be redirected to training needs

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	To no extent at all	0	0%
	Only to a limited extent	0	0%
	Do not know/can't tell	0	0%
	To a large extent	0	0%
	To a very large extent	1	100%
Total		1	100%

The amount that is budgeted towards training for the whole of the Ekurhuleni (inclusive) is R10 million annually. Respondents (100%) are of the view that a greater amount should be redirected to training needs, in order to enhance the skills of employees.

4.9.10 The performance rate of the Nigel Training Department

Table 4.33 Extent of performance of the Nigel Training Department

	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	0	0%
Not at all good	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Table 4.33 indicates that respondents (100%) are not at all pleased with the performance rate of the Nigel Training Department. The performance was rated as not at all good due to the inadequate and ineffective performance of Nigel Training Department, the services of consultants are required. The Training Department needs to improve the challenge through a self-assessment exercise.

4.9.11 Recommendation to add value for accelerated service delivery in the Nigel Local Municipality

Respondents were asked to make recommendations in an effort to add value for accelerated service delivery in the Nigel Local Municipality.

Respondents (100%) recommended the need for training to be accredited that will enable employees to utilise their skills for career enhancement.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the presentation, analysis and discussion of the research results. The next Chapter discusses the findings and conclusions deduced from the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study was an attempt to empirically explore the Workplace Skills Plan that is imperative to provide training and development for enhancement of skills that is vital for effective service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality. One of the main objectives of the study was to assess the implementations and effectiveness of the Workplace Skills Plan to provide training and development of employees for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.

The study was an attempt to achieve the following objectives:

- To give a theoretical exposition of the concept Workplace Skills Plan.
- To provide an overview of the extent of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality.
- To investigate the impact of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality.
- To provide a set of recommendations for effective service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality.

5.2 SUMMARY

In Chapter One, the researcher indicated that the Nigel Local Municipality implemented the Workplace Skills Plan that is approved by the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) for training and development of employees. However, through analysis of the Plan, the following problems were encountered: the skills planning and needs analysis was done in an haphazard manner; no evidence was found that suggest that this plan was derived from the strategic direction given in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of the Municipality, and that the plan is not aligned to the IDP.

The following research questions were considered for the study:

- What is meant by Workplace Skills Plan?

- What is the extent of Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality?
- What could be the impact of the Workplace Skills Plan at Nigel Local Municipality?
- What recommendations can be offered to add value to improve service delivery at Nigel Local Municipality?

Chapter Two dealt with a theoretical exposition of concepts, Workplace Skills Plan, training, development and service delivery. The legislative framework in terms of training and development and service delivery were explored.

The Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) refers to the strategic human resource training and development in order to enhance the workforce skills capacity thereby achieving the institutional goals contained in the policies and business plan of the institution. It is the strategic planning document relating to workplace training, career pathing and the employment equity for the municipality. It is related to the key municipal objectives regarding Integrated Development Planning (IDP), and to the priority training areas identified in the sector skills plans.

Chapter Three explored and dealt with the implementation and interventions of Workplace training at the Nigel Local Municipality. In terms of the Ekurhuleni Growth and Development Strategy, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is committed to improving skills levels. It will feed input regarding the local needs and priorities into the national skills development strategy.

The Workplace Skills Plan Report for training and development is demonstrated and reflected in the training reports that are inclusive for the Eastern Service Delivery Region (ESDR).

In terms of the Draft Integrated Development Plan (2007 – 2011) Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality Strategic objectives (inclusive) is to facilitate the acquisition of economic skills. As Interventions Plan, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will ensure the setting of skills development priorities aligned with

SETA (Sector Education and Training Authority) and Department of Labour. In order to enhance training and development, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will engage in partnership/agreement for sustainable development with academic institutions. Ongoing analysis of the economy will inform on the gap between supply and demand for skills required to boost competitiveness in the various sector of the economy.

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality will ensure among others that skills transfer forms part of its procurement policy. It is committed to fully implement the Workplace Skills Plan as submitted by each department.

Chapter Four focussed on the empirical study on Workplace Skills Plan for enhancement of skills that is paramount for effective service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality. The chapter dealt with an exposition of research concepts. It explained research methodology and technique, sampling and the tools of interviews and questionnaires. Data/information in regard to Workplace Skills Plan was obtained from interviews and questionnaires conducted with employees at different levels positions within the Municipality, members of the public and representatives from the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU). The objective of the empirical study was to determine the impact of Workplace Skills Plan to enhance the skills of employees for effective service delivery at the Nigel Local Municipality.

5.3 FINDINGS

5.3.1 Findings related to management response

5.3.1.1 Training offered to employees

Findings from the empirical investigation indicate that there is no agreement or consistency in terms of training offered to employees at the Nigel Local Municipality. Respondents do not seem to be informed and training programmes are not effectively communicated.

Table 4.2 reflects that 40% within management is of the view that training takes place very often. 20% are of the view that training takes place sometimes, while an equal number (20%) believes training always takes place with a further 20% who are of the view that training seldom takes place..

5.3.1.2 Training as key to improvement in the quality of life

Table 4.7 indicates that training is a necessary requirement for the improvement of the quality of life of the employee. Respondents (100%) are in agreement that training is very much central to the improvement of the quality of life on the employee.

5.3.1.3 Consultation on the importance of training

Findings from empirical investigation indicate that all respondents (100%) as indicated in table 4.9 believe that it is imperative to consult employees on the training programmes. Consultation will ensure that a specific need is addressed.

5.3.1.4 Public are dissatisfied with the level of service

Table 4.11 indicates that 60% of respondents are not satisfied with the quality of service rendered by the employees within the Nigel Local Municipality.

5.3.2 Findings related to employees within Nigel Local Municipality

5.3.2.1 Workplace Skills Training at Nigel Local Municipality

Findings from the empirical investigation indicate that a majority of respondent (40%) believe that Workplace Skills training is non-existent at their level. There is also a level of ignorance in terms of Workplace Skills training among some respondents (20%), with another 40% who is of the view that workplace training do take place as reflected in Table 4.1.

5.3.2.2 The extent of how often training is offered

Table 4.2 indicates mixed responses in terms of how often training takes place. 30% of respondents believe training takes place sometimes. A similar number, 30% are of the view that training seldom takes place. An equal number (30%) are also of the view that training always takes place. 10% responded as do not know. There is inconsistency in terms of training at Nigel Local Municipality.

5.3.3 Findings related to the public response

5.3.3.1 The public are not satisfied with the service rendered by Nigel Local Municipality

Findings from the empirical investigation indicate (Table 4.16) that 60% of respondents are not satisfied with the quality of service rendered by the Nigel Local Municipality. The public do not necessarily look forward to service offered by the local council. Services are not of standards due to negative attitudes and the lack of skills portrayed by employees.

5.3.3.2 Employees do not strive for excellence

From the findings of the empirical investigation, Table 4.19 indicates that 60% of respondents do not believe that the employees within the Nigel Local Municipality strive towards excellence in the execution of their tasks. Employees within the Nigel Local Municipality seem to be complacent.

5.3.3.3 Standard and quality of service

From the findings of the empirical investigation, Table 4.20 indicates that the quality of service by the employees within the Nigel Local Municipality is not at all good. 60% of respondents rated the service rendered by the council as average. There is a challenge for employees to improve and find ways to do and offer better service.

5.3.3.4 No commitment to improve service delivery

Findings from the empirical investigation indicate (Table 4.22) that 70% of respondents believe that there is a lack of commitment from the Nigel Local Municipality employees for continuous improvement in terms of rendering services. It is apparent that employees do not seem to be accountable towards the public. Employees portray a 'don't care' attitude in the manner and way they execute their duties.

5.3.4 Findings related to South African Municipal Workers Union's (SAMWU) response

Findings from the empirical investigation indicate (Table 4.33) that respondents (100%) are not satisfied with the performance of the Training Department of the Nigel Local Municipality.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical research undertaken in the context of this study has identified a number of weaknesses and strengths associated with the Workplace Skills training process of employees within the Nigel Local Municipality.

The importance of skills and competency of municipal employees cannot be over emphasised. A study conducted by SA Local Government Association (SALGA) since the 2006 local polls and completed late last year (2007), evaluated 7000 of the country's 9300 councillors, revealed that 32% of councillors require ABET training. It further revealed that one in three municipal councillors can not read or write and lack basic competency to run local government finances. Two-thirds of councillors, including those who serve on mayoral committees don't understand their roles and responsibilities. A number of councillors are not comfortable in doing business or being trained in English. The study revealed that 3% of councillors within the Gauteng province have a primary school education lower than Grade 7, 20% have secondary school education lower than Grade 11, with 38% who have certificates or diplomas etc. The depressing figures have been fingered as one of the main contributors for poor municipal service delivery (Mbanjwa, 2008 : 27).

It is in this context that several key recommendations are made:

- In terms of training and development for employees within the Nigel Local Municipality, there is a need from the employer to ensure that there is clarity, enough information, detail in terms of training opportunities for employees to gain further skills and competency.
- Information about training opportunities needs to filter to the lower levels of employees.

- Information about training and development and the opportunities for training should be well advertised and promoted and communicated more effectively.
- Consultation with employees about training programmes is imperative.
- It is important that there should be input from employees in terms of the training needs.
- Training programmes should be consistent with the training need of the employee. The training programme should fulfil the need of the employee.
- There should be consistency in how often training is offered.
- Employees need to be always aware of when and what training programmes and opportunities are available.
- Service standards should comply with the ideals of Batho Pele.
- Employees within the Nigel Local Municipal should be reminded that Batho Pele principles are not necessarily lofty and aloof but achievable.
- Setting service standards should be reinforced to ensure the public, citizens are satisfied with the service rendered.
- Employees should exercise and demonstrate more courtesy, ensuring that customers (public) are treated with much consideration and respect.
- Employees should endeavour in the execution of their unique tasks and responsibilities to perform to required standards that are precise and measurable so that the public (end users) can judge for themselves whether or not they are receiving what was promised, as stipulated in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997.
- Employees should strive to excel in manner and ways they render service.

The employee is the most valuable asset. Investment in the human resource (training and development) can only lead to better, faster people oriented services. Time and resources should be utilised to ensure a workforce that are competent to fulfil the need of the public.

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APPENDICE A

LETTERS

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011-360-4659 (W)
Cell: 073 278 5402
E-mail: cedwards@barotcarbide.com.

20 Gazelle Drive
Alra Park
NIGEL

E Ballies

Student No. : 20425155
Degree : Development & Management (Mini Dissertation) MA
Institution : North West University, Vaal Triangle
School of Basic Sciences
Public Management & Administration

To: Elizabeth Ramaoka
Research & Development Director
E-mail: ramaokae@ekurhuleni.com

Cc: Radebe, Thandi
CCC Nigel Head

Cc: Sidgauba Thami
ETD Manager

**SUBJECT: WORKPLACE SKILLS PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE
DELIVERY AT THE NIGEL LOCAL (MUNICIPALITY) AREA**

Dear Mrs Ramaoka

I am a student at North West University (Vaal), currently busy with MA – Mini Dissertation in Development and Management. As research title for my dissertation I intent to research and deal with the subject of Workplace Skills Plan for effective service delivery.

In order for this proposed title and subject to be accepted and approved I need to conduct my research within the Public dominion as opposed to the private domain (sector).

I want to request and appeal to whether it will be possible with your permission, to conduct my research on Workplace Skills Plan within Nigel Local (Municipality) Area.

I need to complete my dissertation within the next 12 months – 100 – 120 pages to be completed in October 2008.

As research methodology (method) I will employ and utilise empirical research and design through semi-structured interviews of HOD's and questionnaires to gather and acquire information. My target population is a sample of about 50 employees within the local Municipality to be interviewed and the completion of questionnaires on a convenient and random basis.

My hypothesis is to determine how the implementation of a Workplace Skills Plan can improve (better) performance level and service within Nigel Local (Municipality) Area.

Any problems in terms of Workplace Skills Plan evident within Nigel Local Municipality will be of particular interest to me. Please, advise me if possible.

I will also be grateful if the Council can furnish me with any (documented) data in terms of Workplace Skills Plan;

The number of employees employed at Nigel Local Municipality; the areas (communities) that the Council serves;

The level (position) of those within the Council (highest to lowest level).

I trust that my request will receive a favourable response.

With regards


EASTER BAEELIES

DATE: 17 OCTOBER 2008



Ekurhuleni
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

Nigel Customer Care Centre

Hendrik Verwoerd St.
Nigel

P. O. Box 23
NIGEL
1490

To: Mr. Ballies

Tel:

Fax:

From: ~~Customer Care Centre Manager: Nigel~~

Ms. Thandi Radebe

Email: radebet@ekurhuleni.com

Date: 13 November 2008

Tel: (011) 360 6000

Fax: (011) 814 4972

www.ekurhuleni.com

Subject: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A STUDY IN THE EKURHULENI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

Dear Mr. Ballies

Your letter dated 16 October 2007 requesting permission to conduct a study to measure the "Workplace skills plan for effective services delivery at the Nigel municipality area" is noted.

The department will be happy to assist in your research project once we have received the following documents:

1. Copy of your proposal
2. Confirmation of registration from your institute.

Once we have received this we will have to sign a contract which will specify things like how far we can assist in your data collection process and in particular sharing of the results of your study.

We look forward in working with you and hope that the results of your study will assist in our struggle to perfect service delivery.

Regards

Ms. Thandi Radebe
Customer Care Centre Manager: Nigel

TR/dk

QUESTIONNAIRES

APPENDICE B

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE: The Workplace Skills Plan for effective service delivery at Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality

RESPONDENT: Managers

INTRODUCTION

The student who authored this Questionnaire is pursuing a Masters Degree in Public Management and Development and will therefore appreciate your assistance in completing the Questionnaire as frankly as you possibly can.

Please read and answer carefully each question by making a cross in the appropriate block:

1. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------
2. Position

Top Management
Middle Management
Other
3. Does the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality (NLM) offer a Workplace Skills training to its employees?

Yes	No
-----	----
4. How often is training offered?

Sometimes	Seldom	Always	Often
-----------	--------	--------	-------
5. Is the training offered relevant to the work situation?

Yes	No
-----	----
6. Who offers the training?

Consultants	The Training Department	Both
-------------	-------------------------	------
7. Is training accessible to all levels of employees within the Nigel Local Municipality?

Yes	No
-----	----
8. Do you think that training will enhance and increase career progression of employees?

Yes	No
-----	----
9. Do you think that it is important that there should be monitoring and assessment of the impact of training offered?

Yes	No
-----	----
10. Do you believe that employees should be consulted on the choice of training programmes?

Yes	No
-----	----

11. Do you believe that training improves the self-esteem level of employees?

Yes	No
-----	----

12. Do you believe that training should be compatible with the municipality (organisational) mission, strategy, goals and culture?

Yes	No
-----	----

13. Do the public appreciate the quality of service rendered to them in the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?

Yes	No
-----	----

14. What shortcomings are evident at the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality which necessitate the prioritisation of training?

15. What recommendations can add value in an effort to accelerate effective training programmes at the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE: The Workplace Skills Plan for effective service delivery at Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality

RESPONDENT: Employees

INTRODUCTION

The student who authored this Questionnaire is pursuing a Masters Degree in Public Management and Development and will therefore appreciate your assistance in completing the Questionnaire as frankly as you possibly can.

Please read and answer carefully each question by making a cross in the appropriate block:

1. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------
2. Position

Top Management
Middle Management
Other
3. Does the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality (NLM) offer a Workplace Skills training to its employees?

Yes	No
-----	----
4. How often is training offered?

Sometimes	Seldom	Always	Often
-----------	--------	--------	-------
5. Is the training offered relevant to the work situation?

Yes	No
-----	----
6. Who offers the training?

Consultants	The Training Department	Both
-------------	-------------------------	------
7. Is training accessible to all levels of employees within the Nigel Local Municipality?

Yes	No
-----	----
8. Do you think that training will enhance and increase career progression of employees?

Yes	No
-----	----
9. Do you think that it is important that there should be monitoring and assessment of the impact of training offered?

Yes	No
-----	----
10. Do you believe that employees should be consulted on the choice of training programmes?

Yes	No
-----	----

11. Do you believe that training improves the self-esteem level of employees?

Yes	No
-----	----

12. Do you believe that training should be compatible with the municipality (organisational) mission, strategy, goals and culture?

Yes	No
-----	----

13. Do the public appreciate the quality of service rendered to them in the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?

Yes	No
-----	----

14. What shortcomings are evident at the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality which necessitate the prioritisation of training?

15. What recommendations can add value in an effort to accelerate effective training programmes at the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE: The Workplace Skills Plan for effective service delivery at Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality

RESPONDENT: Members of Community / Public

INTRODUCTION

The student who authored this Questionnaire is pursuing a Masters Degree in Public Management and Development and will therefore appreciate your assistance in completing the Questionnaire as frankly as you possibly can.

Please read and answer carefully each question by making a cross in the appropriate block:

1. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------
2. Race Group

Black	White	Coloured	Indian
-------	-------	----------	--------
3. Language

--
4. Social / Economic Status

Employed	Self-employed	Unemployed	Student
----------	---------------	------------	---------
5. Do you think that Workplace training of employees within the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality can improve service delivery?

Yes	No
-----	----
6. Do you think that training is important for the development of employees?

Yes	No
-----	----
7. Do you think that the services offered by Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality employees to the public is of quality making citizens to look forward to receive good service?

Yes	No
-----	----
8. Do you feel that regular customer surveys are important to assess service you want to receive?

Yes	No
-----	----
9. Do you think that the public enjoy quality service from the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality irrespective of background, gender, colour or creed?

Yes	No
-----	----

10. Do you think that the employees of the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality strive for excellence in service delivery?

Yes	No
-----	----

11. How would you rate the quality of service delivery by the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality to the public, using the scale below?

Very good	Good	Average	Poor
-----------	------	---------	------

12. In your interaction with the employees of Nigel Local Municipality, how would you rate customer care?

Friendly	Lazy	Racist	Unfriendly	Disrespectful	Rude
----------	------	--------	------------	---------------	------

13. Do you think that there is a commitment from the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality employees for continuous service delivery improvement?

Yes	No
-----	----

14. What are your recommendations to improve the service delivery at Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE: The Workplace Skills Plan for effective service delivery at Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality

RESPONDENT: South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU)

INTRODUCTION

The student who authored this Questionnaire is pursuing a Masters Degree in Public Management and Development and will therefore appreciate your assistance in completing the Questionnaire as frankly as you possibly can.

Please read and answer carefully each question by making a cross in the appropriate block:

1. Does the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality offer Workplace Skills Plan?

Yes	No
-----	----
2. If yes, how often is the training offered?

Annually	Seldom	Always	Often
----------	--------	--------	-------
3. Is the training relevant to their work situation?

Yes	No
-----	----
4. Who offers the training to them?

Consultants	The Training Department	Both
-------------	-------------------------	------
5. Does the training improve their productivity / service delivery?

Yes	No
-----	----
6. Do you think the employees gain skills through the training offered?

Yes	No
-----	----
7. Extent of training methods used for Nigem employees?

Computers	Video	Team Building	On-the-job training	Of-job training
-----------	-------	---------------	---------------------	-----------------
8. Where is the training offered?

Council Chambers	Elsewhere
------------------	-----------

9. Do you think the setting / training venue is important?

Yes	No
-----	----

10. Do you think that a greater amount of the budget should be redirected to training needs?

Yes	No
-----	----

11. How do you rate the performance of the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Training Department?

Very Good	
Good	
Average	
Not at all good	

12. What can you recommend in an effort to add value for accelerated service delivery in the Nigel (Ekurhuleni) Local Municipality?
