

AVETRA Conference 2004

New users of VET expect a new terminology.



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Terminology is all-important in the learning environment. *Lecturer, teacher, course and curriculum* are words that fit a learning model that centres on information transfer; they are words at odds with many contemporary uses of VET.

Centrelink Virtual College is an in-house enterprise RTO working hard to redefine VET practice in order for its application to be relevant to our core business, our learning professions and our learners. This redefinition of practice demands a new terminology.

This discussion will focus on in house enterprise uses of VET and its links to performance management, the new developing terminology, and the challenge to maintain high quality learning in different environments.

In 'Beloved', author Toni Morrison who won the Nobel Prize for literature and the Pulitzer prose for fiction, comments:

*"all of it is now it is always now there will never be a time when I am not crouching and watching others who are crouching and watching too I am always crouching the man on my face is dead his face is not mine his mouth smells sweet but his eyes are locked
some who eat nasty themselves I do not eat the men without skin bring us their morning water to drink we have none at night I cannot see the dead man on my face..."*¹

In the Army's Land Warfare Manual this explanation of Agents is made:

*"The agents of the ATS can be defined in terms of appointments which fall into two categories—functional and doctrinal. The functional appointments include TAs, training requirement advisers (TRAs) and panelling authorities (PAs). Doctrinal appointments include those who are required to facilitate the implementation of the ATS. They include training developers (TDs), training systems advisers (TSAs), training technologists (TTs), and training managers (TMs)."*²

Whilst it is easy to find barely decipherable paragraphs whose meaning is only clear to the initiated, I do want to take this opportunity make a number of comments about terminology and the effect it can have on VET relevance to enterprises.

¹ Morrison, Toni (1987) *Beloved*, Plume, Penguin Group, New York

² (1997) *The Handbook of the Army Training System, CHAPTER 2 Agents of the Army Training System, 2.1.2.2*

Gross expenditure on structured training for 2001/2 was over \$4 billion, and structured training only accounted for 41% of all training provided.³ Anecdotally, the percentage of this structured training that links to accredited outcomes is less than 10%.

Whilst we have focussed on what convinces enterprises to value training and learning (see Figgis et al, NCVER 2000) it would seem from the figures above that a commitment to training and learning in enterprises is not the problem. I would suggest the problem is simple and cost effective models allowing enterprises to link their employees learning to competencies and qualifications. If discussions are to occur in the boardrooms of enterprises, the talk needs to be around performance improvement and qualifications as a by-product of quality enterprise learning. The discussion needs to be driven from an HR perspective and delivered in performance assessment terminology.

It seems the push for a wider view of the uses of VET is coming from the enterprise RTO sector. Some interesting work has been done on human resource implications within TAFE institutes as they engage with changes in the VET landscape, (see McNicol and Cameron, NCVER, 2003 and Palmieri, NCVER, 2003) but by and large these studies have not addressed the wider issues of engaging enterprises.

As an aside, NCVER collection of training effort relies upon publicly funded providers and User Choice funding. Recent discussions between Centrelink and NCVER have centred on ways to feed Centrelink training effort into these figures. Centrelink's annual effort equates to a medium size TAFE college with over 3000 full qualification graduates in 2002/3.

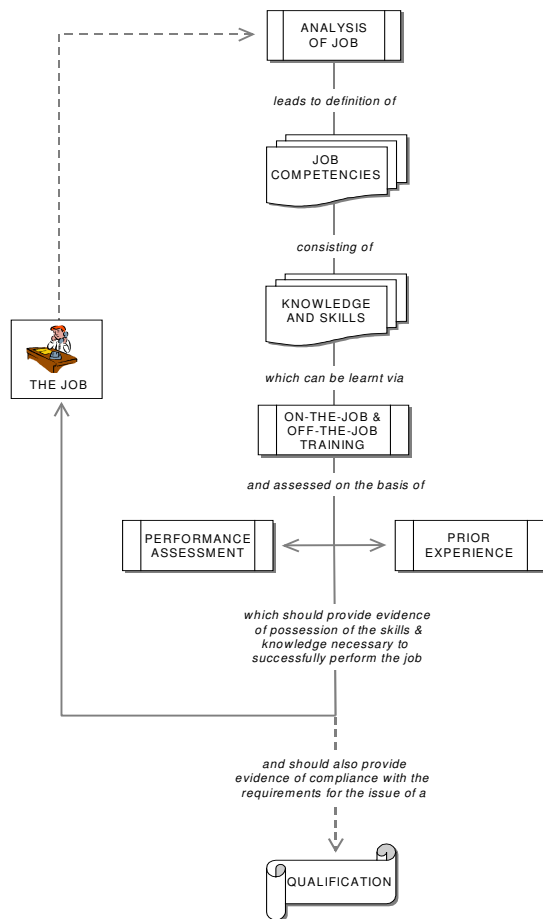
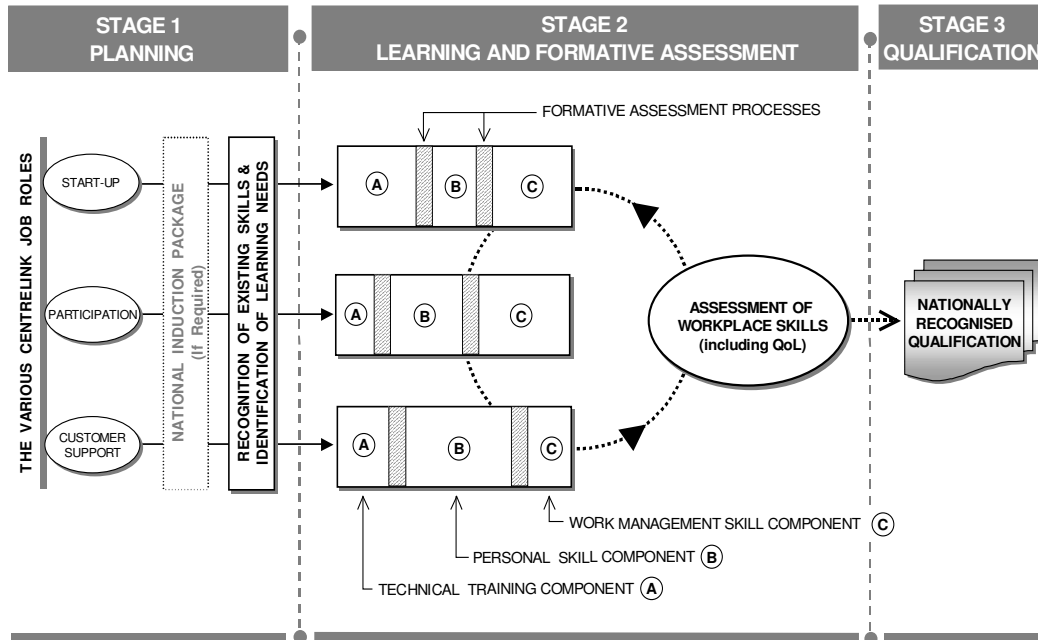
Assuming that this effort is duplicated in other enterprise RTOs, there is a very substantial VET effort not being recorded at all. If fee for service work done for enterprises by RTOs were added to this, then we have a large under reporting.

Centrelink has refined a learning and development model that links enterprise business needs to the NTF.⁴ The traditional approach to learning and assessment in enterprise-based RTOs is primarily based on assisting employees as students to learn, in order to gain a qualification. The traditional approach is a linear model that focuses on the individual acquiring competencies in order to satisfy the requirements for the qualification.

The new approach puts the emphasis on assisting employees to perform their jobs well and, as a result, gain a qualification. The new approach to learning and assessment is illustrated below and focuses on the job not on the learning. Analysis of the job leads to learning, and the demonstration of skills in the workplace. The assessment, along with other performance assessment processes, provides evidence toward qualifications. The model, when applied within Centrelink, tries to use existing reports and data generated as a normal part of an employees work, as evidence of competence.

³ ABS, (2001-02). Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Publication 6362.0

⁴ Centrelink Virtual College, (December 2003) A discussion paper summarising Centrelink Virtual College's proposed new approach to learning and assessment



For the VET industry to engage more effectively with enterprises and to raise the percentage of enterprise training that leads to qualifications, VET practitioners need to consider their role in performance assessment not just learning assessment. The transition should be easy as workplace assessment is performance assessment. The difference is in terminology.

Whilst the model is applied in Centrelink with a quality assurance processes in place and in action, there is a possibility that the model would allow for lowest common denominator learning experiences! The risk would be heightened in fee for service work where the intended output was achievement of a qualification. In Centrelink's case the achievement of a qualification is a benefit of learning job skills, not the purpose.

One example of Centrelink's focus on job relevant skills is the Customer Service Team Leader Development Program. This program provides learning for the Customer Service Team Leader job role, as well as generating evidence toward the Diploma of Business (Front Line Management). An overview of the program is attached.

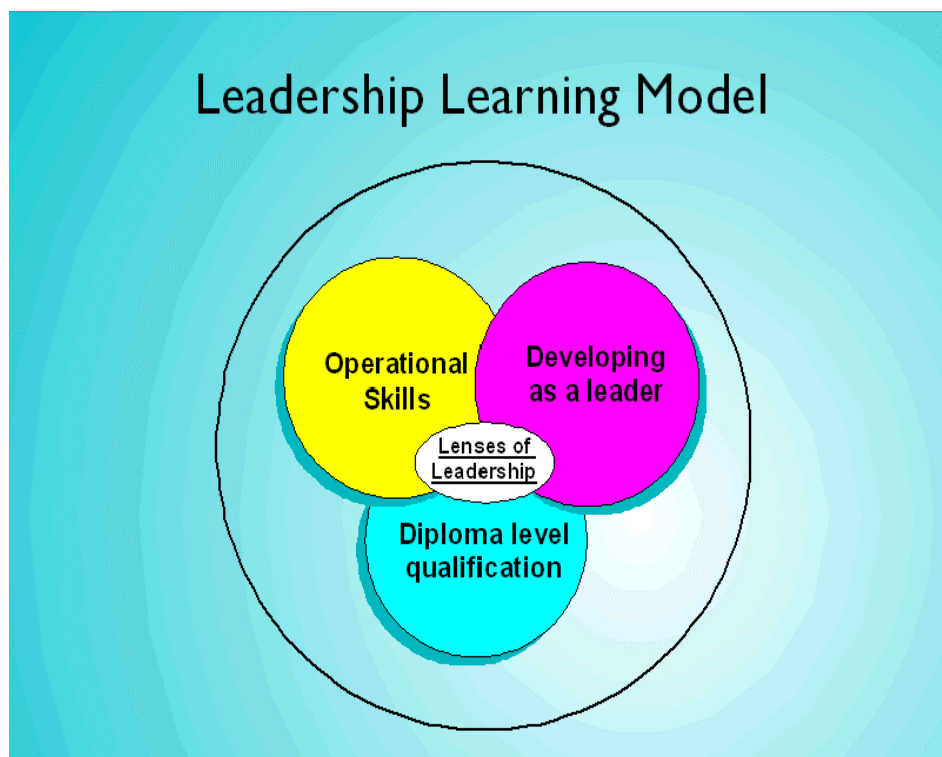


Team Leader Development for Customer Service Team Leaders

Giving You Learning Options

Welcome to the Customer Service Team Leader Development Program.

This program sits within the context of Centrelink's Leadership Development Framework, and complements the existing programs for Senior Executive and Managers. The program aims to provide a consistent approach to the development of all Customer Service Team Leaders, through a comprehensive set of modules for delivery by internal or external providers. It consists of three interconnected components:



Operational Skills

Aims to develop a Centrelink business focus and enable Customer Service Team Leaders to effectively use the available tools, products and processes to achieve business outcomes.

Developing as a Leader

Aims to introduce Customer Service Team Leaders to their role and responsibilities and to develop understanding and application of fundamental business and leadership concepts and skills.

Diploma of Business

Aims to develop a more strategic focus for experienced Customer Service Team Leaders across all of the Centrelink Leadership Capabilities to enable performance at the results and continuous improvement level.

Each component comprises a set of modules for face to face delivery:

Operational Skills Modules

GENERIC		CSC SPECIFIC	CC SPECIFIC
Legislation and Delegations	Customer Feedback	Workload Manager	Workforce Management Solution
APS Values	National Feedback Tool	Performance Monitoring	Quality - QUAK
Staffing your team (includes Probation, TPA and Selections)	QOLStat and QOLReports		Forecasting, Scheduling & Rostering - Variance Tool
OH&S and Prevention and Injury Management	INFOLINK		ACDMIS/Pulse
Managing attendance	SAMS		Essential Skills and Knowledge
Performance Assessment	Identify, verify and Protect		Phone Service Appraisal
Counselling for performance	Local Response Guidelines		Performance Tools including IAM
Compensation and Rehabilitation	Staff Poll		High Performance Mgt Training (HPMT)
Review of Actions	Deny Access		

Developing as a Leader Modules

BEING A LEADER	LEADING OTHERS	LEADING CENTRELINK BUSINESS	LEADING THE ORGANISATION
Exploring the Team Leader role	Communicating in teams	Business Acumen	Networking
Introduction to TLDP	Provide effective feedback	Focus on Performance	
Introduction to Leadership	Working with Diversity	Deliver quality customer service	
Self awareness	Managing conflict	Representing Centrelink	
Self care	Team planning	Community partnerships	
Manage your time	Teamwork		
	Team Problem Solving		
	Implementing change		
	Facilitating meetings		
	Developing our people		
	Capacity and contingency planning		

Diploma of Business (Front Line Management) Modules

Personal Effectiveness	Business Planning	Leading and Facilitating Change
Inspirational Leadership	Achieving Results	Leading and Developing People
Team Building	Continuous Improvement	Occupational Health & Safety

Links to accredited learning

Modules in the Diploma component lead to the attainment of a Diploma of Business (Frontline Management). Each module will be accompanied by a Workplace Project, which provides evidence of workplace competence for assessment purposes. Whilst the modules in Developing as a Leader and Operational Skills are not formally assessed they develop underpinning knowledge and skills for Diploma units. See the "Diploma links" map in the resources below for details.

Access the CSTLDP Resources

Implementation Handbook	<p>Everything you need to know about the background, structure, content and resources for the program. Guidance on identifying learning needs, packaging modules to construct a learning program and delivery of the program.</p>
<p>Skills and Knowledge Checklists Developing as a Leader Operational Skills</p>	<p>Identify the skills and knowledge developed in each module, as a checklist which can be used to determine current skills levels, learning needs and appropriate entry points into the program.</p>
<p>Modules</p>	<p>A list of the Developing as a Leader and Operational Skills modules, their aims and location. <i>Note: Learning Facilitators can access the Facilitator Guides through The CSTLDP Team Room.</i></p>
<p>Development Action Plan</p>	<p>Development planner for Team Leaders for use throughout the development program.</p>
<p>Workplace Achievement Portfolio</p>	<p>Framework for the creation of an ongoing record of achievements in the workplace.</p>
<p>Diploma Links</p>	<p>Maps program modules to underpinning skills and knowledge in the Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) units.</p>
<p>Diploma Learning and Assessment Structure</p>	<p>Over view of how the Diploma modules and Workplace Projects will be packaged together.</p>

Note: The Diploma component of the Program is currently under development.

The CSTLDP will be implemented at Area level to meet current Team Leader needs. For further information about the program please contact your [Area Learning Manager](#). For more information about the Project, contact the Project Manager.

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