Private Providers Enhancing Workforce Futures

Lisa Materano
ACT Committee Chair
Private Providers Enhancing Workforce Futures

Lisa Materano
Director
Blended Learning International
A. Massive Needs Ahead for the Skilling of Australia’s Workforce

Immediate future

– Skill shortages, emerging again in many areas, esp. banking and finance, technology, construction and mining (AFR, 25/8/2010)
– Lucky amongst Western Countries, for example we have very low unemployment (approaching 5% versus 9.4% in USA)
– Low unemployment places additional pressure on the labour market
A. Massive Needs Ahead for the Skilling of Australia’s Workforce cont.

Longer term future

– A rapidly aging population.
– Therefore productivity enhancement is essential.
– Productivity in all jobs can benefit from better skills and better training.
– The whole future of our economy and society rests on better skilling of our workforces.
– All jobs can benefit from better skills and better training.
A. Massive Needs Ahead for the Skilling of Australia’s Workforce cont.

According to Skills Australia 2010 (p2).........”we will need an additional 2.4 million people in the workforce with qualifications at Certificate III and higher by 2015, increasing to 5.2 million by 2025, to meet projected industry demand. In the short term (to 2015) the projected supply of qualifications based on a 2 per cent a year growth in enrolments was estimated to be well short of requirements. The workforce at this stage will be less skilled than is desirable and Australia will continue to depend on a targeted skilled migration program.”
B. Widespread Opportunities: Examples

From this it is clear that the whole economy requires skilling. Private Providers have and are continually contributing to the skilling of Australia’s workforce. Some of my experiences in this field include:

• **QANTAS**: Helping with traditional work force skills.

• **The National Library of Australia**: Knowledge Industry – Digitisation training resulting in enhancing skills of librarians.

• **ANU – Capstone R&D Program**, by skilling graduates we are helping the whole research sector by commercialising its product

• **Victorian Premiers Department** – by creating online education products, increasing the productivity of public servants.
C. The Dynamic Sector – Private Providers

- **Private providers, the dynamic sector:**
  - **Quick** to respond to workforce needs by our very nature.
  - Close to clients needs and responsive and dedicated to continuous improvement.
  - Some of us are global such as Navitas and Study Group demonstrating capabilities of Australian entrepreneurship.

- **TAFE’s and Universities are slower moving in comparison:**
  - They are not at the edge of demand like that of private providers.
  - **But** they have valid alternative complementary roles as comprehensive training providers building on tradition and, in universities, research skills.

- **Private Providers can drive innovation better though. And as well as large providers there are also small, creative and flexible firms in their many hundreds to do this.**
D. Getting partnerships RIGHT!

What is needed to go forward to make this work better for the private providers might be getting core partnerships right,

- **Example 1**: partnerships with industry eg work integrated learning. Case: surveys by Australian Education International show that international students value this highly and seek more

- **Example 2**: partnerships with other education providers, ie. ACPET and UC: a new model for pathways and partnership

- **Example 3**: the third is community partnerships, eg. Billabong and indigenous education and training
D. Getting partnerships RIGHT!

We all need to be skilled!

And VET and private providers play a crucial role in doing this and we can enhance our contribution to student outcomes via ensuring we build in these partnerships.