

they finish and sell – which also acts as motivation. The Business Place provide free short business skills training workshops and access to office services at cost.

Language was first seen as a slight challenge (since most parties needed to use their second language to be heard and understood). However, it was soon discovered that proper communication - where all parties listen to each other and then state their suggestions and concerns without judgment – was very possible and effective

Learner progress is becoming more and more evident. Although it is a time-consuming process to teach (some) slow-learners new skills, most of the learners exhibit remarkable levels of improvement. Learners are tutored on theoretical aspects which include health and safety, compliance with good housekeeping practices and this is applied to practical skills acquisition such as producing basic hand crafted furniture and performing wood finishing operations by conventional spraying. During the programme learners are taught standard operating procedures, including detailed equipment maintenance plans, timber procurement procedures, sales practices and bookkeeping.

The learners are very enthusiastic and eager to participate in all activities. For example when it comes to house-keeping at the end of the day, each learner will instantly start performing his favourite task e.g. packing away, sweeping, dust extracting or cleaning the machines.

The goal of this project is to assist the Kwanothemba Woodwork-shop to become a sustainable and profitable business. In doing so the workshop can become a cornerstone of the community - teaching wood working and production skills to the disabled, as well as the youth, and generating income for those involved. The plan is to start full scale production in April (2015) next year.

With well-maintained machines, skilled personnel, a solid business plan and most important a trained woodwork-shop manager, the workshop has the potential to not only generate additional income for people with disabilities, but also to be a place where skills can be learnt and passed on.

In order to ensure that the project is mutually beneficial to the University of Stellenbosch, the Kwanothemba Carpentry Workshop will also provide an opportunity for a fully qualified Master of Science Student, who specialises in Wood Product Science, to gain work experience relating to the management of wood production.

As a commitment to work placement post training, trained individuals are to be placed permanently at the Kwanothemba Wood Workshop



Before Workshop Upgrade March 2014



After Workshop Upgrade August 2014



Mr. Pekani showing off the new Band-saw



Mr. Mokhashane showing off the new Table-saw

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