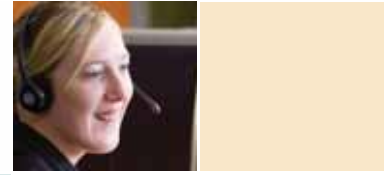


Kia mōhio

Issue 04 | April 2008



**LEARNING
STATE** 

Kia mōhio
Kia mārama
Kia mahara

Leading workplace learning in the State sector

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Answering the call for improved services

At Learning State, we are always exploring how we, your industry training organisation, can support you to continually improve the public's experience of your services.

THIS IS IN LINE WITH the Government's goal of world class professional State Services. One of the goals that contributes to this is accessible State Services. This will be achieved by enhancing access, responsiveness and effectiveness to improve New Zealanders' experience of State Services.

We know that people accessing services want to feel they've been heard and that their individual circumstances have been taken into account. Your employees who deal directly with members of the public must therefore be highly skilled. Because many people access State Services by telephone, contact centres have a particularly important role to play.

We work with a wide range of State sector agencies, like Land Transport New Zealand, to develop their contact centre employees. The contact centre operators have to exhibit a wide range of skills, including the ability to understand the caller's underlying needs, assess what is required to meet those needs, and gather the necessary information and advice to fulfil the needs.

Our workplace learning programmes provide staff with the skills they need. Moreover, the skills are transferable across the State sector and can be developed through to management level.

In this newsletter

On page 2, you can read about our work with the contact

centre of Land Transport New Zealand. This agency is rising to the challenge of providing excellent services to New Zealanders. Learning State congratulates Land Transport New Zealand and its 100 graduates to date.

'We tailor programmes to meet your agency's needs.'

We highlight our new approach to working with member agencies on page 3. We're committed to working with you right at the start of your training needs analysis, so that we can ensure the workplace learning that gets delivered gives you the measurable outcome you need.

Our point of difference is that we don't take a 'one size fits all' approach. We tailor programmes to meet your agency's needs.

The State Sector Induction Programme is another example of how we're taking a much more strategic approach to State sector needs. The programme pilot has been completed, and we're now preparing to roll the programme out later this year. Read more about it on page 4.

Finally, we're pleased that our annual report for the year to 30 June 2007 has been published. You can read more about it on page 4 and a copy is enclosed with this newsletter.



MICHELLE MANLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michelle Manley

**IN KIA
MŌHIO...**

**PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST
AT LAND TRANSPORT
NEW ZEALAND**
Hundredth graduate

**WE'RE HERE TO
HELP YOU**
New approach to
client service

**STATE SECTOR
INDUCTION
PROGRAMME**
Pilot programme complete

FRESH THINKING!
Annual report published

JUST THE JOB
Opportunities for
young people



Ellena Crafar, one of 100 successful graduates of Land Transport's Contact Centre qualification

Putting people first at Land Transport New Zealand

When it comes to client service, Land Transport New Zealand has a hundred great examples of how it's achieving this.

LAND TRANSPORT NEW ZEALAND has just put its hundredth staff member through the National Certificate in Contact Centre Operations, level 3. The qualification is part of a professional development programme that began in 2004, supported by Learning State.

Mark Cooke, Senior Advisor in Land Transport New Zealand's People and Culture Group, says: 'Over the past few years, we have greatly improved our training for staff in the contact centre. We have a strong induction programme of customer service, and this Learning State programme really complements that induction by bringing together all its aspects into a qualification.'

Beginnings

When Learning State came on board, Land Transport New Zealand was already running an impressive internal training programme, with three skilled trainers. However, the training was outside the National Qualifications Framework. Land Transport New Zealand wanted to align what it was doing with the framework so that it could measure competency against recognised standards.

The first step was to put the three trainers through the qualification to become registered assessors. Then the wider programmes for staff could begin.

Like all programmes that Learning State offers, this one has a built-in career pathway. All contact centre staff have the opportunity to do the level 3 qualification. Some staff then move into other areas of the business, like finance or business administration, where they have opportunities to do other qualifications at the same level. If a staff member is promoted to a team leader position anywhere in the agency, they can complete the National Certificate in First Line Management (NCFLM) at level 4, and then a level 5 management qualification.

Michelle Charlton, Contact Centre Manager, has done just that. She has 16 team leaders reporting to her and did the NCFLM to lead by example.

She has now completed the level 5 National Certificate in Public Sector Services – Middle Management. 'I came from the private sector,' she says, 'so it was good to get a qualification about the public sector.'

Measuring success

So how does Land Transport New Zealand measure the success of its professional development programme, apart from the ability to measure competency against recognised standards?

Mark comments: 'A very high rate of people take the opportunity to do the level 3 qualification – somewhere in the region of 75 or 80 percent. We also tend to retain people who are doing it, although other factors are involved in staff retention too.'

Measuring the effect on the public's experience of services is a little harder. Mark says service quality is mostly judged by the fact that the qualification is a recognised industry standard. 'If you meet that standard, you must be doing a good job.'

Want to find out more?

If you'd like to find out more about how Learning State can help you develop your contact centre and client service capability, contact us on 04 495 1410.

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'It gets people excited'

STAFF WHO do the National Certificate in Contact Centre Operations at Land Transport New Zealand experience a significant improvement in their skill level, and their colleagues catch on to their excitement.

That's the view of Ellena Crafar, who works in the contact centre of Land Transport New Zealand in Palmerston North. She recently graduated with a National Certificate in Contact Centre Operations, level 3.

Ellena says: 'I've been working in call centres for about three years, and I thought this would help me to further my opportunities here. We get a lot of time to do the qualification, and there are incentives, so there was nothing stopping me really.'

'I felt I was able to prove myself, to show that I can and do give great customer service. And it did open up a few more views too, like different ways to relate to customers. People around me have seen what I've done and they now want to do it too, so it gets people excited.'

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We're here to help you

Learning State recently re-focused its services to better serve State sector agencies. In this article, we highlight what this will mean for you as a member agency.



Learning State staff are here to help. Back row (left to right) John Cudby, Loretta Garrow, Craig Thomson. Front row (left to right) Tessa Siolo-Thompson, Meripii Haimona-Fee, Loretta Rutene, Patricia Pooley, Angela Banfield, Mark Chiaroni. Missing from the photo are Mrinal Mandorswale and Mose Pio.

AT LEARNING STATE, there's been a significant change to delivering services to State sector agencies. This is in response to the development goals for the State Services, and the need for agencies to have a much tighter focus on workplace learning that delivers quality, advanced learner achievements in knowledge and skills that are a priority for the State sector as a whole.

Before this shift, Learning State focused on providing operational workplace learning advice and support to agencies, on demand.

John Cudby, Manager of Agency Services at Learning State, explains the change:

'Over the next three years, Learning State will move to providing a strategic service to agencies. For you, this means that you'll start to see Learning State working with your agencies as a strategic partner right up front, at the point where your agency workplace needs are first identified.'

'Learning State will then help you to develop and implement both generic and customised development programmes, and measure results.'

'Learning State's work will be strongly grounded in research, so that the wider skills needs of the State sector can be identified, prioritised and translated into workplace learning results for your agencies.'

'The Agency Services team at Learning State will develop the relationship with you. They work directly with agencies like yours to identify and plan workplace learning needs and to develop, implement, and monitor learning programmes.'

'An advisor and a senior advisor from the team are responsible for forming and maintaining relationships with specific agencies. This achieves continuity in our work – and you know who to contact and what to expect each time. Find your agency's advisor at www.learningstate.govt.nz by clicking on 'Contact us' and then 'Advisors'.'

'Our improved learner management systems help us respond more effectively to your questions about learners. And we have developed a strong network of regional advisors who deal specifically with the Modern Apprenticeship programme. They are now more accessible to provide support for learners.'

What's coming up?

Learning State will be running four forums in 2008, to get your feedback, better understand your needs, and support best practice in workplace learning. The forums will be targeted at public sector learning and development specialists, workplace assessors and Modern Apprenticeship coordinators. We will give you more information about dates and venues in the near future.

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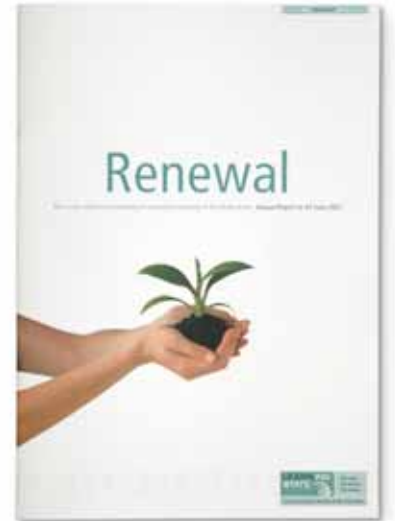
We've got some fresh thinking!

LEARNING STATE'S recently published annual report highlights the organisation's fresh thinking on workplace learning in the State sector.

It heralds a significant shift for Learning State. The organisation now works with you right at the start of your training needs analysis, to ensure that learning opportunities meet the needs of the agency and the individual as well as the wider State sector. For more information, see the article – 'We're here to help you' – on page 3.

Learning State's Executive Director Michelle Manley said: 'Our annual report provides more than simply a review of the year that was. It signals our new direction, and gives our members good information about what they can expect from us going forward.'

If you'd like more copies of the annual report, contact us at info@learningstate.govt.nz, and we'll send you some.



Highlighting opportunities for young people

LEARNING STATE is always looking for opportunities to interest young people in working for the State Services. A new series of the career programme *Just the Job*, on TVNZ, provides a great chance to do just that.

Learning State has partnered with two government agencies – New Zealand Customs Service and the Department of Conservation – to feature career opportunities for young people in the State Sector, to gain national qualifications on the job.

The upcoming series of *Just the Job* will highlight the roles of a Customs officer and a Department of Conservation ranger. The series targets careers advisors,

secondary school students and their parents or caregivers. It provides a snapshot of various roles and jobs and their key responsibilities.

Each episode of the series features a young person visiting a public sector agency to get some hands-on work experience in an area that's of interest to them. They are teamed with a mentor from the agency, who shows them various aspects of the role or job that they're interested in. The series also highlights the agency and its main activities, and hears from staff about the role that's being profiled.

The new series of *Just the Job* goes to air later this year. DVDs of the series get sent to every secondary school in New Zealand.

Induction Programme: pilots complete

LEARNING STATE has recently completed the State Sector Induction Programme pilot.

It was trialled with staff from the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Economic Development. The programme comprises five learning modules. Together

they form a comprehensive induction to the State sector.

The Induction Programme will be rolled out later this year and Learning State advisors will be in touch with agencies to provide more information nearer the time.

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Contact us at feedback@learningstate.govt.nz to let us know your comments on this newsletter. Your suggestions for improvements or future articles are welcome.

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