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**Increasing the Impact of Industry Training Investments in
the Horticulture Industry:
A Model for 'Best Practice' Industry Training in the
Horticulture Industry in New Zealand**

**A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Degree
of Master of Professional Studies at**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project investigates industry-training practices that are occurring in horticulture businesses in New Zealand and the facilitation practices that are employed by the New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (NZHITO) to assist businesses with industry training and learning by undertaking a qualitative research survey of staff who are responsible for industry training in horticulture businesses and the NZHITO in New Zealand.

A literature review investigates industry training practices in other industries in New Zealand and overseas, and looks at industry training in the horticulture industry within the wider context of issues facing the industry and the tertiary education sector in meeting the skills and productivity needs of the industry. The literature review looks at the relationship between productivity and industry training. It looks at the findings on best practices in industry training that foster a learning culture in businesses, and provides information on barriers to successful industry training in other industries.

The research survey examines what constitutes ‘best practices’ in industry training in the horticulture industry, and what are the outcomes, or benefits of successful industry training for employers and industry trainees. The key factors that contribute to successful industry training are identified and the barriers that hinder successful industry training with employers, industry trainees and the NZHITO are identified.

The research findings are used to analyse the learning to performance process in horticulture industry training, and to develop a high impact-learning model (HILM) for industry training that incorporates ‘best practice’ industry training practices for the NZHITO to assist businesses to improve industry-training practices and to gain more impact from their industry training investments.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

Most industry training and learning that occurs in the horticulture industry in New Zealand occurs on an ad-hoc basis, where an employer trains staff on the job to undertake the tasks required of them. An employee trained in this manner may become skilled at those tasks, but may have a limited understanding of the underpinning knowledge behind the tasks, and will not receive formal recognition for the skills and knowledge acquired.

Where industry training is formalised, the New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (NZHITO) assists the employer to train his/her industry trainees. Established in 1992, the NZHITO¹ facilitates industry training in all sectors of the horticulture industry throughout the country. The horticulture sectors in which the NZHITO facilitates industry training include amenity horticulture (parks and reserves), fruit, vegetable and flower production, the post harvest sector, nursery production, arboriculture, landscape, viticulture and floristry.

Formalised industry training of horticultural employees where industry training is facilitated by the NZHITO is a three way partnership between the employer, the industry trainee, and the NZHITO Training Advisor. Most industry training is achieved on the job with a workplace trainer and assessor, normally the supervisor or manager of the trainee. This process, along with the provision of any specialist off-job training and learning is facilitated and monitored by the NZHITO Training Advisor, who works closely with the employer and the trainee. Industry training is more successful in some businesses than in others, and in order to gain the best outcomes or benefits from industry training, and maximise the return on investment in industry training, it is important to understand what industry training practices work well and why they work.

¹ All abbreviations are written out in full the first time they are used in this dissertation. To assist the reader they are also included in a table of abbreviations in Appendix 1.

It is also important to gather information on issues facing the industry and the education sector so that there is a greater understanding of the skills and education needs of the horticulture industry and how these can be met within the wider context of tertiary horticulture education and training in New Zealand.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

This research project investigated industry training practices that were operating in businesses in the horticulture industry in New Zealand, and facilitation practices employed by NZHITO Training Advisors to assist in industry and training and learning. The research project also investigated industry training practices in other industries in New Zealand and overseas, and it looked at industry training in the horticulture industry in New Zealand within the wider context of the issues facing tertiary horticulture education and training to meet the skills and productivity needs of the horticulture industry in 2008 and in the future.

The research determined the following:

- What industry training practices were businesses in the horticulture industry using in successful industry training to find out what is industry training ‘best practice’?
- What were the outcomes and benefits of successful industry training for horticulture businesses, and for the industry trainees?
- What were the key factors that contributed to successful industry training?
- What were the barriers that hindered successful industry training and learning?
- What facilitation practices were used by NZHITO Training Advisors to assist businesses with industry training in the horticulture industry?
- How could the facilitation of industry training in the horticulture industry in New Zealand be improved to assist businesses to gain more impact from their industry training investments?

The information gained from the research was used to develop a High Impact Learning Model (HILM) for the facilitation of effective industry training practices in the horticulture industry in New Zealand. An outcome of the findings of this study was to provide the NZHITO with a practical, credible and strategically useful strategy

to assist horticultural businesses in New Zealand to achieve ‘best practice’ industry training practices. This will increase the impact of industry training investments in the industry and build organisational learning capability and productivity in horticulture businesses in New Zealand. An additional practical outcome of the research will be to encourage more horticulture businesses to engage in formalised industry training to meet the skills and productivity needs of the industry.

1.3 Overview of the Methodology Used

To determine what is industry training ‘best practice’ in the horticulture industry in New Zealand a qualitative survey of 19 horticulture businesses across a range of horticulture sectors, with a geographical spread throughout New Zealand, was undertaken. These businesses were chosen because they are particularly successful in their industry training in terms of industry trainee’s credit and qualification completion, and were recommended by their NZHITO Training Advisors. The purpose of the survey is to determine what industry training practices are being undertaken in horticultural businesses in New Zealand where industry training is known to be successful and what industry training practices are seen as keys to that success. Following on from this what are the outcomes, or benefits associated with industry training in these businesses, and what are the barriers that hinder successful industry training and learning?

A survey of four of the fourteen NZHITO Training Advisors was undertaken to determine what facilitation practices they find are effective in helping businesses to achieve successful industry training. The purpose of this survey is to determine what facilitation practices NZHITO Training Advisors use in the facilitation of industry training, and to identify the outcomes and benefits of industry training for the horticultural businesses they work with, and the barriers to successful learning and training from the perspective of the facilitator of industry training.

The information gained in the interview survey is used to develop a HILM for the facilitation of effective horticulture industry training. An outcome of the findings of this research project will be to provide the NZHITO with a practical, credible and useful strategy to assist horticultural businesses in New Zealand to achieve ‘best practice’ industry training practices. This will increase the impact of industry training investments in the industry and build organisational learning capability and

productivity in horticulture businesses in New Zealand. The information on the benefits of industry training found during this research project will be disseminated to the wider horticulture industry. It is hoped this will encourage more employers to engage in formalised industry training and that consequently there will be an increase in productivity and capability of the industry as a whole.

A literature review was undertaken to gain a greater understanding of industry training practices in other industries in New Zealand and overseas, and to collate information on the issues facing the horticulture industry, and the skills and training needs of the industry in New Zealand.

1.4 Structure of the Report

This dissertation initially provides information on the background of horticulture industry training by NZHITO. The literature review section then provides information on industry training practices in New Zealand and overseas and investigates the relationship between productivity and industry training. It looks at the findings in the literature on best practices in industry training that foster a learning culture in businesses, and provides information on the barriers to successful industry training. The literature review also establishes the role that government mandates Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) in New Zealand to have in education and training within their industries. The issues facing tertiary training and education in meeting the skills and productivity needs of the horticulture industry in 2008 and beyond are also reviewed.

Next the methodology of the qualitative survey of the industry training practices of horticulture businesses and facilitation practices of NZHITO Training Advisors is described and an analysis is made of the findings of the survey.

Then the information gained in the survey and in the literature review is brought together in the conclusions and recommendations, where best practices in industry training are summarised, along with best practices in the facilitation of industry training. The outcomes and benefits of successful industry training are described and the key factors that contribute to successful industry training practices are outlined. The barriers to successful industry training are described. A HILM for the facilitation of successful industry training is developed for the NZHITO to use to assist businesses to improve the impact of industry training.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Most industry training and learning that occurs in the horticulture industry in New Zealand occurs on an ad-hoc basis, where an employer trains staff on the job to undertake the tasks required of them. An employee trained in this manner may become skilled at those tasks, but may have a limited understanding of the underpinning knowledge behind the tasks, and will not receive formal recognition or a qualification for the skills and knowledge acquired.

Where industry training is formalised with the NZHITO, the NZHITO assists the employer to train his/her industry trainees. Established in 1992, the NZHITO facilitates industry training in all sectors of the horticulture industry throughout the country. These horticulture sectors include amenity horticulture (parks and reserves), fruit, vegetable and flower production, the post harvest sector, nursery production, arboriculture, landscape, viticulture and floristry.

NZHITO Training Advisors work with employers to facilitate on-job industry training and learning that will up-skill industry trainees in the practical tasks undertaken on the job, and meet the skills and productivity needs of the business. The NZHITO Training Advisors also facilitate off-job learning opportunities with specialist tutors where trainees learn the underpinning theory behind business practices, such as the horticultural science and horticultural management practices. Off-job training and learning opportunities in specialist practical skills are also facilitated.

Industry training normally takes three years. It results in formal recognition of achievement by enabling the trainee to complete national qualifications in horticulture on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) at levels 2 to advanced level 4. Training not only increases the skills and knowledge of the trainee, but it improves the capability and productivity of the business, and it provides succession to the supervisory and management positions within the business.

Training with the NZHITO is funded by the Government agency, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), along with an industry fee. There are two funding levels available for industry training: the Standard Training Measure (STM) for industry trainees aged over 21 and the Modern Apprentice (MA) funding for trainees

aged 16 to 21. MA funding is a higher rate to allow for additional pastoral support by NZHITO Training Advisors for these trainees².

Not all formalised industry training is successful. Some businesses and trainees achieve positive outcomes from industry training, in terms of regular progress with training measured by trainee credit completions and qualification achievements, and increased business capability and productivity. Others have poor outcomes for industry training, with slow credit achievement, poor qualification completions, trainee and employer dissatisfaction and poor productivity outcomes for the business. There is a continuum of business between those two extremes.

The variability in the success of horticulture industry training raises questions around why some businesses are successful in leveraging positive outcomes from their industry training practices while others are not so successful. This research project aims to determine what industry training practices are occurring in businesses where industry training is successful – in other words what is industry training ‘best practice’. What are the key factors contributing to successful industry training? And following on from this what are the outcomes and benefits of industry training for the businesses investing in it and the trainees undertaking it. What are the barriers that hinder that success? And whether these barriers are with the industry trainee, the business or with the NZHITO. What is an effective model for horticulture industry training that will enable businesses to gain greater leverage from their investment in training, and achieve successful outcomes in terms of business capability and productivity, and skills and qualification achievement for trainees?

2.2 Literature Review

New Zealand and international publications on industry training practices in a range of industries were reviewed to provide information with which to build awareness and understanding of industry training practices in New Zealand and overseas, and to provide information on current horticulture industry skills and training issues. The literature review provided information on the following:

- A suitable definition of industry training

² Personal communication with Mike Finlayson, CEO of NZHITO 3 November 2008.

- Information on the link between productivity and industry training
- The best practices in industry training
- The benefits of industry training, both for the companies involved and for the learners, or industry trainees
- Barriers to successful completions in industry training
- The role Industry Training Organisations take in industry training
- Issues facing the horticulture industry in New Zealand in terms of tertiary training and education and the wider horticulture education and training requirements for the industry from 2008 to 2011.

2.2.1 Industry Training Practices in New Zealand and Overseas

2.2.1.1 Definition of Industry Training

Industry training can occur in businesses for permanent employees, casual employees and contractors who work for specific times of the year or perform specific tasks within the workplace. Most industry training is informal training – that is, it is not formally assessed or tested. Training may take the form of observation and instruction from supervisors or peers, demonstrations by supervisors, or it may take the form of seminars, short courses or field days outside the workplace.

Industry training may be formalised, especially for permanent employees. In this case industry training may be defined as: skill or competency-based training undertaken by employees, primarily on-the-job (ie work-based) resulting in a formal nationally-recognised qualification, primarily at levels 2 to 4 on the NQF. This generally takes around three years (Pells, Steel, & Cox, 2004). Pells assumed that industry training results in a higher wage on gaining the qualification.

Curson (2004) noted that workplace learning is the formal acquisition of skills and knowledge in the workplace. It can be employer based where the learner is an employee in their place of work, or work based, where someone who is not an employee comes to the firm for the purpose of training. Knowledge and skills obtained in the workplace are formalised with assessment and achievement of units standards and national qualifications. Workplace learning may be supported by off-site education and training on a regular or occasional basis.

The Scottish Government (2002) stated that work based learning is any training that relates directly to the requirements of the jobs in an organisation. A key aspect is the direct involvement of the employers that can range from hosting a period of work experience to delivery of training entirely in the workplace. This is seen as an important source of skills development as the employers are the end users of the skills created. It is particularly effective as it gives trainees realistic hands-on experience and develops skills relevant to employer needs.

Fraser (2005) looked at small businesses and industry training. She found many small businesses were reluctant to engage in formalised industry training, believing that in-house informal training works best for them. She found that small business owners need to be persuaded of the benefits of formal training for their employees. She looked at the types of learning in small businesses, and how links between formal and informal training could be made in small businesses by engaging with ITOs. She graphed the types of training, as she saw them within a quadrant and illustrated the links between formal and informal training in the following way:

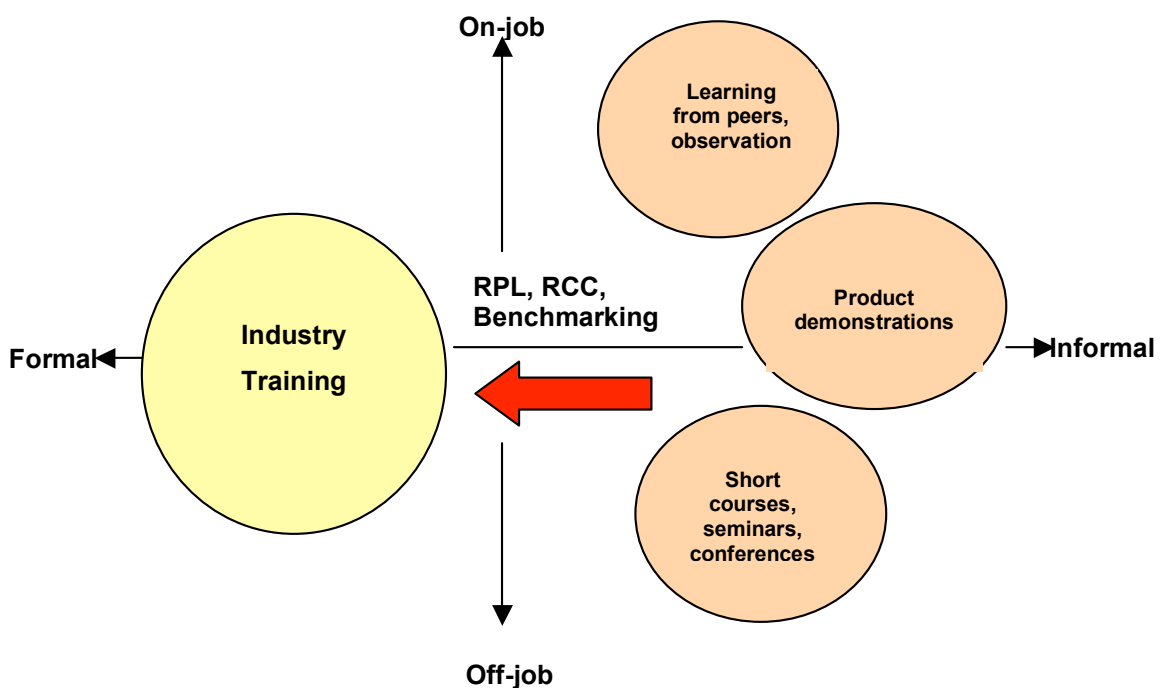


Figure 1. Industry training and informal learning (Fraser, 2005 P 16)

(Note: RPL stands for Recognised Prior Learning, RCC stands for Recognised Current Competency)

This diagram provides a useful visual representation of the relationship between formal and informal industry training, their degree of formality and the method of training both on and off the job. It also provides a link between informal training and formal training, with an ITO being able to benchmark knowledge and skills gained in informal training by the processes of Recognised Prior Learning and Recognised Current Competency.

Formal or informal industry training may be provided by in-house staff such as supervisors, line managers or peers, and/or an external provider, such as a Private Training Establishment (PTE), a Polytechnic or Institute of Technology (ITP), a Consultant, a University, or an Industry Training Organisation (ITO). In a 2007 skills and training survey of 536 New Zealand businesses, it was found that 90% of businesses that responded to the survey had provided some form of training for their staff in the past 24 months, although the median amount of training provided per employee was only two days. Training in skills most commonly cited as being important to the needs of the businesses were specific trade and technical skills, followed by communication skills and literacy and numeracy skills. The most popular form of training offered (by 73 percent of the responding businesses) was external courses, that is training provided by people or organisations outside the business. Most of the training was informal, with under half of the respondents using formal training for 0-30 percent of their total training efforts. In-house line staff provided 56 percent of training, Private Training Providers or Consultants provided 54 percent of training and Industry Training Organisations provided 52 percent of training (Green, Huntington & Summers, 2008).

These statistics support Fraser's (2005) findings and suggest that much industry training is not formalised, and that there is room for ITOs to increase their engagement with businesses by assisting businesses to put structure in to training, linking achievements in skills and knowledge with national qualifications.

2.2.1.2 Productivity and Industry Training

Harvey and Harris (2008) found that investment in industry training increases productivity and capability in the workplace if it is accompanied by the adoption of human resource (HR) practices that improve employee engagement and employee motivation. They found that to be effective industry training needs to be an integral part of the business strategy, and the organisation of the business needs to ensure

employees are given the opportunity to use new skills. They defined the seven drivers of productivity as: building management and leadership capability, creating productive workplace cultures, encouraging innovation and the use of technology, investing in people and skills, organising work, networking and collaborating, and measuring what matters. The nature of formalised industry training, where industry training results in national qualifications impacts positively on the above productivity drivers.

Industry training gives employees, or industry trainees the skills and knowledge to become the supervisors, managers and leaders of the future – their training should be an integral part of succession planning in business. The coaching and mentoring relationships developed between good workplace trainers and their industry trainees encourage the development of productive workplace cultures, and if there are several industry trainees, the comradeship of studying and working together contributes to teamwork and supportive working relationships. The knowledge and skills gained during industry training mean that industry trainees learn the ‘why’ behind practical workplace practices. This means they have the skills and knowledge to contribute effectively to problem solving, decision making, and the innovation and implementation of new ideas and technological advances. Investing in training is an investment in people, and in skills development (Industry Training Federation (ITF), 2007).

Harvey and Harris (2008) suggested that supportive HR practices in training depend on effective management capability and leadership, and that industry training facilitates innovation and the use of more sophisticated technologies, and contributes to more productive workplaces.

Firm Foundations (Knuckey, Johnston, Campbell-Hunt, Carlaw, Corbett, & Massey, 2002) a report to the Ministry of Economic Development, found ample evidence to support the fact that investment in skills and the employer-employee relationship contributes to lower costs and improved productivity. The report stated that investment in people contributes to a firm’s value and competitive advantage. As with the findings of Harvey and Harris (2008), this report found that leaders in business practice are more concerned with their employees’ welfare and have comprehensive systems for measuring and rewarding staff performance, and provide

internal and external training and development opportunities to support investment in the development of improved products and services.

Harvey and Harris were not the only researchers to find a direct positive link between new skills learned in training, and the opportunities to put the new skills in to practice in the workplace. Brinkerhoff (2006) found that off-job training events that were taking place in the United States of America were underleveraged. He found that where off-job training achieved maximum positive impact of improved employee capability and superior performance was where a quality-training event was aligned with an integrated performance management system. He found it necessary to have clear direction and support from management as to the intentions of the training and learning expectations from it. The opportunity for applying the learning from an off-job training event needs to be applied immediately in the workplace and the trainee needs the necessary tools and resources and management support in terms of coaching and mentoring to ensure that this occurs. If this happens employees gain new robust skills and knowledge, new job behaviours and improved job effectiveness. If the improvements in capability of the trainee as a result of training are rewarded within a robust performance management system then the company gains maximum impact in improved productivity.

Brinkerhoff illustrated the key to success in the entire learning to performance process that results in increased business capability and performance improvement in the following flow diagram.

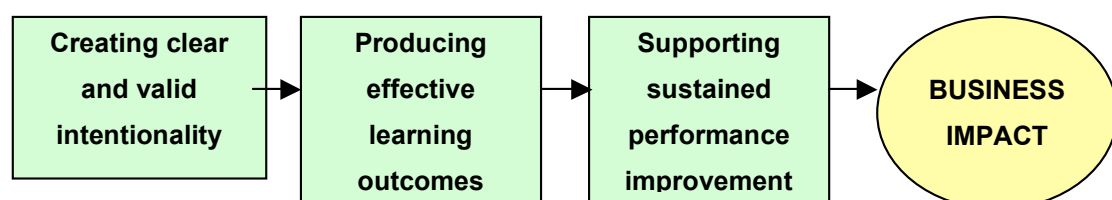


Figure 2. The Learning to Performance Process (Brinkerhoff , 2006 P 45)

Brinkerhoff's illustration of the learning to performance process is very applicable to the ITO facilitated industry-training model, where training and learning are based on a combination of on-job training and learning supported by off-job training events. The ITO working with the employer, has the potential to link off-job learning with on-job

practice to gain maximum learning outcomes from industry training. Brinkerhoff (2001) described this learning to performance process as high impact learning.

Enhanced personal capability facilitates and enables the introduction of more sophisticated and innovative technologies and workplace practices. The introduction of more sophisticated and technical production processes creates the demand for enhanced personal capability (Harvey & Harris, 2008). Industry training is becoming increasingly important in the horticulture industry in the 21st Century, when horticultural science and plant husbandry practices used by growers have become highly technical. Employees need formalised training that goes beyond just learning the skills to do the job, in order to implement the innovations in machinery and computerised technology, and sophisticated plant husbandry techniques used in all sectors of horticulture such as greenhouse growing, fruit and vegetable production, the post harvest sector, arboriculture, nursery production, amenity horticulture and floriculture.

Formalised industry training provides the training and learning needed to implement these new and innovative industry practices. Much of a business's value lies in its human capital, and people provide organisations with a crucial source of sustainable competitive advantage (Knuckey, Johnston, Campbell-Hunt, Carlaw, Corbett, & Massey, 2002).

A high performance business model is a business in which employees have a high degree of autonomy in decision-making, and there is an increased focus on training and skills development, where good communication and teamwork is valued. HR practices recognise performance and promote productive line management relationships (Ryan, 2008). As with researchers, Ryan (2008) found, industry training results in increased productivity when it is associated with good HR management practices.

To summarise there is evidence, that where industry training is associated with supportive HR management practices, the engagement in industry training will have a positive impact on productivity. Industry trainees acquire the capability to improve productivity in the workplace and to adopt new technologies. Relationships fostered between trainers and trainees by the training process improve networking and collaboration to generate a team atmosphere that benefits the culture of the workplace.

Where good HR practices are linked with the acquisition of new skills and behaviours, the work is organised so that trainees can put new skills in to practice, resulting in sustained improvement in performance.

2.2.1.3 Best Practices in Industry Training – Fostering a Learning Culture in Business.

As mentioned above, industry training impacts positively on the seven productivity drivers. One of the productivity drivers is workplace culture. This section explores the link between workplace culture and industry training in more depth.

The concept of the cultivation of a learning culture in organisations was explored in case studies undertaken by Johnston and Hawke (2002). They found that a learning culture is associated with the development of systems and structures that support learning, and involves working with other partners such as an educational provider.

A NCVET (2003) report found that the ‘ideal’ workplace learning situation occurs in an organisational culture that supports and values training and learning, and that training is customised both to individuals, and to increase the capability of the organisation.

The key to effective industry training practices is to foster a learning culture within the workplace that will encourage learning, celebrate success and provide ample support for the learners. The additional support for industry trainees and their employers provided in Australia by group training companies (similar to New Zealand’s ITOs) is seen as important (Montague & Hopkins, 2002).

The same publication identified the key organisational features and learning cultures within institutions that are needed to ensure effective learner support in industry training. These are:

- Valuing people
- Having the right individuals in key positions
- Developing a planned, systematic and funded approach to learner support
- Having a formal induction/orientation process
- Support from senior management
- Providing incentives for learners

- Having an open system with access for all
- Having a workplace culture where everyone is seen as a learner and a trainer
- Having a critical ratio of experienced people is necessary to foster learning
- Providing organisational support for trainers
- Embedding learner support in training provision
- Having a flexible learner-centred approach
- The provision of a clear single communication point
- Having co-operative partnerships between trainers and workplace staff (Montague & Hopkins, 2002).

Employer practices that encourage employees to practice and develop the skills learned in on and off-job training by job rotation is seen as beneficial in providing awareness of other people's roles in the organisation and the fostering of teamwork, job satisfaction and task variety (Knuckey, Johnston, Campbell-Hunt, Carlaw, Corbett & Massey, 2002).

Dawe (2003) indicated that successful training practices include: having an organisational culture that supports learning, linking training to major features in the business strategy, and responding to change. An organisational culture where individuals are respected and where knowledge and expertise is shared is essential for successful training and learning. Supportive HR practices are needed where training is linked with performance management practices and success is rewarded. Having a diverse training programme and formalising the training with national qualifications is valued. He described a successful model for training where supervisors are the trainers and coaches of their teams, and where learners have individual training plans depending on their training needs.

Curson (2004) looked at effective learning in the workplace. Her research concluded that successful completion of learning goals in the workplace depends on having a learning culture in the workplace, having management recognise the value of training, and linking training to business strategy. Good administration processes that effectively monitor and track trainee's progress, having a structured approach to learning, and meeting the training needs of the trainee are important. Providing incentives to learn such as linkage to pay rates, providing support from trainers and

internal experts, setting aside time to learn, and flexible learning to suit the needs of the business and the learner are also needed for successful industry training.

Curson illustrated the learning culture in the workplace that supports effective learning in the following diagram.

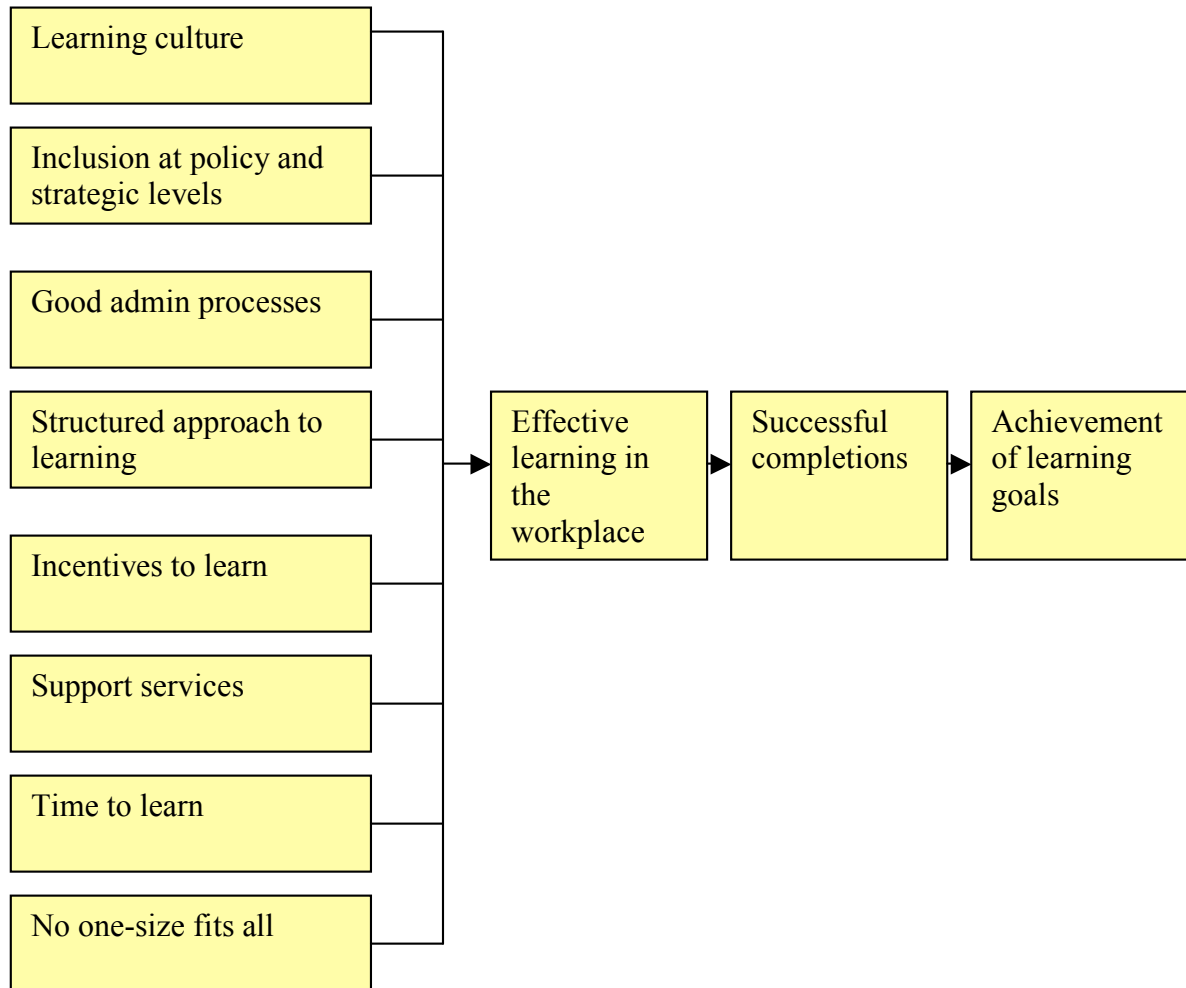


Figure 3. Research Model: links between effective learning and successful completion of learning goals in the workplace (Curson, 2004 P 18)

Brinkerhoff (2001) developed a HILM for training. It is a comprehensive conceptual framework with integrated methods and tools that any training practitioners in any setting, can use to help their businesses to achieve dramatically increased returns from learning investments. Brinkerhoff's HILM provides tools for robust and constructive learning interventions, so that employees can expand knowledge and acquire new skills. Trainees and managers identify performance improvement objectives, and link these to business goals. In a HILM there is support for learning and training such as

supervisory guidance, performance measures, feedback, encouragement and recognition of achievement.

Therefore, to summarise, the literature suggests that adequate support within the workplace for industry trainees where management practices foster a culture of training and learning, and link this in to appropriate HR management practices are necessary for successful industry training. The literature supports the role of line managers and supervisors as being the most appropriate people to train their employees, and that training is enhanced with additional support from an outside education provider. This reinforces the valuable position the ITO has in that it is able to enhance training and learning by providing structured training support for the industry trainee and the employer.

A HILM for training brings together the findings in the literature regarding the linkage business capability and productivity needs with training in new skills and the implementation of those new skills, resulting in an increase in productivity. If a HILM is implemented in a package with other HR management practices such as empowering employees, offering a variety of work to employees, and rewarding performance it will employ the best practices in industry training, and foster the development of a learning culture in the workplace.

2.2.1.4 The Benefits of Industry Training

The benefits of industry training for the employer include enhanced business and workplace productivity and profitability, where trained and skilled employees are confident, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Employees are ready to take responsibility and make a contribution to the business. Other benefits include increased employee job satisfaction and staff retention, improved health and safety in the workplace, and a positive learning environment where there is an atmosphere of inclusiveness, productive discussion and informed decision making (Agriculture ITO, 2008).

Other benefits for the employer are improved quality of service or product, a more competitive company, improving competence, keeping up with technological developments, increasing the flexibility of employees and increasing productivity (The Scottish Government, 2002).

Benefits for employers found in research conducted by Business NZ and the Industry Training Federation (2003), covering a wide range of industries including the manufacturing sector and the tourism sector found that training staff had a positive effect on: quality of output, productivity, staff motivation, business growth, health and safety, staff retention, innovation, profitability and costs (Baker, Summers & Murdoch, 2003).

There is a clear connection between higher skills in the workplace and higher productivity, particularly at the intermediate level, that is the skills at NQF levels four and five resulting from industry training. Benefits associated with higher skills in the workplace include greater commercial orientation, strategic awareness, innovation, increased prospect of business survival, originality and increased technological complexity (Harvey & Harris, 2008).

From the employee's perspective there are advantages from engaging in formalised industry training. The benefits for industry trainees include practical assessment in the workplace instead of examinations, the opportunity to acquire a national qualification, an increase in self esteem and self confidence, and the value of the qualification when seeking jobs with other employers, career development, and raising employee productivity and earnings (The Scottish Government, 2002). Additional benefits for the employee are having a personalised training plan, having mentoring support from the Training Advisor, and learning while earning (Agriculture ITO, 2008).

An Industry Training Federation (ITF) report entitled 'Learner Perceptions of Industry Training' (2007) studied focus groups of engineering and building industry trainees. Benefits of training reported by industry trainees include: improved productivity and efficiency and higher quality of work, a career path and the opportunity to move ahead. Additional benefits are a formal system linked to increases in pay, and the acquisition of skills that help them outside of work with hobbies and around the home, as well as the general impression of trainees that employers are interested in their development.

Industry training not only benefits employers and employees. On a macro level there are benefits to the country in terms of increased productivity, increased competitiveness in a global economy, and increased growth in GDP from having a

skilled workforce (The Scottish Government, 2002). Harvey and Harris (2008) found that increasing education by one year raises per capita national output by 6 percent.

The review of tertiary education and training for land based industries consultation paper by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) (2008) stated that New Zealand Government investment in supporting the land based industries through the delivery of relevant high-quality education and training to meet national and regional training needs, along with investment in research and innovation would benefit both the country, and workplaces. The benefits to the country include increased national productivity, improved economics of industry, more sustainable practices and better technology uptake, innovation and development. The benefits to industry are to improve the image of the land-based industries, improve the terms and conditions of employment, ensure more sustainable work practices, and retention of skilled staff (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008).

Research commissioned by the Agriculture ITO quantified positive rates of return to farmers, employees and the industry for technical training at lower levels. The return on investment in industry training at NQF levels one to five including costs to the dairy industry in 2005 is 3.4 to 1, and for the sheep industry is 4.9 to 1. The returns for employees are also larger. Training was worth an average of \$7,000 per annum to employees in wages and benefits (TEC, 2008). These figures quantify the benefits of industry training for businesses and trainees, placing a dollar value on the return on investment in training, rather than relying on qualitative and anecdotal evidence of the benefits of industry training.

To summarise, there are benefits from industry training for the employer, the employee and for the country. Benefits for the employer include raising productivity and profitability, improved competitiveness, increased staff retention, and building staff capability to implement new technologies and take responsibility for the quality of work. For employees, the benefits of gaining nationally recognised qualifications while working, having a career path and raising employability and earnings, as well as acquiring confidence and skills are worth the extra effort needed to engage in industry training. For the country, the benefits of increased productivity and economic growth, along with increased competitiveness in a global marketplace are a necessity.

2.2.1.5 Barriers to Successful Industry Training

You would think that given all the benefits of industry training, more employers would be engaging in formalised industry training, and in those businesses where formalised industry training is occurring with NZHITO, there would be more employees engaging in industry training. However as at 31 December 2008 there were 2624 employees engaged in industry training with NZHITO across all sectors of the industry (NZHITO, 2008)³ out of a total full time labour requirement for the industry as of the 2006 census of 36,461 (Slack, Nana & Wu, 2007).

Where training in the workplace is not formalised, employers may be reluctant to let trainees have time off work for off-job training days, or they may see the cost as an issue, or the administration of training may be a barrier. Many employers still see formalised training and learning in the workplace as a cost rather than an investment both in their staff and in the productivity and future of their business, and do not engage in formalised industry training (Curson, 2004).

Fraser (2005) noted that barriers to small businesses engaging in formalised industry training are often due to financial and opportunity costs, with time pressures and low margins in small businesses meaning they do not engage in industry training. She also noted that in the tourism industry the seasonal nature of work and geographic location are barriers to formalised industry training. These issues are in common with the fruit, vegetable and viticulture sectors of the horticulture industry with large numbers of seasonal workers needed, and workplaces often geographically isolated from major population centres. In the fruit and vegetable industries there is a lack of training and development culture where training is seen as a cost rather than an investment. Training tends to be limited to specific tasks required for the work, with no formal recognition of skills acquired (Horticulture New Zealand, 2008).

The seasonal nature of industries such as horticulture and tourism, agriculture, sport, and retail with high numbers of casual employees, and high numbers of short term contracted labour means that many employees are simply taught the basics of the tasks to be performed and no more, and no further investment is made in them

³ NZHITO Quarterly report to TEC December 2008, emailed to the author by Bronwyn Winchester Deputy CEO, NZHITO 17 December 2008.

(Curson, 2004; TEC, 2008). Another issue is a lack of supply of people with the appropriate skills and attitudes entering the industry, with lack of suitable school students attracted to enter the industry due to a poor perception of suitable career pathways in the industry and low pay rates in the industry (TEC, 2008; Working Group 4, 2008).

A survey by the Seasonal Labour Strategy Working Group 4 (2008) found that small businesses tended to be more reluctant to enter in to formalised industry training than medium and large sized businesses. Some employers surveyed think that if they invest in formalised training with national qualifications outcomes their employees will be poached by their competitors. Businesses see uncertainty in the business environment and a decline in business performance as barriers to training. Some prefer to employ skilled staff rather than train their own, with some small businesses believing they are too small to train. Lack of interest from employees and a perceived lack of suitable training opportunities are other barriers to engagement in formalised industry training in the horticulture industry (Working Group 4, 2008). These findings are congruent with the findings of Fraser (2005).

A lack of knowledge of what ITOs do, and difficulty in understanding the complexity of the education and training system are other barriers to engagement in formalised industry training along with reluctance to place value on formalised training and the inability to see the benefits of training (Baker, Summers, & Murdoch. 2003, Fraser, 2005 and Working Group 4, 2008). Green, Huntington & Summers (2008) found that the reason given for not engaging in formalised training in 56 percent of businesses surveyed was that they did not know that ITOs and/or modern apprenticeships existed in New Zealand. This was followed by lack of information about ITO facilitated training (11%), lack of employee interest (8%) and concerns about affordability (8%). These are similar to the findings in New Zealand horticulture businesses outlined above.

The Scottish Government (2002) also found that reasons given for not entering in to formalised industry training are difficulty in recruiting suitable applicants for industry trainee positions, either because of isolation, or full employment, a lack of people wanting to enter the industry, or lack of suitable applicants.

Where formalised industry training and learning is in place not all industry trainees complete their qualifications. There may be many issues contributing to non-completion of training. Retention and non completions are an issue for industries that have large numbers of young trainees (15-29 year olds) such as hairdressing and hospitality (Curson 2004). Barriers to qualification completion may be with the industry trainee, the employer, or the training provider such as the ITP or the ITO, or a combination of these three parties. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

Curson (2004) identified barriers to completions, learning and training that include a lack of quality of on and off-job training, lack of support from the ITO, seasonal influences in the supply of labour, cost, training that does not meet skill needs, the small size of the business, lack of value placed on the qualifications by trainee or by employer, unsuitable delivery model for training, and strained employer/employee relationships. Trainees may not see a clear career path for them resulting in loss of motivation to complete a qualification (Curson, 2004, The Scottish Government, 2002).

Other influences adversely affecting successful completion by trainees include trainees being sent to a training event without adequate preparation. Consequently they do not understand what they need to learn and how they can use it in the business. Trainees may be trained at the wrong time and are not in a position to implement the training in their work. Managers may not support or reinforce learning or hold employees accountable for new learning and performance. Incentives and performance factors may be misaligned with applying the learning to new job behaviours (Brinkerhoff, 2007).

More closely related to this dissertation were the findings of the Seasonal Labour Strategy Working Group 4 (2008). Barriers to businesses in the fruit and vegetable industries engaging in training include: a lack of suitable people entering the industry from schools due to poor perceptions of the industry and poor career advice, low remuneration rates, poor employer behaviour and employment practices, a high number of migrant workers with poor English language skills and cultural differences. Other issues are the perception of poor coordination between Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs), duplication and competition between TEOs, or ignorance of the help that is available from the NZHITO, cost, and high staff turnover (Working Group 4 2008).

Barriers to formalised industry training, are obviously an issue in the horticulture industry where there is a lack of skilled labour and a lack of graduates at degree and diploma level entering the industry (Berl, 2007). A greater understanding of these barriers is necessary, whether barriers are with the business not engaging in formalised training at all, the employee not engaging in training, or an industry trainee not completing their qualification. Although the survey undertaken as part of this dissertation will include only businesses that are engaging in successful industry training, the research will investigate barriers to industry trainees in those businesses completing their training and gaining qualifications. It is hoped that the dissemination of the information on the benefits of industry training this research finds, will encourage more businesses in the horticulture industry to engage in formalised industry training.

2.2.1.6 The Role of ITO's in Industry Training

Until the early 2000s coordination of industry training and setting the industry unit standards and qualifications was considered the role of ITOs. However in recent years, the government has increasingly looked to ITOs to provide strategic leadership for their industries (TEC, 2008).

Fraser (2005) stated that industry training has a growing role in the tertiary education sector. Not only in terms of growth in the number of industry trainees across all industries, from less than 20,000 in June 1995 to 140,000 in 2004, but the ITOs are now required to provide strategic leadership for their industries.

An Industry Training Federation report (2006) stated that the government require the ITOs to take a wider approach to skills leadership to meet their industry training needs. ITOs, because of their connections with tertiary education sector and industry are in a unique position to influence the supply of skills through participation in the education system, and the demand for skills through connections with employers. The report found that ITOs are implementing this vision by placing training within the context of industry change, collaborating with key industry players, developing a learning culture in workplaces, and developing learning pathways through qualification development. Research is seen as playing a key role in determining ITO leadership strategies.

Green, Huntington & Summers (2008) found that 51 percent of respondents in small businesses agreed and 67 percent of large businesses agreed that industry training makes an effective contribution to meeting the skill development and employment needs of their business. And that many employers invest in industry training so that their staff have technical and trade skills specific to their business or industry. They found that in-house training and ITOs are better placed than more 'academic' institutions to provide training that is directly relevant to their business.

Harvey and Harris (2008) found that the current model in which ITOs are working is to focus on the individual industry trainee and their skill development and qualifications, whereas the focus of the emergent model for ITO activity is to take advantage of the growing connectedness of industries and their ITOs and seek new ways to leverage this connectedness to meet the overall needs of the business. This means that skill development needs to be applied in the workplace, and integrated in to the overall mix to improve business performance.

The NZ Skills Strategy Implementation Plan 2008/09 was a report put together by the New Zealand Government, in conjunction with Business New Zealand, New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, and the Industry Training Federation to accompany the Skills Strategy Action Plan. In this report the ITOs are given responsibility, along with other government agencies to implement nine of the ten actions in the implementation plan for the Skills Strategy Action Plan 2008/09. These include:

- Improving the use and retention of skills in workplaces
- Increasing employer and worker awareness of their skill needs and influencing the supply of skills
- Increasing literacy and numeracy learning opportunities
- Influencing the supply of skills through a responsive training system and unified approach to defining and measuring skills
- Making the most of the available workforce through skills development

(NZ Skills Strategy, 2008).

In light of the current focus by government to place ITOs in a leadership role in coordinating the education and training needs of their industry, increasing employer and worker awareness of their skill and training needs, responding to employer's skill

needs and promoting a learning culture within the businesses in their industries, it is important that the NZHITO engages with businesses in the horticulture sector to raise the awareness of the need for industry training, and work to improve the success rate of the industry training that is occurring. The research for this dissertation will provide valuable information for the NZHITO to develop a strategy to assist businesses to increase the impact of industry training investments, and to disseminate information on the benefits of industry training to businesses, so that barriers to successful industry training can be minimised and more businesses engage in industry training. The information will enable NZHITO to assist businesses to improve the effectiveness of industry training is improved, and enhance organisational learning capability and productivity in horticulture businesses in New Zealand in line with the requirements of the Skills Strategy Action Plan 2009/09 outlined above.

2.2.1.7 Issues Facing Tertiary Training and Education in the Horticulture Industry in 2008

The NZHITO is in a unique position in the tertiary education sector by virtue of its close links with industry, as well as the horticulture industry groups, both at association level and employer level to take a leadership role in the facilitation of education and training at all levels from school through industry training to university (ITF, 2006). There are many issues facing the horticulture industry in 2008 if the skills and productivity needs of the industry are to be met in the future. The workforce is ageing and many businesses are not actively engaging formalised industry training to ensure that staff with appropriate knowledge and skills are able to step up to leading roles in the business (TEC, 2008).

There are a low number of skilled people in the workforce compared with other industries with only 31 percent of the workforce holding a national qualification at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4 or above, compared with a 42 percent of the national workforce. Hence there is the need for a greater proportion of the horticultural workforce to be qualified at level 4 or above on the National Qualifications Framework (BERL, 2007). More alarming is that most of the 31 percent of qualified people in the horticultural workforce are qualified in other fields such as engineering, management, commerce, science, with only 8 percent holding a horticulture qualification (BERL, 2007).

Based on projections of the horticulture industry's labour requirements through to 2011 a minimum of 540 people per annum need to be trained to level 4 or above. If there is high staff turnover this number rises to 850 per annum to meet the skill needs of the industry. Of the 540 graduates needed, 192 need to graduate at level 4 from the ITF, ITP and PTE sectors, the remainder at level 5 to PhD level from the University sector. A further 722 people need to graduate from schools, the ITF, ITP and PTE sectors at levels 1,2 and 3 (BERL, 2007).

However, in recent years there have been a decreasing of number of graduates in horticultural science and commerce related qualifications from the University sector at levels 5 and above. Level 5-7 Diplomas in horticulture and agriculture declined by 133 EFTS (Equivalent Full Time Study) and level 7 degrees and postgraduate diplomas by 146 EFTS from 2003 to 2007 (TEC, 2008). This has resulted in declining TEO provider capability with the loss of experienced tutors and researchers from Universities and ITPs due to low student enrolments, and a decline in graduates entering the industry. Furthermore a decline in easily accessible pathways to research and weak financial support and reward for research careers has lead to few incentives for University students to study at higher levels to enter a research career in horticultural science. This has in turn lead to a loss of research capability and loss of competitiveness in a global marketplace (TEC, 2008).

There are negative perceptions of working conditions, remuneration and career opportunities in the industry resulting in difficulty in attracting school leavers and other people in to the industry. This is partly due to a lack of understanding of the industry, and therefore promotion of the industry by school career advisors and school science teachers (TEC, 2008; Working Group 4, 2008). Furthermore, the undervaluing of science in the school curriculum and low enrolment of students in the science subjects means there are now fewer students studying science at tertiary level meaning the industry is not able to recruit employees with suitable horticultural science expertise (TEC, 2008).

Because of the negative perceptions of the industry and lack of school students wishing to study horticulture, declining rolls in the Institute of Technology and Polytechnic (ITP) sector has resulted in the ITP sector developing and marketing industry training programmes that mirror NZHITO industry training. This has resulted in overlapping provision of industry training between the ITP sector and

NZHITO. Overlapping provision of industry training has resulted in confusion in the marketplace and competition between education providers in the same marketplace, instead of cooperation (TEC, 2008; Working Group 4, 2008). Disparities in funding available to the industry training sector compared with the ITP sector for industry training has resulted in inefficiencies in government funding available for training, duplication of industry training delivered by NZHITO and the ITP sector and inequitable competition between Tertiary Education Organisations (TEC, 2008).

Furthermore, whereas ITPs were previously providing off-job training for NZHITO industry trainees under a co-mingling of EFTS and STM funding arrangement, because of Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) directives to dismantle these arrangements, ITPs have become reluctant to provide off-job training for the NZHITO industry trainees for a lower contract fee, further straining relationships between the two tertiary education sectors.

Another issue relating to funding of education and training is the capped funding environment that TEOs are operating in, meaning funds are limited for training and education in the horticulture. However compliance training in short courses at levels 1 and 2 directed at upskilling industry people on agrichemical safety and health and safety, tractor skills, injury prevention are taking an inequitable large portion of the Effective Full Time Study (EFTS) funding available for education and training at levels 1-4. In 2006, 22 percent and in 2007, 20 percent of total EFTS funding was used for compliance training by the ITP and PTE sectors (TEC, 2008).

There has been an oversupply of education organisations providing education and training in the horticulture sector. In 2006 there were 57 secondary schools, 19 polytechnics and 45 Private Training Establishments (PTEs) delivering horticulture unit standards. This has resulted in confusion in the market place and duplication of provision (Finlayson, 2006).

Another problem has been the increasing numbers of migrant workers in the workforce with the introduction of the National Seasonal Labour Strategy and the Recognised Seasonal Employers' Scheme (RSE). This has impacted on the demand for industry skills training, and an increased need for language, literacy and numeracy training (TEC, 2008; Working Group 4, 2008).

Due to a lack of tertiary qualified people entering the industry, formalised industry training of existing staff has become increasingly important (BERL 2008). Industry training, facilitated by NZHITO would increase the skills and knowledge of those already in the industry, and if higher level University education were more accessible to those working then industry trainees would have further training options at higher levels without having to leave work to study full time at University.

To summarise, the horticulture industry is facing a serious skills shortage now and in the future as the numbers graduates from Universities and ITPs has declined in recent years and the number of people qualified at level 4 and above has not kept up with demand for qualified employees. This will impact negatively on capability and productivity in the future as the workforce ages. There is difficulty recruiting suitable people in to the industry due to poor perceptions of career prospects and low pay rates in the industry.

There have been significant issues in the tertiary education sector around funding and overlapping provision of training and education, competition in the tertiary education sector and confusion in the marketplace with an over supply of education providers competing for a limited number of students.

However, with a very small percentage of the workforce with a horticulture qualification at level 4 or above, it is increasingly important people in the workforce are upskilled and become qualified at levels 4 and above. The government has stated that the ITO, by virtue of its close links with industry and tertiary education providers is in a unique position to take a lead role in working with industry and providers to the facilitation of horticulture education and training at all levels from school through industry training to University.

2.2.2 Conclusion

The literature review has provided a suitable definition for formalised industry training. That is the formal acquisition of skills and knowledge with on-job training and assessment in the workplace that is predominantly employer based. The learning leads to a national qualification. Industry training is enhanced by the support provided by an outside education and training provider, and off-job education and training to complement the on-job learning. The government has given a clear mandate to the ITOs to facilitate this training because of their close relationships with

industry and other tertiary education organisations. The government has also given ITOs the mandate to take a leadership role in the coordination of wider tertiary education and training by working with schools, ITPs, PTEs and Universities to meet the skill needs of their industries. The information gained from this research should provide the NZHITO with knowledge to improve the way in which it engages with employers in meeting their skill and training needs, to assist businesses to improve their industry training practices, to enhance the impact of industry training on business capability and productivity. As well as assisting the NZHITO, this research project will provide information on effective industry training practices that will assist businesses to improve productivity and gain more impact from their investment in industry training.

A clear link has been shown in the literature between increased productivity and capability of businesses and industry training, where good industry training practices impact positively on the seven drivers of productivity. The coaching and mentoring skills of supervisors and line managers, the passing on of their skills and knowledge and the relationships formed between trainers and their trainees, and between trainees impact positively on creating productive workplace cultures, networking and collaboration. The structure brought to industry training by formalising it gives clear measures of skill and knowledge capability to use in HR management practices. The literature research shows that industry training increases employee capability, encourages employee independence, increases problem-solving skills and encourages innovation and the adoption of new technical processes and technology. Investing in people and skills ensures succession for future leaders in the business.

Information on 'best practices' in industry training that have been found in other industries in New Zealand and overseas have been described by other researchers. The literature research has identified that the key to successful industry training is the fostering of a learning culture within a business. The key elements of a learning culture include: learning to be a high priority in the strategy of a business, and to be supported at all management levels and by good HR management practices. Learning needs to be structured and supported by good administration processes, incentives need to be in place to learn, and time set aside for training and learning. The learning needs to be individualised to meet the skill and productivity needs of the business and of the industry trainee.

The research survey carried out as part of this dissertation will identify 'best practices' in industry training that are occurring across a number of horticulture sectors in New Zealand. The businesses chosen are businesses that have a reputation for having successful industry training practices as measured in terms of trainee's credit and qualification completions.

A comparison will be made with the findings of the research in other industries, and will lead to a greater understanding of industry training 'best practices' in the horticulture industry. This information will be able to be used by the NZHITO to assist businesses in the industry to improve industry-training practices and achieve positive outcomes in terms of business productivity and capability and trainee capability and productivity, and enable businesses to achieve greater impact from their investment in training.

Other benefits of industry training are described in the literature. Benefits for the employer, the employee and the country are described. Benefits for the employer include increased productivity and staff capability, staff retention and the ability of staff to work independently and take responsibility. Benefits to the employee include increased capability, increased employability, a career path and positive increases in remuneration. Benefits to the country include increased productivity and increased competitiveness in a global marketplace.

There are many issues facing the horticulture industry and horticulture education and training in New Zealand in 2008. These include a need for more people in the industry to be trained and educated at NQF levels 3, 4 and 5, and a lack of people entering the industry due to poor perceptions of the industry and poor perceptions of pay rates within the industry. Other issues include the use of migrant labour in the industry, and a need for more literacy and numeracy support for employees in the industry. To add to these issues in the industry, there are issues in the tertiary education sector around an extremely low number of University graduates in horticultural science and commerce, and funding and overlapping provision issues in the ITP sector and ITO sector as both compete in the same market for a limited number of students and trainees. With a lack of people entering the industry, it is important that more people already in the industry are formally trained. The ITO has been given a mandate by government to take a lead role in the facilitation of

education and training from schools through industry training to University education to provide for the skills and knowledge needs of the industry.

The literature review identified barriers to industry training in the horticulture industry and other industries, in terms of barriers to businesses engaging in formalised industry training, barriers to employees engaging in formalised industry training, and barriers to industry trainees achieving their qualifications. Barriers to engagement in industry training include a lack of understanding of how ITOs can assist in industry training, a lack of understanding of education and training, geographic isolation the seasonal nature of work in the industry and a lack of a training culture in businesses. Barriers contributing to non-completion of qualifications by industry trainees in other industries include lack of quality on and off-job training, lack of support from the ITO, cost, training not meeting the skill needs of the business or the trainee, and strained employer/employee relationships.

Specifically the research survey was undertaken to provide information on the outcomes and benefits horticultural businesses consider industry-training produces for them, and whether these benefits are similar to those in other industries. The survey will also identify the barriers to successful completions for NZHITO industry trainees, and provide information on industry-training ‘best practices’ that have a positive impact on trainee capability and completions. The dissemination of the information will hopefully encourage businesses that are not currently engaging in formalised industry training to do so, and encourage businesses that are already undertaking formalised industry training to train more of their staff and to improve their industry training practices to achieve more impact from industry training and improve capability and productivity. The research will provide the NZHITO with the information to develop a strategy to assist businesses to achieve a better quality of training and minimise the barriers to successful industry training, and therefore achieve more impact from their industry training investments.

3 METHODOLOGY - SURVEY

The purpose of the survey is to establish what industry training practices are operating in businesses in the horticulture industry in New Zealand that are known to be successful in their industry training. And also what facilitation practices are employed by NZHITO Training Advisors in the facilitation of industry training. The research will determine the following:

- What industry training practices are businesses in the horticulture industry using in successful industry training to find out what is industry training ‘best practice’?
- What are the outcomes and benefits of successful industry training for horticulture businesses, and for the industry trainees?
- What are the key factors that contribute to successful industry training?
- What are the barriers that hinder successful industry training and learning?
- What facilitation practices are used by NZHITO Training Advisors to assist businesses with industry training in the horticulture industry?

The literature review established industry-training practices that are successful in other industries in New Zealand and overseas and identified barriers to successful industry training. However the review did not find evidence of previous research in to industry training practices specific to the horticulture industry in New Zealand.

In order to establish what industry-training practices are currently producing effective learning and positive outcomes in the horticulture industry it was necessary undertake a qualitative survey of businesses that are currently undertaking successful industry training. The survey was necessary to understand what are ‘best practices’ in horticulture industry training and to identify the key practices that contribute to successful industry training.

The survey was designed to provide information on the industry-training practices that are occurring in the businesses surveyed, the outcomes or benefits of industry training perceived by the businesses taking part in the survey, and on the barriers that survey participants think hinder successful industry training. It was decided to interview a selection of horticultural businesses that are known to be successful with industry training as well as a small number of NZHITO Training Advisors to establish

existing industry training ‘best practices’ from the perspective of the businesses conducting the industry training and the NZHITO Training Advisors who are facilitating the training. The survey took the form of a semi structured qualitative interview rather than a questionnaire because the researcher felt that more information would be gained by talking with the participants and being able to peruse, with more questions, interesting avenues uncovered during the interview.

3.1 The Survey of Horticulture Businesses

Nineteen horticultural businesses throughout New Zealand were surveyed. The businesses were selected on the basis of recommendation of the NZHITO Training Advisors as businesses that are particularly effective at industry training. The businesses represented a range of sectors within the industry and a geographical spread across the country. At each business one or two people were interviewed⁴. The interviewees were supervisors or managers who are responsible for industry training at their business. The sectors represented are amenity, viticulture, arboriculture, landscape, fruit production, nursery and vegetable production. The regions of the country represented are Otago, Canterbury, Marlborough, Hawkes Bay, Bay of Plenty and Auckland. The interviewer rang each business several weeks before the visit to establish whether or not the business was willing to take part in the survey, and posted or emailed information outlining the purpose of the survey, and the format it would take. (See information sheet Appendix 1.) The interviews took place at the businesses.

The following businesses took part in the survey:

⁴ Under Lincoln University’s ACHE (the Human Ethics Committee Policy) section 6.2.3(2) this research was exempt from needing Human Ethics Committee approval as only professionals were interviewed in their professional capacity. However, in line with best practices, good ethical practices were followed (for instance, participants were given a research information sheet, and a consent form was used and examples of these can be found in the appendices).

Table 1. List of Horticulture Businesses Surveyed

Business/Horticulture Sector	Location
Amenity	
Gore District Council	Gore
Larnach's Castle	Dunedin
Hawkes Bay District Health Board	Hastings
Hastings District Council	Hastings
Castlecorp	Rotorua
City Parks	Auckland
Amenity and Arboriculture	
Asplundh	Dunedin
Arboriculture	
Arbor Care Ltd	Tauranga
Nursery Production	
Naturally Native NZ Ltd	Whakatane/Tauranga
Oderings Nurseries Ltd	Christchurch
Pukerau Nurseries	Pukerau
Fruit Production	
Kinross Orchard	Hawkes Bay
Landscape	
Morgan & Pollard Landscapes	Queenstown
Southern Landmarx	Queenstown
Vegetable Production	
NZ Hothouse	Drury
Viticulture	
Pernod Riccard New Zealand	Marlborough
Alan Scott Wines	Marlborough
Akarua	Cromwell
Clearview Vineyard	Cromwell

The survey was a qualitative survey that took the form of an interview, where a series of topics were introduced and the interviewee was asked to talk about each topic. The interview format was based on the evaluation format documented by Brinkerhoff

(2006) in his success case interview process. This interview technique was developed to conduct interviews to provide credible and valid evidence on the impact of training interventions to businesses. He developed the Success Case Method (SCM) for interviewing supervisors and managers in business where training interventions had been successful. He measures and evaluates the impact of training interventions by interviewing managers in businesses where a training intervention has occurred using a structured qualitative success case interview process. The success case interview process does not just document the impact of training, but it uncovers and pinpoints the factors that make or break training success. The steps involved in the SCM for completing success case stories are:

1. Plan the interview process and questions to ask.
2. Conduct the interviews
3. Document the most interesting and noteworthy ones.

The main purpose of the interview is to capture the nature and scope of the successful training intervention, to identify the factors supporting success and determine how training interventions are used. The interview process is analogous to a 'bucket filling' process. The interview process aims to fill several information buckets, each bucket representing a category of success case information. The interviewer asks questions and guides the conversation to 'fill' each bucket with sufficient information about that category. Four success case interview 'buckets' Brinkerhoff used for training success stories are:

1. What was used? "What", "where" and "how" questions on training methods used.
2. What results were achieved? What outcomes did training achieve for the business and the trainee?
3. What helped and what got in the way? Detail such as what support did they have from management, what special incentives were there such as rewards, job objectives, work requirements. What tools, information sources did they use?
4. Suggestions. Suggestions for additional training resources, better tools, better incentives that would improve training outcomes.

The principal advantage of this interview protocol is its flexibility. Using the bucket structure allows interviewees to start where they are most comfortable and allows the conversation to be more natural and spontaneous. During the conversation the interviewee talks freely and the interviewer makes notes in the appropriate bucket section, and during the course of the interview steers the conversation to fill in gaps in information being recorded under each of the bucket categories (Brinkerhoff, 2006).

The general structure for the success case interview is as follows:

1. Opening. Introduce the interviewer and put the interviewee at ease, note the purpose of the interview and assure confidentiality
2. Probing and documentation. Dig in to the application and results of training
3. Identification of support factors. Identify the role of systemic factors that support training
4. Final exploration. Explore deeper if necessary
5. Identification of follow up needs
6. Closing. Thanking the interviewee

(Brinkerhoff, 2006).

The interview structure in this research project was based on the success case interview structure developed by Brinkerhoff. An interview coversheet providing details of the business and number of industry trainees was developed for completion during the opening of the interview. This is detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Background Information of the Business

Name of company	
Interviewee	
Interviewee's position	
Sector	
Description of company work	
Number of employees	
Number of trainees/apprentices in workplace training with NZHITO	
Number of WPA's /WPT's	
Length of time company has been training with NZHITO or another provider	

The success case interview process was used as a template when planning the interview process and the questions to be asked. Information 'buckets' were developed to gain information on industry-training practices. Questions were planned that could be used to fill in gaps in the conversation if necessary. The information buckets used in this research survey are outlined below:

Bucket 1. A Description of the industry-training practices in your workplace.

- Describe the structure of industry training that is occurring in this workplace.
- Describe the support you provide for industry training?
- What tools/resources are used for industry training?
- Are the Workplace Assessors (WPAs) the same people as the Workplace Trainers (WPTs) or different people?
- When is industry training occurring? Are there specific times set aside for some aspects of training or is it all done on the job?
- Is there an off-job component to the training?
- If so do you know what learning is occurring at off-job training days?
- Are your WPAs/WPTs/supervisors involved with the trainee's learning at off-job training days – either before, during or after the training days?
- What support do you get from NZHITO staff?

Bucket 2. A Description of the outcomes/benefits of industry training.

- What does industry training achieve for your business?
- What does industry training achieve for your trainees?
- How do you measure success of training? For the trainee and for the business?
- Do you use training for succession planning?
- Does training help achieve your business goals?

Bucket 3. What makes industry training successful in your workplace – in other words what are the keys to successful industry training in your workplace?

- What helps the trainees to succeed?
- What incentives are there for training (for example rewards, pay increases, job incentives)?
- What managerial support is there for training – for the trainees, WPAs and WPTs?
- What tools/practices do you use in training that are particularly effective?
- Are there any people involved who are particularly effective in training/coaching/mentoring your trainees?
- If so what qualities do they bring to the training?
- Are there any other things that you think are keys to the success of industry training in your workplace?

Bucket 4. Barriers to success.

- What is not working for you?
- Are there any internal barriers to the success of training within your company?
- Are there any external barriers to the success of training?
- Are there internal barriers to achievement by the trainees?
- Are there external barriers to achievement by trainees?

Bucket 5. Suggestions for improvement.

- What do you think could improve the outcomes of training in your business?

- How could the NZHITO work more effectively with you to facilitate training?

Each interview took between one and two hours, and a supervisor and/or manager responsible for industry training in the business was interviewed. The general structure of the interview followed the success case interview structure outlined by Brinkerhoff (2006) but was modified to suit this research project. The interview structure is outlined below.

- Opening. The researcher introduced herself and explained about her background, the reason for the research and the nature of the research being undertaken. She put the interviewee(s) at ease and assured them of confidentiality of their name but asked for permission to use their company name. The information sheet on the business was read and the consent form signed. She also gave them her card and the information sheet on the research project and assured them they could contact her afterwards if they did not want any information to be included in the written report.
- Probing and documentation, identification of support factors. The interview proceeded with the interviewer giving the interviewee the ‘big picture’ of the interview, by outlining all the ‘buckets’ of information that would be covered in the interview and once more gaining assurance that the interviewee was comfortable with the process and the content of the interview. She then introduced each ‘bucket’ of information or topic and allowed the interviewee to proceed with the conversation while she took notes. At each break in the conversation she checked the questions on each bucket to make sure there were no gaps in the information provided by the interviewee, and steered the interview to fill those gaps if necessary.
- Final exploration. The interviewer gave the interviewee an opportunity to talk about anything that the interviewee felt had not been covered during the interview and could be added to the information.
- Follow up needs. This was where the interviewee had a chance to discuss any suggestions for improvement they had identified in the suggestions for improvement bucket that NZHITO could follow up on.

- Close. The interviewer thanked the interviewee for their participation and their time and reminded them to contact her if they had any concerns following the interview.

3.2 Survey of NZHITO Training Advisors

Four of the 17 NZHITO Training Advisors were interviewed to determine the facilitation practices they were using with employers and trainees in the businesses they were working with. This was to gain an understanding of industry training from the perspective of the facilitator of the process working outside the businesses undertaking industry training. The discussion was based around their experiences and their facilitation methods. The interviews were qualitative interviews that followed the same success case interview format as that for the businesses surveyed. Questions were asked covering the same information ‘buckets’ as those asked of the people interviewed in the businesses, with a slight variation as outlined below. The Training Advisors were each given a copy of the information sheet and signed the consent form as those interviewed in the businesses had done (See Appendix 1 & 2).

The information ‘buckets’ covered during the interviews are outlined below:

Bucket 1. The facilitation style/tools/methods used by the Training Advisor.

- Give an overall description of your approach to facilitation of industry training.
- What tools/resources do you used to facilitate industry training. Give examples.
- What do you do when industry training is not going well with a trainee or with a business?
- How do you design training plans for your trainees?
- How do you work with the WPAs and WPTs and managers?

Bucket 2. Outcomes of industry training.

- What are the outcomes of industry training for the trainees?
- What are the outcomes of industry training for businesses?
- Give examples of particularly successful outcomes of industry training.

Bucket 3. Factors contributing to success.

- What do you see as the key factors that contribute to successful outcomes for industry training for businesses you work with?
- What do you see as the key factors contributing to successful outcomes for the trainees?
- Why is industry training so effective in the most successful company you work with?

Bucket 4. Barriers to success.

- What are barriers to successful industry training operating in businesses?
- What are barriers to successful industry training with trainees?
- What are barriers to successful facilitation of industry training by NZHITO Training Advisors?

Bucket 5. Suggestions for improvement.

- What could businesses do to improve the successful outcomes of industry training?
- What could trainees do to improve the successful outcomes of industry training?
- How can NZHITO staff help to improve industry-training outcomes?

4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The people interviewed in the horticultural businesses visited were generally the supervisors of industry trainees, who were their workplace assessors and workplace trainers, or the managers of the business who were coordinators or overseers of the training. In 14 businesses only one person was interviewed, but in five businesses a senior manager and one or two workplace assessors and trainers were interviewed. This is because the initial contact was made by phone with the supervisor or manager who was the coordinator of training in that business and was the contact person who liaised with the NZHITO Training Advisor for the business. Because the nature of the research project was explained over the phone, and an interview time was set at this time, it was left up to this contact person to arrange any other suitable people at that business who were involved in industry training to be interviewed.

All those interviewed were very willing to take part in the research project and to share their knowledge and their experiences openly and honestly. They all supported the practice of formalised industry training, and were pleased that the knowledge collated during the research would be used to help NZHITO to assist other businesses to improve their industry training practices.

The research survey findings are discussed for the businesses and for the NZHITO Training Advisors under each of the information ‘bucket’ headings that were used for the interviews.

Current practices in industry training, along with the keys to successful industry training are discussed to find out what are ‘best practices’ in industry training. The outcomes of successful industry training and the barriers that impede successful industry training are discussed. Facilitation practices used by NZHITO Training Advisors to assist businesses with industry training are discussed, and the keys to successful industry training practices, and the outcomes of industry training and barriers to success as they perceive them are discussed. Conclusions from the research survey and the literature review are discussed and analysed.

A HILM that NZHITO is able to use to facilitate industry-training practices in the horticulture industry is described. The information gained will provide NZHITO with

a practical, credible and strategically useful strategy to assist horticultural businesses in New Zealand to achieve ‘best practice’ industry training practices. This will increase the impact of industry training investments and build organisational learning capability and productivity in horticultural businesses in New Zealand.

4.2 The Survey of Horticulture Businesses

An analysis of the information gained during the interviews at horticulture businesses is discussed under the information ‘buckets’ used during the interviews. They are:

- A description of the industry-training practices in the businesses surveyed
- A description of the outcomes of industry training for the business and the trainee
- The key factors particularly effective in contributing to the success of industry training
- Barriers to successful industry training with the business, the trainee and NZHITO
- Suggestions for improvement in industry training practices

4.2.1 Industry Training Practices

4.2.1.1 Introduction

Eighty five percent of the businesses surveyed were small to medium sized enterprises but some were large corporate businesses. Although staff numbers rose in seasonal businesses, the numbers of permanent employees in the businesses surveyed were as follows: Three had less than 5 employees, five had six to ten employees, three had 11 to 20 employees, five had over 20 but less than 100 employees, and three had more than 100 employees. Fourteen of the 19 businesses surveyed had more than one industry trainee, and of those, six had more than five industry trainees and four had more than 10 industry trainees. Six of the businesses surveyed had a policy of recruiting school leavers for industry training, but generally industry trainees were a range of ages. All but two businesses used NZHITO as their industry training education provider. Two used a polytechnic as their industry-training provider.

The discussion on industry training practices with the participants of the survey has been grouped under subheadings. This is because when collating the notes taken

during the discussions there was so much in common that it seemed appropriate to discuss the information on industry training practices under the following topic headings:

- A culture of learning and training
- Mentoring and coaching
- Training resources
- The role of NZHITO

4.2.1.2 Culture of Learning and Training

All the businesses surveyed place great importance on industry training and have one person to coordinate the industry-training activities in their business and ensure training progressed satisfactorily. In nine of the businesses this person is a senior manager who does not necessarily do the day-to-day training, but delegates the training and assessment to supervisors and line managers. In ten of the businesses surveyed the coordinator is also the supervisor, workplace trainer and assessor who works with the trainees every day.

Although, by virtue of the fact that industry training is occurring on the job and so is a continuous process, all businesses surveyed put aside extra time during the working week that was dedicated to training. Fourteen interviewees spoke of having regular 'catch-up' days, where progress with written assignment work and practical work was reviewed, and future work and training was discussed. Extra time is set in most businesses surveyed for specialised practical training such as pruning or tractor driving. In-house practical training sessions are arranged for groups of trainees in businesses with more than one industry trainee. One amenity business works closely with their NZHITO Training Advisor to arrange outside specialist tutors to take in-house practical training, but other businesses use their own workplace trainers and assessors to tutor these group-training sessions.

Two large businesses provide in-house theory lessons for groups of trainees, but all other businesses send trainees to the off-job training days organised by NZHITO or the polytechnic. The NZHITO Training Advisor tutors in-house theory tutorials at one of these businesses, with the assistance of their workplace trainers, and the other

has the capability within the organisation to bring in specialist tutors for theory tutorials.

All businesses place great value on industry training and 13 of the businesses mentioned that they prefer to train their staff on the job with formalised industry training rather than take graduates from other programmes. In nine of the businesses, the managers and supervisors interviewed had been apprentices or industry trainees themselves. They appreciate the quality of training they had been given, and the rewarding careers they now enjoy. There is a strong culture of training and learning in all businesses surveyed, where training and learning are a strategic component in their business. It was evident that all the interviewees have a passion and enthusiasm for their industry, and take pride in passing on their skills and knowledge to the trainees, with 14 of the interviewees noting the high value they place in passing on their skills and knowledge. Fifteen of the interviewees stated they have very high standards of workmanship, and they take pride in the fact that they are training their employees, to those high standards, ensuring a high quality of work and the good reputation of their business.

In situations where there are groups of trainees, interviewees felt the support and encouragement they give each other is very valuable. One interviewee spoke of the supportive and collaborative environment where trainees work and study together. Three interviewees spoke of supporting trainees to go to off-job training events together by providing a work vehicle. One interviewee said that she teams up the trainees together to work on units at the same time where possible. She teams up a trainee who is further on in training with another trainee to teach them a unit, seeing this as a way to 'refresh and revise' the unit themselves. At other times she teams up a trainee with a supervisor to work on a unit. She spoke of the good team spirit that this practice has engendered in the workplace.

The same interviewee explained how she sets assessment tasks according to each trainee's learning styles – some like to be assessed predominantly orally and practically while some prefer to do written projects, using the computer to document work and incorporating photos. Some prefer tests and she has a set of tests she has developed over the years.

4.2.1.3 Mentoring and Coaching

It was evident that industry training is more than passing on skills and knowledge. It was obvious to the interviewer that the workplace trainers and assessors interviewed develop a close relationship with their trainees and take on a mentoring and coaching role. Fifteen interviewees spoke of the encouragement and support they and the other workplace trainers and assessors in their businesses give to their trainees. Fifteen interviewees spoke of the pride in their achievements in seeing trainees mature and develop, in to productive and confident employees throughout the period of their training. One interviewee said she gets a lot of joy from her teaching, mentoring and coaching role.

One large business had begun formalised industry training only a year ago, and spoke of the growth in confidence that the achievement of unit standards had given their trainees, most of whom did not have a previous qualification. One interviewee spoke of his pride in seeing many school students over the years learn good work ethics, while working at the nursery after school and in holidays, and go on to become valued skilled employees through their apprenticeship there, or in another career. Another interviewee spoke of the pride he felt in seeing trainees reach their full potential, and go on to successful careers in the industry, whether they were with his own company or another company.

One interviewee described her style of training as tough but fair. She talked of the need for respect to be earned on both sides – the trainees needed to take responsibility for their learning and earn her respect, and similarly she is aware that she needs to earn their respect. She, along with eight other interviewees talked of constantly encouraging questions – ensuring the trainee become more observant and gains a greater understanding of the reasoning behind the practice. She spoke of the need for trainees to show no initiative in their first year of training, and to always seek her guidance in problem solving. Then as the trainee progresses they are given more responsibility. This gradual increase in responsibility as trainees advanced was talked of by ten of the interviewees, so by the time trainees were in their third year they were given other people to train and are placed in a supervisory role. The importance of giving them other people to train was mentioned by five of the interviewees as being extremely important in their development as the future leaders in the industry.

4.2.1.4 Training Resources

All businesses provide the trainees with extra resource material over and above the NZHITO resource material. Nine pointed out that the business has an extensive library for use by trainees and that business computers are made available for use for internet research and for typing assignments. Five businesses have comprehensive written standard operating procedures for practical tasks and the use of machinery and equipment in the business. These are used extensively for training and assessment.

Pernod Riccard, a large corporate vineyard operation with extensive vineyards in Marlborough, Hawkes Bay and Gisborne have extensive in-house training and assessment resources for every practical task, the operation of all machinery and for the horticultural science subjects such as plant husbandry, pest and disease identification and control, weed identification and control and soil science. The training resources have been developed over the past six years. The company have a training committee of representatives from throughout the country that meet regularly to update these documents. The training resources are used to train all staff, but until recently had not been linked with formalised qualifications. The NZHITO has benchmarked the company's training resources against unit standards. This has resulted in better structure for the training and easy assessment of levels of competence of employees, for performance management purposes. Now every employee is able to achieve unit standards and national qualifications while working, which has been greatly appreciated by staff, who had no way of doing this previously.

The use of the trainee diary, or work record was seen as an extremely valuable learning tool by seven of the interviewees. They see the habit of keeping a work record and recording techniques learned and observations made is good discipline. Two pointed out that it is a valuable tool for learning plant names and expanding plant knowledge, and that it is a tool for improving powers of observation. One manager has a digital camera available at all times for trainees to record their work visually for filing in their diary. He uses this as a means of keeping up with their progress, and as a catalyst for discussion, as he prints off all the photos for them. He commented that diaries are useful as a learning and assessment tool and also a record for future reference.

4.2.1.5 The Role of NZHITO

NZHITO was the facilitator of training for seventeen of the businesses surveyed. The quality of ITO service and support was identified as extremely important in that it could make or break industry training by five of the interviewees. All but two of the interviewees are very happy with the service they had from their NZHITO Training Advisor, the level of support they received, and the help NZHITO gives them in organising training. One commented that the additional support provided by regular visits by the Training Advisor meant that trainees feel special, because there is more than one person who is guiding and mentoring them, and the trainees feel empowered by sharing their progress with the Training Advisor. The same interviewee had had poor service from a previous Training Advisor and had felt isolated and alone as a workplace trainer/assessor, and the trainees had felt alone with only her to take an interest in training.

Most made the comment that their Training Advisor is always accessible, always returns calls, or is only a phone call away. Interviewees appreciated that their Training Advisor visits regularly, one saying he sees a NZHITO staff member every three or four weeks. Two commented they appreciate that their Training Advisor lives locally making it easier to keep in touch with. Another described how his Training Advisor is constantly in touch and it was good to have another person to provide feedback on issues. One said he relies on his Training Advisor for support, another said that without the support from the Training Advisor in responding to all their training needs formalised industry training would not occur.

In the two cases where interviewees felt NZHITO service was poor, both find that room for improvement in the timeliness of service their Training Advisor provided, and one finds his Training Advisor very hard to contact.

4.2.1.6 Summary

In summary, it is evident that all businesses surveyed had a culture of training and learning, and that priority is placed on industry training. The businesses are using industry training as a means of ensuring a high standard of work is maintained in the business and to ensure the business is competitive.

Because industry training is a priority, every business has a senior staff member who coordinates training and monitors progress. Support for the trainees is evident in that

dedicated time is set aside for training, and resources were available for study. Trainees attend off-job training days and some are provided with a work vehicle to get there. The workplace trainers and assessors take pride in passing on their knowledge and skills, and develop close relationships with trainees, mentoring and coaching and encouraging them to become productive and valued members of staff, and to open up career paths for them.

In most businesses surveyed there is more than one industry trainee. Having more than one industry trainee results in a supportive and collaborative environment in which trainees support each other in their work and study.

A variety of training resources are used. These include the NZHITO training resources, standard operating procedures, reference books and computers. The use of the work record or diary is seen as an important learning tool, particularly effective when used in conjunction with a digital camera for a visual record of learning.

It is evident that the majority of the interviewees appreciate the support and guidance received by their NZHITO Training Advisor and the fact that they are easy to contact.

4.2.2 The Outcomes/Benefits of Industry Training

4.2.2.1 Outcomes for the Business

All interviewees described industry training as producing ‘competent and confident’ staff, and knowledgeable staff with good practical skills. Eleven interviewees felt that industry training produced well-rounded staff, trained to horticultural ‘best practice’, and 14 interviewees commented on the high standard of work that is achieved by staff. Three interviewees in the amenity sector commented on the satisfaction and good comments from the clients and the public on the beautiful gardens and that was encouraging to the trainees. One noted that industry training helps achieve company production goals and improves productivity. Eight interviewees noted that industry training produces staff that work with minimal or no supervision, while five noted that trained staff make independent decisions and are good at problem solving. Five commented that industry training results in a high standard of health and safety and less accidents in the workplace. One said the high standard of work means the company has a good image, which is an advantage when tendering for work. Five companies said that having industry trainees is a good selling point when tendering

for work, where they are seen as good employers and have high numbers of qualified staff.

Comments on the benefits of industry training included staff who take pride in their work, have good work ethics and a positive and enthusiastic attitude to their job, with six interviewees commenting that industry training produces staff who rise above the 'just a job' mentality.

Sixteen of the interviewees were emphatic that industry training is the best way of gaining practical skills and knowledge of the trade, and three commented that by engaging in industry training, staff learn the 'company way' of doing things and the 'company philosophy' which maintain the high standards of work undertaken by the business.

Increased staff loyalty and staff retention are benefits noted by 10 of the interviewees. Three commented that they are seen as good employers by engaging in industry training which means they find it easier to attract good staff than they might otherwise. Fifteen of the businesses interviewed link qualifications gained with their performance management system and reward qualification achievement with increases in pay, using credit and qualification achievement as a measure of performance during their annual performance review process. Along with staff retention, nine interviewees noted that industry training produces the future supervisors, workplace trainers and assessors, and leaders for the business.

Four interviewees felt that industry training helps generate a team atmosphere in the business, with trainees helping, supporting and encouraging each other, and supportive relationships developing between trainees and their trainers and assessors. Three said that industry training contributes to a happy workplace.

4.2.2.2 Outcomes for the Trainees

Industry training provides goals for the trainees, a career path and allows them to complete national qualifications while working. This was noted by 14 interviewees while two commented that industry training raises some trainee's expectations of themselves and provides a pathway to study at higher levels, such as Diploma or Degree study at University. Other comments on benefits of industry training for the trainees included a sense of achievement and job satisfaction, and learning the skills and knowledge needed for their career in a supportive and caring environment.

4.2.2.3 Outcomes for the Community

Gore District Council had a wider view on industry training, seeing industry training as a way to offer young people, particularly school leavers career opportunities in the town, and keep them there rather than have them leave for tertiary training in a city. The council's strategy is that by keeping young people in the community and giving them the opportunity to gain their tertiary qualifications in the workplace they are building the skills and qualifications and capability of the community as a whole. There has been a lot of publicity around their policy to train young people on the job, and they hope that other businesses in the community will follow their example.

Oderings Nurseries, a long standing wholesale and retail nursery business in Christchurch employs many school children from the community in the afternoons after school, during weekends and in holidays, and see this as a way of nurturing school children, instilling good work ethics and skills in them and giving them the opportunity to prepare them for work when they leave school. For those who chose to become industry trainees at the Nursery after they left school, some have stayed in the company and were now in leading roles in the company.

4.2.2.4 Summary

To summarise, industry training produces positive outcomes, or benefits for businesses. It produces a skilled competent and confident workforce that produces a high standard of work in a safety conscious, productive and supportive work environment. Employees are able to make independent decisions, solve problems and work unsupervised. Industry training ensures succession in the business leadership, and improves staff loyalty and retention. It promotes a collaborative work environment with happy employees. Industry training helps businesses achieve productivity goals and be more competitive.

Industry trainees have goals to achieve, a positive attitude to the job, and are able to learn the skills and knowledge needed to gain national qualifications in a supportive work environment that provides a diverse range of experiences. Their work moves from being 'just a job' to being a rewarding career.

4.2.3 Keys to Success

When asked to attribute the success of industry training in their business to the crucial elements that are the keys to success there were consistent common themes to the responses.

Good managerial support was seen as crucial to success by eight of the interviewees, and seven acknowledged that having a dedicated coordinator to drive the training is important. Seven described the dedication and passion of the trainers and managers for their industry and for training. A deep-rooted culture of training was evident to the interviewer, in which priority is given to training in all businesses surveyed.

The importance of good communication between trainers and trainees, the role of trainers to nurture and support trainees, and the importance of a good supportive team atmosphere are seen as keys to success. The enthusiasm of and encouragement given by the workplace trainers and managers were descriptions used by seven of the interviewees.

Having regular meetings, prioritising training, and celebrating success were seen as important by one interviewee. Earning respect was seen as key to success by two interviewees.

A further key to success is the importance of having an industry trainee with the right attitude, who takes responsibility for his/her learning. Two businesses felt it was important to identify potential trainees while they were still at school, while they were in the habit of learning, and they were impressionable and open to learning new skills.

The establishment of a close relationship between the trainer and trainee is extremely important, and that respect needs to be earned on both sides for industry training to be successful. A sense of humour and making training fun, making training a positive experience were also identified as important.

Four of the interviewees felt that a key to the success of industry training was the variety of work their business could provide for training, and two mentioned that the beautiful environment trainees were working in and creating was inspirational.

Six interviewees identified the support from their Training Advisor was a key to success, as they are able to rely on their training advisor to take care of their training needs and organise specialist training where necessary. Having a well-structured training programme is seen as important as is having trust in the system and the

qualifications. Having a close link between on-job and off-job training was seen as key to success by one interviewee. One interviewee acknowledged the importance of having all three parties dedicated to the success of training – the industry trainee, employer and training provider.

To summarise, the keys to success of industry training lies with all parties involved – the employer, the trainee and the training provider. In the business, having a culture of training and learning where there is dedicated managerial support, and a coordinator to drive the training, industry training is successful. Managers and trainers are enthusiastic and trainees are supported and mentored in a team environment.

It is important that potential trainees are identified early and that the trainees have a positive attitude and are willing to take responsibility for their learning, are interested in and enjoy their work.

The training provider must coordinate a well-structured training programme, with a supportive off-job training programme that is closely related to the on-job training and learning. It is important to develop a supportive relationship with the managers and workplace trainers and assessors in the business, and with the trainees, and to be readily available to respond to employer's needs.

4.2.4 Barriers to Success

During the interviews, the barriers to successful outcomes for industry training were discussed under three categories: those attributable to the workplace, to the trainee and to the quality of service provided by the ITO. Descriptions given are summarised under the category headings below.

4.2.4.1 Barriers to Success in the Workplace

The most common barrier to the success of industry training identified by six interviewees is time and workload pressure, preventing workplace trainers and assessors spending as much time as they would like with their trainees.

The quality of the workplace trainer and confidence and competence of the workplace assessor to assess the trainee were acknowledged as barriers to the quality of the training and to completion of qualifications by four of the interviewees. Lack of support from senior management in allowing dedicated time for training, or not allowing trainees to attend off-job training events was identified as a barrier, although this was not a problem in any of the businesses surveyed.

The lack of continuity of work associated with the contract nature of amenity and arboriculture was identified by one business as an issue affecting stability of employment for trainees, and consequent completion of training.

The relatively low wages in the horticulture industry were identified as barriers to recruitment of suitable trainees, with entry-level wages often at minimum wage by two interviewees, and two interviewees identified their geographical location as a barrier because the cost of living was high and wages were relatively low.

One interviewee identified procrastination in engaging with the ITO to formalise industry training as a barrier to success, seeing the benefits formalised industry training has brought to the business and the trainees compared with before training with the NZHITO.

Overall, the time and workload pressures were the predominant concern to the interviewees, followed by the skills and confidence of the workplace trainers and assessors to engage in quality training and assessment.

4.2.4.2 Barriers to Success – The Trainee

Although no industry trainees were interviewed in this survey, the following are the comments made by the employers or senior staff interviewed. The most readily identified barrier to success is the attitude of the trainee, their attitude to work, their enthusiasm, and confidence and communication skills. This was identified by ten of the interviewees, one of who remarked that the more the trainee put in the more they got out of the training. Literacy and numeracy issues are the most commonly identified issues contributing to lack of progress and were identified by five of the interviewees.

Motivation to complete assignments and other study requirements in their own time at home was identified by two interviewees. A Generation Y poor work ethic was identified by four of the interviewees in some industry trainees, with high rates of absenteeism, lack of timeliness and the expectation of instant rewards. On the other hand one interviewee noted that some older employees are reluctant to formalise their training because they feel they are ‘too old to learn’.

Personal issues at home were cited as contributing to lack of progress in training by four interviewees. These could be such things as relationships, pregnancy, sport

commitments, flatting or childcare. Drug and alcohol abuse were identified as a barrier to progress by two interviewees.

In summary, poor trainee attitude is the most readily identifiable barrier to successful progress of industry training and completion of qualifications, followed by literacy and numeracy issues, and personal issues at home.

4.2.4.3 Barriers to Success – The ITO

The quality of ITO service and support was identified as extremely important, in that it could make or break industry training by five of the interviewees. Having their Training Advisor respond to their needs promptly and efficiently, and having them readily accessible is very important to them. If this does not happen trainees and trainers become frustrated, progress was slowed, and if the ITO service is particularly poor, trainees or businesses will opt out of training. Having said that all but two of the businesses interviewed greatly appreciated the excellent service their ITO Training Advisors provided them. Several mentioned that they could not do the training without the ITO. Two businesses had previously had poor service from the ITO and they were able to compare outcomes from the two situations.

Two interviewees identified that the timing of off-job training had the potential to be a barrier to successful completion of training. Off-job training needed to be in the off-season, because businesses cannot release trainees for off-job training in the busy season.

To summarise, prompt and efficient service by the ITO is necessary for successful industry training, with off-job training days timetabled for convenient times. If that does not occur employers and trainees become frustrated and successful industry training is compromised.

4.2.5 Suggestions for Improvements in Industry Training

Of the 19 businesses surveyed three could not think of anything they could do to improve their industry training practices. Most of the other businesses struggled to think of anything they could do to improve their industry training practices. The following are comments that were made.

Four interviewees would like to increase the time spent with their trainees at one-on-one tutorial and training sessions.

There were suggestions for improvement around training resources. Two of the businesses want to improve the effectiveness of their SOPs by including diagrams and photos. Two interviewees want the ITO to improve its training resources. One wants to standardise the diary or work record by providing a template to assist with record keeping. One wants to develop training videos, and another suggestion was for an interactive e-learning site for trainees. Two businesses want more prompt service from their ITO Training Advisor.

Three interviewees want to improve the way they supported industry trainees when they rotate them to different areas of the business. One interviewee suggested that the ITO provide more professional development for workplace trainers and assessors to help them improve their industry training and assessment practices.

In summary, the main improvement to industry training practices identified by the interviewees is the ability to spend more time with their trainees on a one to one basis. Other suggestions regarded improvement of training resources and the professional development of workplace trainers and assessors.

4.3 Summary of the Interview Survey with Horticulture Businesses

4.3.1 Industry Training ‘Best Practice’

For industry training to be successful it is important that all three parties involved, the employer, the trainee and the training provider are working productively together. It is important that there is a culture of training and learning in the business where there is managerial support, and industry training is part of the business strategy. The business needs to have a person to drive the training, that is, ensure it is progressing, and liaise with the NZHITO Training Advisor. A supportive training environment includes the provision of regular dedicated time for training and tutorial sessions in the workplace, supporting trainees to attend off-job training days, and rewarding success by linking progress with performance management and remuneration. Managers and workplace trainers and assessors are enthusiastic, set high standards and support, encourage and mentor their trainees. Where possible, having more than one industry trainee promotes a collaborative team environment where the trainees support each other and work and study together.

Trainees must take responsibility for their learning, have a positive and enthusiastic attitude and be interested in and enjoy their work. They must manage their time, attend off-job training days, be diligent about recording their learning in their diary, and be prepared to set aside time outside work hours to complete assignments. They must seek the advice and guidance of their workplace trainer and assessor, and constantly ask questions to discover the reasoning behind the practice.

The Training Advisor must be available to respond to the needs of the employer, design a training programme that is well structured and meets the seasonal and practical training needs of the employer in a timely manner. Off-job training days need to complement training that is occurring in the workplace. The Training Advisor needs to develop a close, supportive relationship with the training coordinator and workplace trainer and assessor and the trainee.

4.3.2 The Outcomes of Industry Training

Successful industry training produces a competent and confident workforce that is skilled, produces a high standard of work, is safety conscious, innovative within a supportive and collaborative team environment. It provides for succession in the business and improves staff loyalty and staff retention.

It generates a positive attitude in the trainees and takes work from being 'just a job' to a career. It enables trainees to set goals, achieve national qualifications, achieve higher pay and to become productive and skilled and knowledgeable members of the workforce.

4.3.3 Barriers to Success

Just as successful industry training lies with the three parties, employer, trainee and training provider, barriers to success can be attributed to any of the parties. The most common barrier to success in the business is time and workload pressure hindering quality-training time for the workplace trainers and assessors to spend with the trainees. The competence and confidence of workplace trainers and assessors can be significant barriers to successful industry training. Other barriers identified in the survey include geographical location, continuity of work and low wages affecting the ability to recruit suitable applicants for industry trainee positions.

Poor trainee attitude, absenteeism, not taking responsibility for learning, lack of time devoted to study all contribute to lack of progress in training. Personal relationship

problems and problems at home, along with drug and alcohol abuse are also barriers to success identified in the survey.

If the Training Advisor does not provide prompt and efficient service, and is hard to contact, does not respond promptly to the employer's and trainee's needs, or if off-job training days are scheduled for the busy season then training success is compromised.

Where training success is compromised by any of the barriers identified with any of the parties, employers, workplace trainers and assessors, trainees or the Training Advisor the other parties become frustrated, progress is slowed, a successful outcome is jeopardised, and the trainee or employer may opt out of industry training.

4.3.4 Suggestions for Improvement

The two main suggestions for improvement identified in the survey are to improve the ability for workplace trainers and assessors to spend more time with their trainees. Other suggestions are to improve training resources and to provide professional development for workplace trainers and assessors.

Part two of the survey is to interview four NZHITO Training Advisors. The reason for this is to gain a different perspective on industry training from the facilitator's point of view, and to establish whether the information provided by the businesses surveyed, is similar by the Training Advisors. Therefore the structure of the interviews with NZHITO Training Advisors is similar to the structure of the interviews at the businesses.

4.4 Survey of NZHITO Training Advisors

Four NZHITO Training Advisors were interviewed to determine the facilitation practices they are using with employers and trainees in the businesses they are working with. The Training Advisors assist businesses with industry training in the horticulture industry. They work closely with employers, establish the skill and knowledge needs of employers and design individual training plans for industry trainees to fulfil those needs. They identify suitable workplace trainers and assessors in the workplace as well as a contact person within the business to liaise with for coordination of the training. They train the workplace assessors, and meet with the training coordinator, workplace assessor(s) and trainees regularly, usually two to four times per year to monitor progress and mentor and support the workplace assessors

and trainees. They provide on-job training and assessment resources, organise specialist off-job training and any specialist in-house training that is needed. Each Training Advisor works within a geographical area and they work with around 50 to 80 employers in their area and oversee the training of around 100 to 150 industry trainees. Most Training Advisors work with businesses in all the horticulture sectors in their area, although some may specialise and work predominantly with one sector.

The purpose of interviewing the NZHITO Training Advisors was to gain an understanding of industry training from the perspective of the facilitator of the process outside the business. Because NZHITO Training Advisors work with so many employers and industry trainees, they see a range of industry training practices in the businesses they work with and a range of outcomes of industry training, so they have different experiences and observations to draw on.

The interviews were qualitative interviews and took the same format as the interviews with the businesses, that is: the opening, probing and documentation, final exploration, and close. Discussion was based around similar ‘buckets’ of information as the ‘buckets’ of information on industry training practices, outcomes of industry training and barriers to industry training as covered in the survey of businesses, along with facilitation practices they used. Therefore a comparison of information between the two surveys could be made.

The buckets of information covered during the discussions included:

- The facilitation style/tools/methods used by the Training Advisor
- The outcomes of industry training for the business and trainee
- The key factors contributing to successful industry training
- Barriers to success
- Suggestions for Improvement.

The analysis of the information gained during the interviews is discussed under the same information ‘buckets’ below.

4.4.1 Facilitation Style/Tools/Methods of the Training Advisor

The Training Advisors interviewed see their role in the workplace as enhancing training that is already occurring by providing the tools for training and assessment,

and increasing the depth of training that is occurring naturally. As one Training Advisor said: “putting structure in to training so that it fulfils the requirements of the qualification”.

Three spoke of having an inclusive and supportive style, and a relaxed manner with employers, trainers, assessors and trainees. Two are mindful of the seasonal nature of the businesses they are working with and scheduled visits and off-job training days to cater for this, the other two work in sectors that are not so seasonal. One commented that: “It is all centred on the employer. You have to keep him happy. If you do that everything else follows”.

They all see the building of supportive relationships with employers, trainers, assessors and trainees as crucial, and talked of the importance of being easy to contact and always available to meet their needs, and stop for a chat. One Training Advisor described his ‘golden rules’ that he abides by. He described how “I do not overstay my welcome, I fit in with the workload at the workplace, I always take time to have a chat, and I try not to disrupt the workplace”. He maintained that the building of relationships is the key to success. Two Training Advisors spoke of becoming their friend – developing a friendly relationship. One networks with employers after hours, meeting for a game of tennis or a run. One described how, when visiting a landscape site he might pick up a trowel and help for a while. Two spoke of giving advice in their specialist field of expertise to employers.

Regular contact with the employer was seen as essential. One Training Advisor said he is constantly in touch and visits at every opportunity rather than posting material out, as a visit always gives a chance for discussion. One maintains regular contact but as many of his employers are in the fruit production industry, he is mindful of their workload and leaves them alone in the busy harvest season. One deals with large companies and meets with the employer for discussions and planning, and seldom sees the trainees as it is too expensive for the employer to bring them in from their scattered locations in the field. Two said they always time visits to suit the employer, always allowing the employer to take the lead and dictate the time. Often this is at 7am in the morning and they may have to drive for one or two hours to get there.

All interviewees place great importance on the quarterly review process to monitor trainee progress and mentor and coach trainee, and where necessary coach the

workplace trainer and assessor. Setting goals, and recording them is important for encouraging progress, in credit completions, as is the power of positive encouragement and reinforcement in giving confidence to trainees and workplace assessors. One Training Advisor described how he places poorly performing trainees on a written contract to encourage them to achieve small steps in their unit standard assessments.

Celebrating success is encouraged, with one Training Advisor sending out letters of congratulations to the trainees with the achievement of every unit standard. Most make a point of hand delivering national certificates to trainees where possible.

Providing fast and efficient service, responding quickly to the needs of employers, responding promptly to requests, is seen as important. All design training plans to align with business needs. Two Training Advisors go to great lengths to organise any extra in-house training businesses need, such as pruning, chainsaw safety, tractor driving, and providing total support to the trainers, assessors and trainees.

One Training Advisor, a qualified horticultural tutor, tutors in-house tutorials on the horticultural science subjects for organisations that have large numbers of trainees, meaning they can not attend off-job training days at the Polytechnic. He finds this works well, and normally has a workplace trainer at the tutorials, relating the theory to practices in the workplace. Another, a qualified arborist provides in-house tutorials on specialist practical skills showing trainees and workplace assessors the latest techniques. He has begun to assist workplace trainers by organising professional development sessions for groups of them by bringing in guest speakers to keep them up to date with techniques and equipment, or having coaching sessions on workplace assessment practices. The advantages of in-house tutorials to the employer are that work disruption is kept to a minimum, and the tutorials covered relate directly to their work practices.

In summary, the Training Advisors interviewed emphasised the importance of having regular contact with the employers and trainees, while being mindful of working around their busy timetables. The supportive nature of the relationship they build with the managers, coordinators, trainers and assessors in the workplace, and with the trainees is important for success. They respond to employer's individual training needs by designing training to suit the employer's capability needs and providing

extra specialist support with off-job and in-house training where appropriate. Goals are set and trainee progress, monitored. Training Advisors provide encouragement, guidance and advice, and celebrate success.

4.4.2 Outcomes of Industry Training

4.4.2.1 Outcomes for the Employer

All interviewees acknowledged that the employer gains skilled and knowledgeable, employees. Having productive and committed employees was another description given by one interviewee. Respect, and a positive staff attitude, and happy and productive employees are seen as positive outcomes of industry training. Two interviewees described the importance of having qualified staff in winning contracts. One said that the employer wants to train staff so that they can become leading hands and supervise other groups of workers on jobs, growing the business.

The benefits of staff retention, having staff with a positive attitude to work, and having a skilled, productive workforce are benefits for the company, as well as providing for succession to senior positions in the company were mentioned by two interviewees.

4.4.2.2 Outcomes for the Trainee

Trainee success is measured by the Training Advisors in credit and qualification achievement. Successful credit and qualification achievement is life changing, and the change in attitude as trainees' progress through training, as they 'step up' at work and take responsibility. One comment made was that by becoming qualified the trainee improves his/her future career prospects. Another described a change in the employers' attitude, that improves with the success of the trainee. All said that qualifications open doors and provide a career path and open up opportunities. One said that networking at training days with other trainees and employers opens their minds to practices in other companies, and provides them with a network of contacts. One commented that training gets a trade behind them for the future. Gaining skills and knowledge is another benefit to the trainees mentioned by all the interviewees.

4.4.2.3 Outcomes for the ITO

One Training Advisor pointed out that growth in the number of businesses and in the number of trainees within businesses training with the NZHITO are positive benefits for NZHITO of successful industry training. Three talked of repeat business, as

employers gain confidence in industry training, where they are provided with good service from the ITO, and place more of their staff in formalised industry training. Word of mouth recommendations between employers was mentioned by three training advisors with a resulting increase in the number of businesses engaging in formalised industry training is a positive spin-off for the ITO.

4.4.2.4 Summary of Outcomes

To summarise, NZHITO Training Advisors are aware of benefits of industry training for the employer, the trainee and for NZHITO. Benefits for the employer include a skilled and knowledgeable and committed workforce, with increased staff retention and loyalty, increased productivity and leadership succession. Business growth and the ability to be awarded more contracts by having qualified staff are benefits of industry training.

As skills and knowledge increase, successful completions bring national qualifications that open career prospects for trainees. Success is seen as life changing. They have a positive attitude to their work and respect from their employer, and are able to network with staff in other businesses.

A positive spin-off for the NZHITO is that with successful industry training comes more business, with both an increase in trainee numbers in existing businesses and word of mouth referrals encouraging other businesses to engage in formalised industry training.

4.4.3 Keys to Success

The Training Advisors interviewed all felt that in successful industry training the Training Advisor provides structure and support for the training to meet business needs. Two stated that the key to successful training is that the employer is in working with the ITO. One interviewee said the key to success is regular contact the industry trainers, assessors and trainees, and to agree on a written action plan for completion goals at the trainee quarterly reviews. One commented that it is essential to be a good communicator.

Three said the key to successful training is its flexibility – training starts at any time of the year, individualised training plans are suited to employer needs, training is self-paced, and where trainees change employer and/or horticulture sector or geographical region they can continue training. The method of delivery of specialist support

training is flexible to suit the employer was mentioned by three interviewees, with training days in-house or off-job. Two emphasised the key to success is the flexibility and accessibility of training compared with other forms of tertiary training.

Two interviewees stated that the employer must choose a respected person in the business to drive the training. In the words of one interviewee, “the leader needs to be someone with mana in the workplace”. One said it is important that employers show willingness to support their industry trainees, and they have enthusiasm and a passion for training. One interviewee stressed that the most successful businesses engaging in industry training are those in which the employer is a leader.

In summary comments by Training Advisors indicate that actions by the employer and the Training Advisor are the key to successful industry training. The accessibility and flexibility of industry training is seen as a key to success. Training Advisors comments focused on their own role in assisting businesses with industry training, emphasising their responsibility in bringing structure in to training that meets the needs of the employer, setting goals for the trainee, and of supporting employer and trainee. Successful industry training needs passionate and enthusiastic trainers and assessors and a respected person within the business to drive the training.

4.4.4 Barriers to Success

All Training Advisors saw barriers to successful industry training within businesses they facilitate industry training in with the employer, the trainee and the training provider. These are outlined below.

4.4.4.1 Barriers to Success – the Employer

They all saw unsuccessful industry training where there is lack of management support. One described situations where “there is a casual or disinterested employer or workplace assessor”. One described situations where employers do not delegate responsibility for coordination of training, or do delegate the role but do not provide extra time to do it.

Lack of support for the trainee in not allowing the trainee to spend time with his/her workplace trainer or assessor, or not allowing the trainee to attend off-job training days was described by all those interviewed. It is discouraging for the trainee where there is lack of financial support for training. One Training Advisor felt it was unreasonable that some employers provide no financial help at all for the trainees,

while another Training Advisor felt the trainee should be accountable to pay the fee themselves because if it is paid by the employer, and the employer pays wages when they attend training days there is no 'buy in' from the trainee. Two interviewees said that where management do not recognise qualification achievement with increases in pay, trainees become disillusioned and lose motivation.

All interviewees see situations where workplace trainers and assessors lack practical skills and/ or confidence to train and assess. One described a barrier with "workplace assessors who lack commitment – they don't buy in to the role". Two interviewees described where workplace assessors are pedantic or not confident in assessing the trainee becomes frustrated with lack of progress and credit completion, and may drop out of training. One listed lack of communications skills and poor attitude of workplace assessors as barriers.

4.4.4.2 Barriers to Success – the Trainee

Lack of commitment by the trainee is seen as a barrier to success by two interviewees. As one interviewee put it – when there is no 'buy in' from the trainee. One interviewee listed personal issues with industry trainees, especially young trainees, as barriers to success: "coping with living away from home in a flatting situation, girlfriends, pregnancy, babies". Two interviewees pointed out that low literacy level of some trainees is a barrier to unit standard and qualification completion, as is the language barrier where English is a trainee's second language.

One Training Advisor is frustrated that the current education system is based on credit completion and unit standard assessment. He said young people become 'credit collectors', and industry training that is based around unit standard completion, is not always meeting the needs of the business.

4.4.4.3 Barriers to Success – NZHITO

It is essential for the NZHITO Training Advisor to have credibility in the industry. Two interviewees stressed that the Training Advisor must be able to "talk the talk" – have a background in the industry in order to gain respect of the employers. One described the importance of finding the right Training Advisor for the employer to work with, and three emphasised the need for the Training Advisor to have expertise in the industry as well as educational expertise. If the Training Advisor is not credible then the employer may drop out of industry training or find another provider.

Persuading employers to engage with the ITO in formalising industry training is difficult with some businesses. One described how sometimes persistence over a long period of time is needed before an employer is open to the idea of formalised industry training and willing to engage with the ITO. The same interviewee said getting a ‘foot in the door’ was particularly hard if the employer had had a bad experience with a previous Training Advisor.

One interviewee found that coping with the ‘paper work’ and a high workload as a preventing him from visiting some employers as frequently as he would like. Another saw poor communication skills or poor organisational skills on the part of the Training Advisor as barriers to success. Three interviewees said prompt service from the Training Advisor is important.

The quality of the off-job training provider, the ITP or PTE that the ITO has contracted was seen as a barrier to success by one interviewee. If the ITP or PTE is inflexible with timetabling of off-job training days, or the tutors are pedantic about assessment and are over-assessing, or not delivering quality tuition, then trainees quickly lose motivation and stop attending training days.

4.4.4.4 Barriers to Success - Summary

In summary, barriers to success with the employer include lack of commitment and disinterest, and lack of support for the trainee, whether that is financial support, or lack of training time with workplace trainers and assessors, or not linking success with remuneration rewards. Workplace assessors who were not confident or competent with training and assessment, have poor communication skills or a poor attitude are also seen as barriers to successful industry training. Many employers will not engage with NZHITO in formalised industry training at all, and getting a foot in the door often takes persistence over a long period of time.

Lack of commitment by the trainee, personal issues and low levels of literacy and numeracy and poor employer/employee relationships are barriers to success.

If the credibility of the Training Advisors is in question, or they are poorly organised or do not provide prompt and efficient service, or lack communication skills to build supportive relationships then employers will opt out of training or find another provider.

4.4.5 Suggestions for Improvement

One Training Advisor felt that the focus of industry training around unit standard completion is not necessarily meeting industry needs and disrupts the flow of training, and that emphasis needs to be on practical skills and theory topics not on unit standard assessment. One interviewee commented that there is a need for Training Advisors to be innovative and responsive to employers, targeting training to meet their needs.

One Training Advisor acknowledged there is a need to attract a higher calibre of people in to the industry, and to overcome the poor perception of the industry in schools and in the community.

One interviewee thought that having the trainee pay the fee and take time off to attend training days without pay would improve their commitment to training and achievement.

4.4.6 Summary of the Survey of NZHITO Training Advisors

The Training Advisors surveyed acknowledged that it is essential that Training Advisors are respected in the industry, have sufficient expertise in the industry and in education, and that they develop close and supportive relationships with the employers, workplace trainers and assessors and trainees. They provide structure to industry training that is flexible and individualised and responsive to the training needs of the employers. They need to be effective communicators, who are well organised so they can provide a prompt and efficient service. Two see the key to successful industry training is the flexibility and accessibility of industry training compared with other forms of tertiary education.

They see positive outcomes of industry training for the employer, the trainee and NZHITO. Successful industry training produces a skilled, knowledgeable and committed workforce, improving retention and business productivity. The achievement of national qualifications improves the career prospects of trainees and achievement is life changing, improving job satisfaction, and expanding their own skills and knowledge.

Barriers to success are seen with employers, trainees and with NZHITO staff. Industry training is not successful where employers who are disinterested, lack commitment and do not support trainees either financially or by allowing them dedicated training time. Where workplace assessors lack confidence and/or

competence to assess trainees, lack of progress is frustrating and may lead to the trainee dropping out of training, or leaving the workplace.

Trainees who lack commitment, or are dealing with personal issues lead to lack of progress in industry training. Low levels of literacy and numeracy or having English as a second language also contribute to lack of progress and unsuccessful industry training.

Training Advisors who lack credibility and have poor communication and organisational skills are barriers to industry training. If a Training Advisor is unresponsive to an employer's needs, the employer will become frustrated and either opt out of industry training or find another education provider.

Improvements suggested by the Training Advisors centred on their own responsiveness to employers, the need to attract a higher calibre of trainee in to the industry, and on taking the emphasis of industry training away from unit standard and credit completion to an emphasis on topics and skills that employers need.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Best Practices in Industry Training

The industry training and learning practices that are occurring in the horticulture businesses surveyed are congruent with successful industry training practices outlined in the literature. The extent of the congruence is discussed in detail below.

5.1.1 Industry Training Best Practice in the Workplace

Effective industry training occurs in a workplace that is committed to and values training and learning. The business has a culture of training and learning. Because staff in many of the businesses surveyed had been trained themselves in industry, a high value is placed on the effectiveness of using the expertise of supervisors within these businesses to train employees. This ensures the high work standards of the business are maintained. In the words of three of the interviewees industry training ensures employees are trained in the ‘company way’ and to the ‘company philosophies’. Workplace trainers and assessors take pride in passing on their skills and knowledge, in the high standard of work achieved, and in mentoring and coaching their trainees.

Priority is given to industry training, and a key to success is to ensure that there is someone who is respected in the business to ‘drive’ the training – ensure it is occurring, monitor progress and liaise with workplace trainers and assessors, and the Training Advisor. Where dedicated training time is set aside, progress is made and training is successful. This culture of training and learning, and the high value placed in having those in the workplace train their employees, was also found by Montague and Hopkins (2002), Dawe (2003) and Curson (2004).

Just as Curson (2004) found in her research, in the businesses surveyed, training and learning is a component of business policy at a strategic level in the and is integrated in to the performance management system. Progress is measured and used in performance management processes and rewarded with increased remuneration, and succession of supervisory and management positions is taken care of by promoting qualified trainees to more senior positions.

5.1.2 Industry Training Best Practice – the Trainee

Where effective industry training practices are operating in a business, having the right trainee is important. In the words of one interviewee in the horticulture business survey, “finding the right person for training with the right attitude” is important to success. Another interviewee maintained the trainees have to earn her respect for training to be successful. Other keys to successful industry training attributable to trainee behaviour that were identified in the business survey are having a motivated trainee, having trainees who feel good about themselves, and trainees who take pride in their work. It is important that the trainee takes responsibility for their learning, and that there is ‘buy in’ to training. It is important that the trainee earns the respect of the trainer, and important that the trainee respects the trainer, and they develop a close working relationship.

5.1.3 Industry Training Best Practice – the Training Provider

Johnston and Hawke (2002) found that successful industry training is supported by systems and structures provided by an education provider. In 17 of the businesses surveyed, learning structure and a supporting system is provided by the NZHITO, and in two businesses by an ITP.

It was identified in the survey that NZHITO puts structure in to training with training plans that are individualised to the capability and productivity needs of the employer, with clear levels of progress and achievement that the employer can use in performance management. Industry training NZHITO is flexible and responsive to employer and trainee needs in the most appropriate ways. It supports and assists on-job training with additional specialist theory and practical Off-job training either in-house or away from the business. For trainees flexibility means they are able to change employers, horticulture sectors and/or geographical regions and continue with their training.

The survey findings indicate that best practice by the NZHITO occurs where the Training Advisor has a close working relationship with the employer. The Training Advisor is in regular contact with the employer, meets with the workplace training coordinator and/or workplace trainer/assessor and trainee regularly, and reviews progress and sets goals for the trainee at the quarterly review. The Training Advisor must respond to employer and trainee needs promptly and efficiently. The training

programme is well structured and Training Advisor is respected in the industry and is a good communicator and is well organised.

5.1.4 Industry Training – A Three Way Working Relationship

Therefore for successful industry training to occur, best practice is where there is a collaborative working relationship between the employer, the trainee and NZHITO where the employer, trainee and Training Advisor work together in a cooperative and supportive manner, and each party works diligently to ensure progress is made and training is successful. Their work is supported by effective communication and support systems. This is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

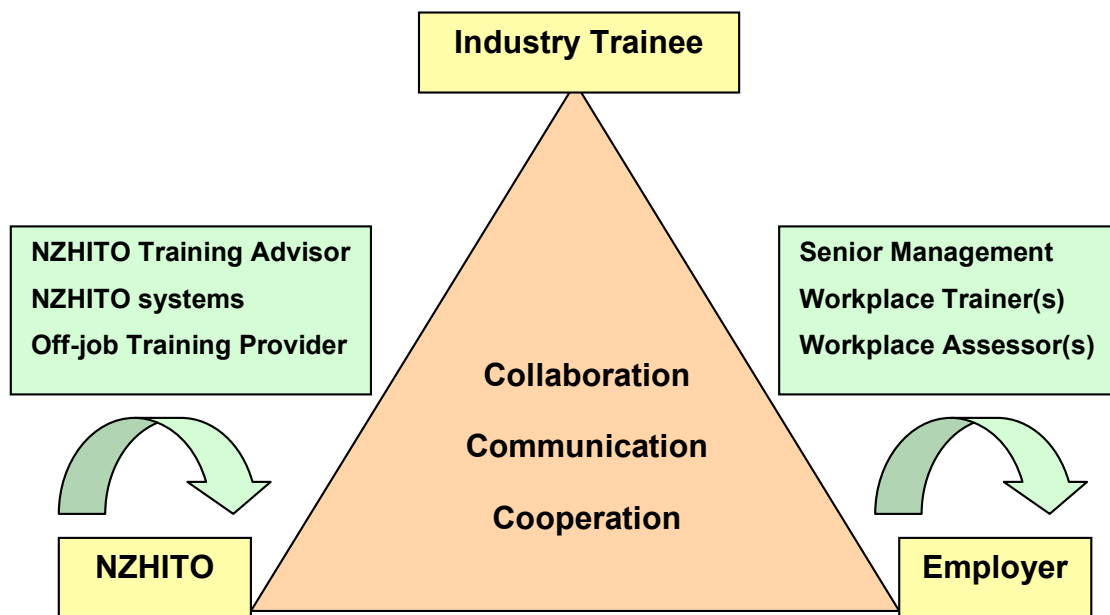


Figure 5. Best Practice in Horticulture Industry Training – the working relationship between employer, industry trainee and NZHITO

5.2 The Outcomes of Industry Training

The literature review found successful industry training benefits the employer, the trainee and the country. The survey found additional benefits for the community and the NZHITO. Outcomes are discussed below for each.

5.2.1 Outcomes for the Employer

The survey found positive outcomes of industry training for the employer. Industry training produces a competent and confident skilled workforce. Employees produce a high standard of work, health and safety standards are improved, employees are able

to make independent decisions, and less supervision is required. A skilled workforce is innovative and embraces new technology such as highly technical plant husbandry techniques, or new machinery and technology. Industry training contributes in a positive way to achieve the high standards of work and the productivity goals of a horticulture business ensuring businesses are competitive. These findings are similar to the benefits of industry training found in other industries published in the literature by the Scottish Government (2002) and Baker, Summers & Murdoch (2003).

Other positive outcomes for the employer, described by interviewees in the survey are a motivated and happy workforce, increased staff loyalty and staff retention, a collaborative team working environment and succession to supervisory and management positions in the business. The Agriculture ITO (2008) and Baker, Summers & Murdoch (2003) made similar descriptions.

5.2.2 Outcomes for the Trainee

There are beneficial outcomes for the trainee from participating in industry training. The trainee is able to gain national qualifications while working, and is able to step up to a rewarding career with higher rates of pay. Industry training engenders a positive attitude to the job, where work is enjoyable. The trainee becomes a productive and skilled member of the horticulture workforce. Those taking part in the survey described these benefits and they are similar to those found in other industries by the Scottish Government (2002) and ITF (2007).

5.2.3 Outcomes for the Community and the Country

The Gore District Council believe that industry training produces positive outcomes for the community by giving young people the opportunity to gain a tertiary qualification and become a productive member of the workforce. This keeps young people in the community rather than losing them to the cities. Industry training enhances the capability of the community. Perhaps being a local body means that the Gore District Council was one of the more likely organisations to see a link between what they were doing and their social responsibility towards improving the community. Other businesses surveyed appeared to realise that the benefits of industry training extended beyond their organisation and their trainees, to their industry, but did not mention benefits to the community or country.

In these times of increased awareness of the social responsibility of businesses and the need for sustainable business practice, perhaps there is merit in the ITO pointing out the extended benefits of investing in industry training that go beyond benefits to their own organisations and even their own industry. After all, horticulture businesses are often in rural or small town communities where it is important to keep young people in the community or face a population decline with the resulting negative effects in loss of capability within the community and loss of public services such as schools and medical services. As the Gore District Council pointed out, industry training keeps them (and the author would add, future generations) in town.

The Scottish Government (2002) identified benefits of industry training beyond the businesses and industry to the country, as did TEC (2008). Research by The Scottish Government (2002) and Harvey and Harris (2008) indicates industry-training benefits the country by increasing productivity, raising GDP and by increasing competitiveness in a global economy.

5.2.4 Outcomes for NZHITO

Successful industry training also benefits the ITO as employers see the benefits of formalised industry training, increasing the numbers of those training in the business. As one Training Advisor who works predominantly with large corporate companies pointed out, if he keeps the employer happy, the employer keeps enrolling more and more trainees in to formalised industry training, hence growing ITO business. The additional benefit of providing good service is that and more employers engage in formalised industry training with the ITO, encouraged by word of mouth referrals.

5.3 Barriers to Successful Industry Training

5.3.1 Barriers to Engagement in Industry Training

With so many benefits to industry training, you would think that more businesses would be engaging with NZHITO in formalised industry training. However, Training Advisors interviewed described reluctance by some employers to engage in industry training. This finding is similar to that reported by Working Group 4 (2008), Curson (2004) and Fraser (2005). One Training Advisor described how it often took persistence over a long period of time before businesses will engage in formalised industry training. Two business interviewees were really pleased with the positive results for their companies and for their trainees once they engaged in industry

training, after reluctance over an extended period of time after previous attempts by the ITO to get them on board. Sometimes, it seems that the time must be right before an employer is ready to commit to formalised industry training.

The horticulture industry is not alone in finding employers reluctant to engage in formalised industry training, with employers in other industries seeing industry training as a cost rather than an investment (Curson, 2004). The seasonal nature of the horticulture business and geographic location are also barriers to employers engaging in formalised industry training (Horticulture New Zealand, 2008) as they are in the tourism industry, and agriculture, sport and retail (Curson, 2004; Fraser, 2005; TEC, 2008).

The best advocates for industry training are those engaged in industry training, that are reaping its associated benefits, as evident in the businesses surveyed. It is human nature to be conservative and to be reluctant to try something new, especially when it involves a financial investment. I think some businesses that are currently reluctant to engage in industry training would be more receptive to recommendations made by other employers rather than by the ITO, who they would just see as 'selling' training. The message portraying benefits of industry training would have more impact when coming from industry leaders and their industry associations. To encourage more businesses to formalise industry training, the ITO does need the help of these leaders in industry.

Where employers are looking to employ industry trainees, some find difficulty in recruiting suitable applicants for industry training positions due to low wages, a poor perception of career options in the industry, or geographical isolation. This was found in the survey and in the literature (The Scottish Government, 2002; Horticulture New Zealand, 2008; Working Group 4 2008). One way to improve this situation would be for the ITO to work with schools to raise awareness of the industry and its importance in the New Zealand economy, as well as the wide range of career paths it offers. Integrating horticulture examples in to current curricula in such subjects as science, economics, accounting and geography would help, as well as working more closely with horticulture teachers and careers teachers.

5.3.2 Barriers to Success in Industry Training

Where formalised industry training is in place, there are barriers to successful credit achievement and qualification completions and successful outcomes for businesses. These barriers may lie with the employer, the trainee or NZHITO and are outlined below.

5.3.2.1 Barriers to Success – the Employer

The most common barrier to success identified by interviewees in businesses surveyed is lack of time to give to training and assessment by the workplace trainers and assessors. Disinterest and lack of commitment by the employer, and lack of support for the trainee were identified in the interviews with Training Advisors. Other barriers to success are lack of competence and/or confidence of the workplace trainer and/or assessor. This results in slow or nonexistent progress in credit completions and qualification achievement. Trainees become disheartened and may drop out of training or leave the workplace. Poor employer-employee relationships, and not rewarding success by increases in pay is also disheartening for employees. Other industries experience similar problems (Curson, 2004).

Brinkerhoff (2007) found that where employees are not adequately prepared for an off-job training event or where they do not have the opportunity to put skills learned in training in to practice, and managers do not reinforce learning or hold employees accountable for new learning or performance then success is compromised. Interviewees in the survey did not describe this issue but this may be because the nature of industry training is practically based, and participants in the survey found good alignment between off-job training and on-job training.

5.3.2.2 Barriers to Success – The Trainee

The survey found barriers to success with trainees include poor attitude to work and to training, absenteeism, not taking responsibility for learning and not setting aside time outside work hours to study. Personal and home life problems as well as drug and alcohol abuse contribute to lack of progress, along with low levels of literacy and numeracy. Curson (2004) described similar problems in other industries. As one Training Advisor pointed out, young trainees are often in a flatting situation, learning to live outside the family home, learning to cook, not eating properly, learning to manage their finances and learning to get along with their flatmates. Or they have

babies or young children to look after and find it hard to juggle responsibilities at home with work and study.

More education on life skills would be helpful in schools to overcome some of these problems. The ITO currently has a two-hour study skills programme that Training Advisors can run for their trainees before training days begin each year. This programme provides useful tips on effective study techniques. But the ITO does not provide any training in other life skills. With the number of off-job training days kept to a minimum to suit employers, it is unlikely that they would agree to allow trainees to attend additional training in life skills. However, perhaps this is worth some consideration. It would be interesting to know whether any other ITOs are assisting their trainees in this way.

5.3.2.3 Barriers to Success – the ITO

Barriers to success with the NZHITO identified in the survey were poor communication skills and organisational skills, and a poor response time to requests. Three Training Advisors identified the importance of Training Advisor credibility with the industry. Careful recruitment of Training Advisors, choosing Training Advisors with an industry and/or horticulture education background is essential, as is good induction training for new Training Advisors to ensure they provide good service to their employers and the trainees. Professional development in communications and time management would also help up-skill staff and minimise barriers to working effectively with employers.

Poor coordination between tertiary education organisations, competition between tertiary education organisations, and ignorance of the help NZHITO can give to employers are barriers relating to the training provider that were identified in the literature. (Working Group 4, 2008), and not identified in the survey. This is probably because those taking part in the survey were already engaging in successful industry training with the NZHITO. The work of ITO staff in visiting businesses, liaising with industry associations and speaking at industry conferences will continue to spread the word on the benefits of formalised industry training and the ITO's role in assisting businesses to benefit from this. Work with other tertiary education organisations to provide clear education pathways from school through industry training and University education will go some way to clarifying how different

tertiary education providers can respond to the skills and capability needs of the industry.

5.3.2.4 Barriers to Success - Conclusion

As described above, barriers to success may lie with any one of the parties involved in industry training, the employer, the trainee or NZHITO. Where this occurs the other parties become frustrated or disheartened, training is compromised and progress is slowed or halted. The trainee may stop training or leave the workplace, or the employer may stop using the ITO to assist with training and/or change training providers.

It is important to identify issues as they arise and attempt to find solutions to problems, to overcome barriers to success and achieve satisfactory progress again. This can only be achieved where there is regular contact, open and honest communication and close collaboration between the three parties. This breakdown in training is illustrated in diagrammatic form in Figure 6 below. The diagram shows the relationship between the trainee, employer and NZHITO, and how barriers to success can occur with any one of these parties, resulting in a loss of collaboration, cooperation and/or communication and consequent breakdown in industry training.

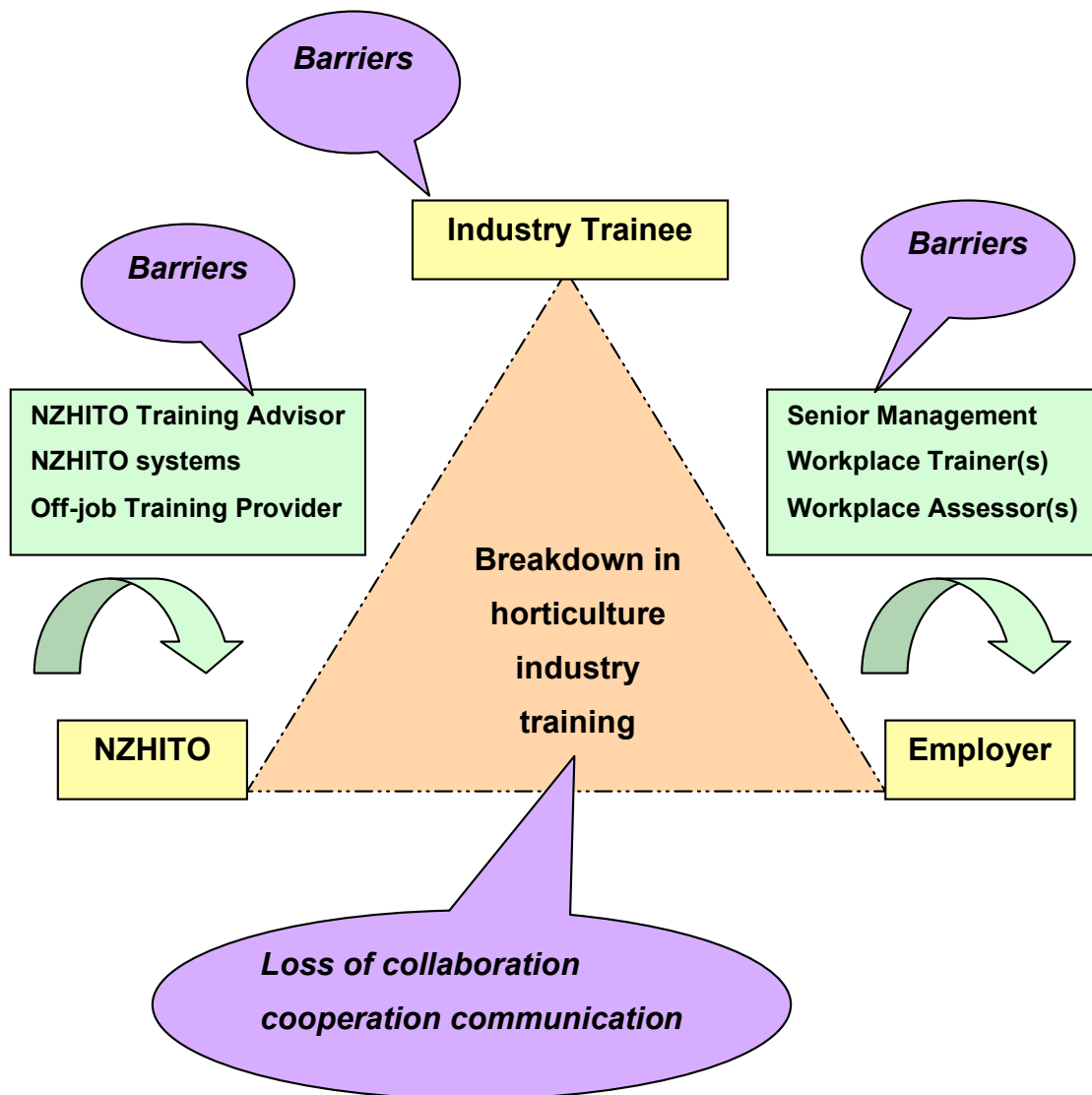


Figure 6. Barriers to Successful Horticulture Industry Training

5.4 Implementing Best Practices in Horticulture Industry Training – Assisting Businesses to gain more impact from industry training investments

It is evident that successful industry training requires a close working relationship between the employer, the trainee and NZHITO. The role of NZHITO is to assist the employer to put structure in to training, and to provide support systems to assist with industry training.

5.4.1 The Learning to Performance Process

Best practice occurs where the NZHITO works closely with the employer to design training plans to suit the employer's capability and productivity needs, and has a close and collaborative working relationship with employer and trainee. Progress is monitored regularly at the quarterly review, and goals are set for the trainee.

Specialist tuition provided in off-job training and learning complements and reinforces on-job training and learning. Industry trainees gain valuable knowledge and skills that are developed in the workplace. This learning to performance process with industry training is illustrated by expanding on Brinkerhoff’s learning to performance model that was illustrated in Figure 2. The expanded learning to performance process is illustrated in Figure 7 below.

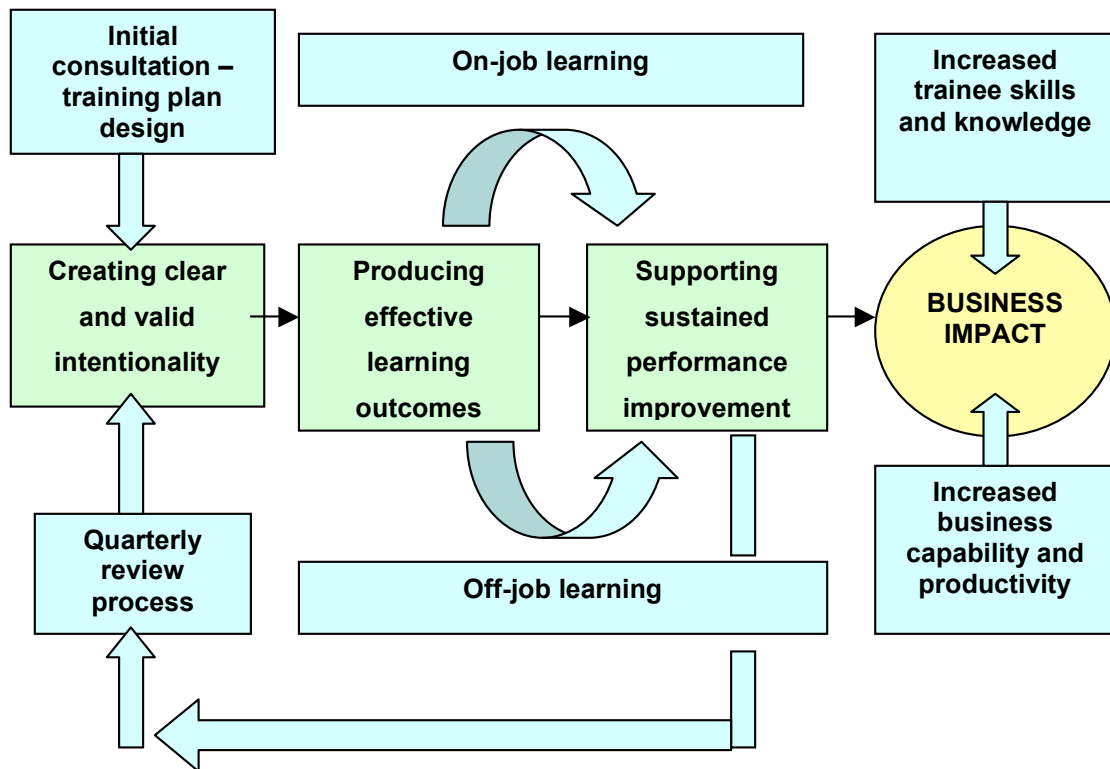


Figure 7. The Learning to Performance Process NZHITO Facilitated Industry Training

Recall that central to Brinkerhoff’s learning to performance process, is the creation of a learning environment in which the learning to performance process is comprised of three fundamental and interrelated segments. The first is the creation of clear and valid intentionality as to the purpose of training and learning interventions that are linked with business goals, and that managers and other leaders understand and are committed to. This is followed by a training intervention such as workshop or class that produces effective learning. Following the training intervention the trainee must be given every opportunity to practice the new skills and knowledge learned in the work environment with management providing such support for the learner as

coaching, feedback, incentives reviews of action plans in order for the business to gain maximum impact from the training and learning in terms of productivity and capability gains. In Brinkerhoff's learning to performance process it is important that these three segments in the process are aligned and integrated.

Well planned and coordinated industry training facilitated by the NZHITO, where the employer, the NZHITO Training Advisor and the trainee are working in a collaborative way has the potential to create a learning environment in which the learning to performance process is aligned with business productivity and capability goals, and the on-job learning is integrated well with off-job learning so that each supports the other and the trainee is able to integrate skills and knowledge learned. That way business is able to gain maximum impact in terms of productivity and capability gains.

In the survey of Training Advisors it was evident that the Training Advisors interviewed work with the employer at the initial consultation, to determine the capability and productivity needs of the business and the trainee, and to determine the best way to meet those needs. A training plan is developed by the Training Advisor for on and off-job training and learning that ensures a fit between skills and knowledge needs and unit standards required for the trainee to complete the qualifications. The Training Advisors interviewed place great importance on the quarterly review process. Here the trainee, employer and/or workplace trainer and assessor meet regularly, four times a year to set training goals, review progress, review and plan off-job specialist training events and support the workplace trainer/assessor and the trainee. This initial consultation process, and the quarterly review process ensures there is clear and valid intentionality as to the training and learning process throughout the training, and that this is clearly evident to each of the three parties involved, the trainee, employer and Training Advisor.

It is easier to gain congruence between on-job training and learning and off-job specialist training interventions in an ITO facilitated training model where there is close collaboration between the employer, the Training Advisor and the trainee than in a situation such as Brinkerhoff described. Brinkerhoff's learning to performance process is based on a model in which the training provider is away from the workplace with no connection to the workplace. With ITO facilitated industry training, on and off-job training and learning are planned and coordinated together by

the Training Advisor and the employer. This model provides the necessary connection between the on and off-job training and learning, to ensure each supports the other.

In ITO facilitated industry training, there is congruence between industry practice, on-job learning and off-job learning, because the workplace trainer/assessor takes an active role in the training and learning process. Where industry training ‘best practices’ are occurring in the workplace, the trainee is constantly learning and practicing skills on the job, and putting knowledge and skills learned at off-job training interventions in to practice immediately. The research survey found industry training ‘best practice’ provides employer support for the trainee that Brinkerhoff described as being desirable in the learning to performance process. Coaching and mentoring is provided by the workplace trainer/assessor, and progress is monitored during the quarterly review process. Performance and qualification success is linked with HR practices and rewarded. This close connection between on-job and off-job training and learning, with industry training ‘best practice’ supports steps two and three in the Brinkerhoff’s learning to performance process, producing effective learning outcomes and supporting sustained performance improvement.

The research survey found that where ‘best practices’ in industry training are being undertaken by the employer, the trainee and the NZHITO Training Advisor, in a collaborative and cooperative working environment, the business and the trainee benefit and there are positive outcomes from industry training. The business gains maximum impact in terms of productivity and capability from industry training, and the trainee makes successful progress, gains valuable skills and knowledge, national qualifications and a productive career. This completes Brinkerhoff’s learning to performance process.

5.4.2 A HILM for Horticulture Industry Training

Formalised industry training with NZHITO, where the employer, the trainee and NZHITO work collaboratively to undertake industry training ‘best practice’, produces a skilled, competent and confident workforce that improves business capability and productivity. The learning to performance process that is facilitated by the NZHITO can be illustrated in a HILM for horticulture industry training. The process of industry training and learning begins with the business capability and productivity

needs analysis by the NZHITO Training Advisor and the employer as outlined above, progresses through flexible delivery of on and off-job training and learning that meets the needs of the employer and trainee. Assessment is against unit standards, and where industry training ‘best practices’ are occurring, training produces beneficial outcomes for the business and the trainee in terms of enhanced productivity and capability along with a skilled and qualified workforce. This HILM for NZHITO assisted horticulture industry training is illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 8 below.

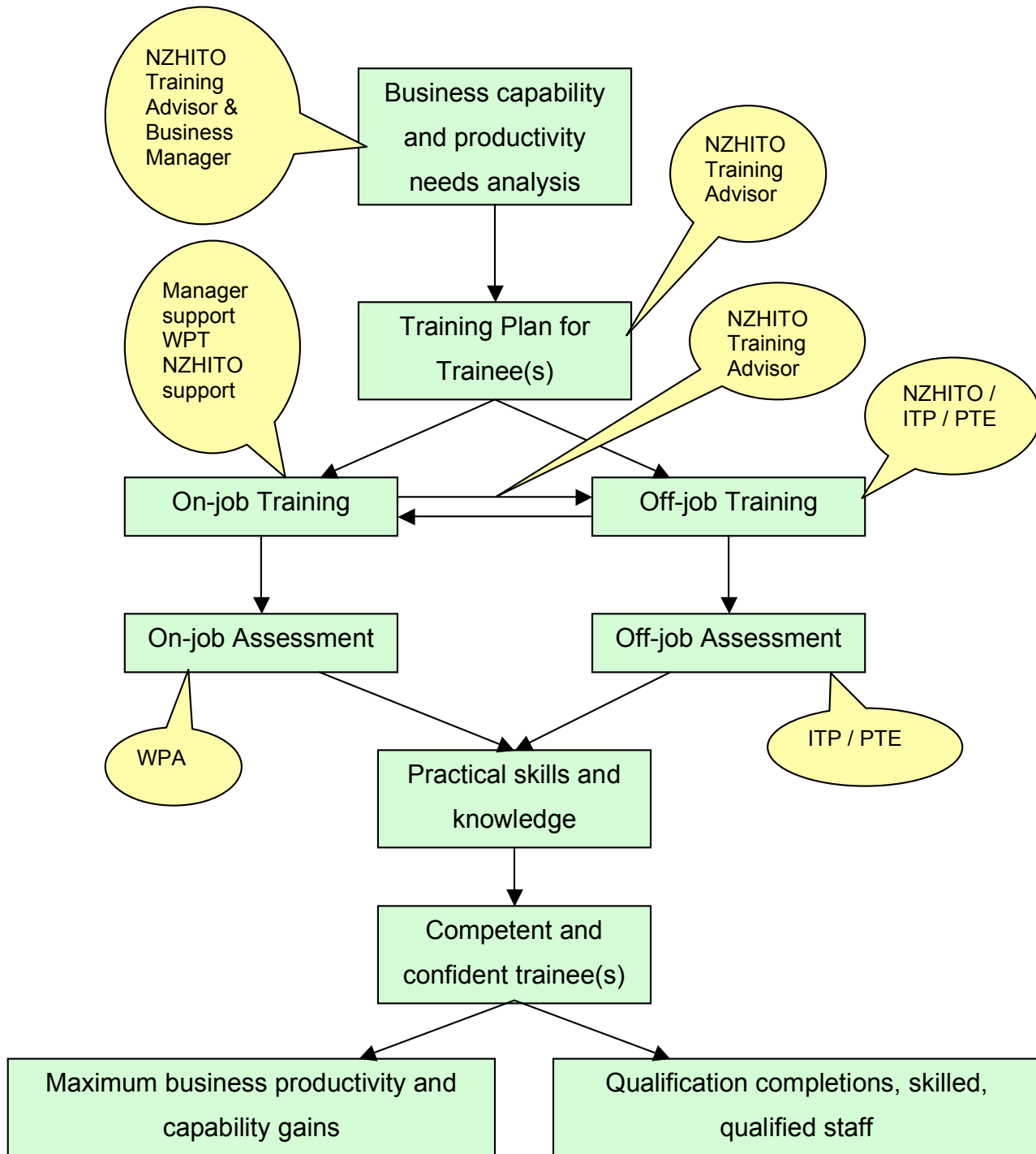


Figure 8. HILM for NZHITO facilitated Horticulture Industry Training

5.4.3 Implementation of a HILM Model in Horticulture Industry Training

For the NZHITO to assist employers to implement an effective HILM for industry training, and to improve the impact of industry training it is necessary to remove as many of the barriers to successful industry training that were identified in the research

survey as possible. To remove the barriers to successful training and learning the ITO needs to support each of the three parties involved in industry training, the employer, the trainee and the NZHITO Training Advisor.

To overcome employer's reluctance to engage in formalised industry training, the findings of the research in to 'best practices' in industry training and the beneficial outcomes of training, needs to be disseminated at industry conferences and through industry associations.

To assist existing employers engaged in formalised industry training to adopt industry training 'best practices' it is necessary to provide information and professional development opportunities to assist managers and workplace trainers and assessors with improving their industry training practices. Professional development opportunities may include topics such as communication skills, team building techniques and coaching and assessment skills, or new technical industry practices. This will ensure that workplace trainers and assessors are more confident and competent in their role as a trainer and assessor, and have the communication skills, and teaching and assessment skills to provide a better quality of training and learning and assessment in the workplace.

Professional development opportunities for Training Advisors to improve communication skills and time management skills would benefit 'best practices' as would professional development opportunities to keep up to date with industry practices to ensure their industry credibility.

To summarise, this research has found that where businesses engage in formalised industry training in a collaborative way with NZHITO there are beneficial outcomes for businesses and industry trainees, and the skills and productivity needs of the horticulture industry are improved. These beneficial outcomes are maximised where industry training 'best practices' result in a collaborative and cooperative working relationship between NZHITO, the employer and the trainee. There are barriers to successful industry training, with the employer, the trainee and NZHITO, but where these barriers are overcome, industry training is successful and businesses gain more impact from their investment in industry training.

A HILM for horticulture industry training provides a model for individualised training that is flexible and meets the capability and productivity needs of the employer and

trainee. There is congruence between on-job training undertaken by workplace trainers and assessors, and specialist off-job training and learning, each complementing the other to build the skills and knowledge of industry trainees. This results in positive productivity and capability gains for the business, and produces skilled and qualified staff, satisfied in their work and career.

Further research is needed to investigate the experiences of industry training from the perspective of the industry trainee. What are the outcomes or benefits of industry training, what do industry trainees see as the key factors that contribute to success, what are the barriers that hinder successful credit and qualification completions?

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8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1 Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Full Title	Abbreviation/Acronym
Business and Economic Research Limited	BERL
Effective Full Time Study	EFTS
Human Resource	HR
Industry Training Federation	ITF
Industry Training Organisation	ITO
Institute of Technology, Polytechnic	ITP
Modern Apprentice	MA
National Qualifications Framework	NQF
New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation	NZHITO
New Zealand Qualifications Authority	NZQA
Private Training Establishment	PTE
Recognised Current Competency	RCC
Recognised Prior Learning	RPL
Recognised Seasonal Employers	RSE
Standard Training Measure	STM
Success Case Method	SCM
Tertiary Education Commission	TEC
Tertiary Education Organisation	TEO
Training Advisor	TA
Workplace Assessor	WPA
Workplace Trainer	WPT

8.2 Appendix 2. Letter of Introduction for Survey Participants



You are invited to participate as a participant in a project entitled:

What are the best practices for workplace training in the Horticulture industry in New Zealand?

The aim of this project is to determine what are best practices in workplace training in horticulture in New Zealand, and following on from this, what makes these training practices 'best practice'.

A practical outcome will be to provide the New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (NZHITO) with a practical, credible and strategically useful workplace training strategy to facilitate best practice workplace training practices in horticultural workplaces in New Zealand. The strategy will increase the impact of workplace training investments in the industry and build organisational learning capability and productivity in horticulture workplaces in New Zealand.

Your participation in this project will involve being interviewed by the researcher about workplace training practices in your workplace. This interview will take about one hour. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time, and may decline to answer any questions you would prefer not to answer. With your consent, I would like to record the interview, as this will help me later when I review the interview, and will mean that I do not have to take as many notes during the interview.

As a follow up activity you may be contacted at a later date to clarify some points – you can say no, if you would prefer me not to contact you again.

The details of your name will remain confidential. The general location, ie province or city, and horticulture sector you are in will be used in any publication.

The project is being carried out by Helen van der Werff as part of a dissertation towards her Masters degree. Helen can be contacted by:

phone: 07 5423922, Mob: 029 2012003, email: helenvdw@hortito.org.nz

She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you have about participation in the project.

Helen's research supervisor is Lyn Boddington, she can be contacted by:

phone: 03 325 3627 Ext 8276 email: boddinl@lincoln.ac.nz

Thank you

Helen van der Werff

8.3 Appendix 2

Consent Form

Name of Project:

What are the best practices for workplace training in the Horticulture industry in New Zealand?

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.

I am happy to have Helen record my interview: Yes No

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

8.4 Appendix 3. Quick Reference Checklist – Best Practices in Horticulture Industry Training

The following is a concise checklist to use for quick reference to best practices in horticulture industry training for the business, the trainee, and the NZHITO.

8.4.1 Best Practices for the Business

- A culture of training and learning in the business
- Staff with a passion for their industry
- Senior staff with a passion for passing on their skills and knowledge
- Supportive senior management
- Work closely with the NZHITO Training Advisor to ensure training and learning is achieving business productivity and capability needs
- Someone in the business who will drive and coordinate the training
- High standards set of for the quality of work
- Open communication, the encouragement of questions
- Regular dedicated time set aside for training and learning
- Management support for the trainee(s) to attend off-job training days
- Recognise that workplace trainers and assessors have a mentoring and coaching role
- Respect the industry trainees
- Design a performance management system that rewards qualification achievement with pay increases
- Provide a clear career path for trainees

8.4.2 Best Practices for the Industry Trainee

- Take responsibility for learning – be committed
- Keep a diary, or work record, to record work completed, work practices, observations
- Meet unit standard completion goals and assignment due dates
- Ask questions

- Respect the workplace trainers and assessors

8.4.3 Best Practices for NZHITO

- Be accessible
- Respond to requests, and employer and trainee needs promptly and efficiently
- Work closely with employers, management and workplace trainers and assessors to establish business needs and goals, and establish the skills and knowledge trainees need to meet those business needs
- Design flexible training plans to fulfil the identified skills and knowledge requirements of the employer
- Organise specialist off-job training relevant to the needs of the employer
- Set goals for the trainee at the quarterly visits
- Update training plans at quarterly visits so that the workplace trainer/assessor and trainee can follow their progress
- Reward success
- Use high quality written resources for training that are user-friendly – have plenty of diagrams, photos, flow diagrams etc
- Where an employer has good quality SOP's, use these where possible and match to unit standards
- Employ Training Advisors who have a horticulture industry and/or horticulture tertiary education background, who have the expertise and capability to work with employers and gain their respect
- Provide professional development opportunities for workplace trainers and assessors

8.4.4 The Outcomes of Industry Training

Where industry training is operating in a supportive environment and in an effective manner it is achieving the following outcomes:

- It gives employees the skills and knowledge to be productive members of the workforce
- It improves safety in the workplace

- It improves the adoption of new technologies and processes, such as innovative plant husbandry techniques
- It improves employer and trainee perceptions of themselves and their industry
- It enhances the relationships between employees and employers - trainees and workplace trainers, workplace assessors and managers leading to effective team building in the workplace
- It promotes a healthy team environment in which to work
- It helps provide career pathways for staff
- It improves staff retention
- It is an incentive to recruit staff, and helps in attracting applicants for positions
- It provides staff with meaningful industry qualifications that are recognised nationally and internationally
- It is a way of passing on the skills and knowledge of experienced workers to others in the workplace
- It is a motivational factor influencing staff behaviour and attitude – produces a positive ‘can do’ attitude to work, lifting staff attitude to work from the ‘just a job’ mentality
- It improves staff morale
- It provides succession to replace those exiting the business due to retirement or moving to other employment
- It reduces the need for constant close supervision of staff
- It is a business driver to improve staff capability
- It increases business capability and business productivity
- It gives businesses a competitive edge when tendering for work
- It promotes a high standard of work, that is appreciated by clients and the public
- It keeps young people in the community and gives them the chance to achieve tertiary qualifications while working
- It raises the capability and productivity of the community
- It increases productivity of the workforce and competitiveness of the nation in a global marketplace