

# Future of Online Learning Quality- Best Practices in Artificial Intelligence and Competency-Based Credentialing

## A Competency Based Approach to Workforce Development

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# MY EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING COMPETENCY BASED SYSTEMS IN ORGANISATIONS



The Problem we  
faced



What we wanted  
to achieve



The Approach



Implementation



Result



# The Restructuring Problem

- The organisation was pursuing a full restructuring process following a change in ownership. Several changes had to be made and it had to ensure business continuity while jobs were being re-designed
- Of significance were the jobs in the Operations and Maintenance Department. These new jobs required specific education levels and knowledge, skills and abilities and very few employees had all the requirements for the new positions.
- To move ahead we had to capture, recognize and use what they had and chart a development path going forward.
- The traditional assessment method of measuring classroom training was inadequate for our purpose and different assessment tools were needed for measurement and recognition of past learning inside and outside the classroom.



## What did we want to achieve?

- To align the organisation structure with its goals and ensure business continuity as we did so.
- To establish an objective training analysis system that would identify training needs, recognize competencies employees already possessed which benefitted the organisation and chart a way forward for them to develop the new competencies.
- Give employees career mobility as they acquired and demonstrated new skills and competencies in the organisation.

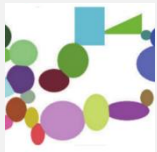
# The Approach



The Company already had a Competency Based Management System which used upgrades as an incentive for learning and for transferring learning in the workplace. This was leveraged to develop a specific company training methodology in the O&M department.



The Company worked with a partner to develop and implement a process which enabled employees to gain recognition and credit for what they already knew and could do and established a competency-based system linked to Appointments, Performance Assessments, and Competency Evaluation and Certifications



The Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Method (PLAR) was utilized for this purpose in one organisation and the Competency Assurance System (CAS) in another.



# What is PLAR

- PLAR was used to create Technical and Business Occupational standards for each occupation.
- Employees were assessed against the standard and got recognition and credit for what they already knew and could do. It allowed for equivalency of knowledge and skills to be demonstrated through evidence.
- It was implemented in conjunction with UTT which was the credentialing body.

# The PLAR Method





# The Process

- It starts with the development of a ‘curriculum’ for the job. This details the company and industry standards of the competency, and the regulatory, and Occupational standards required in order to begin the process.
- Assessment of candidates – self assessments, supervisory assessments
- Validation of the KSAs and attitudes using Subject Matter Experts, internal and external verifiers.
- Preparation of the Individual Development Plans – this breaks and designs the DACUM into small learning modules so they are easily digested by employees on the job.
- Learning and development activities – portfolio development; readiness for certification (interviews, observations, walk-downs).
- Certification of employees’ competencies against approved standards by certifying body, UTT. **Issues a Certificate of Acquired Competency (CAC)**
- Evaluate implementation strategies with a view to ensuring quality control.





# Benefits

- *Employee:*
  - Career and personal development.
  - Certificate of Acquired Competency issued by a credentialing body is portable and can be used as credentials for other jobs and/or furthering education.
- *Employer:*
  - Get highest value from investment in training and make better hiring decisions
  - Establish comprehensive succession plan and career path for all affected occupations.
  - Establish performance standards for occupational profiles and certify employees' competencies
  - Clarify and refine its Human Capital Competency needs with respect to its Occupational profiles.
- *Certifying Body:*
  - Improve connections with business and industry
  - Align curricula with industry needs
  - Increase the potential for research and development
  - Ensure quality control of the validation process



# Competency Based Credentialing

- Traditionally, academic degrees have been used as a proxy for skills and knowledge needed to perform on the job. But competency-based credentialing can complement this.
- If equivalency of knowledge and skills can be demonstrated through evidence, then academic credit can also be granted.
- Both PLAR and CAS give reward for providing evidence of competency in a particular skill. The focus is on learning more so than experience or qualifications.
- There is the recognition that learning comes from multiple sources, particularly learning in technically skilled positions.
- Because it is incremental, it lends itself to micro-credentialing.
- Students should be able to offer competency-based credentials as proof of their knowledge and skills
- Implementation of the process requires extensive consultations with all stakeholders in the employment relationship.




# Role for ACTT

- ACTT can assist in organizing industry and occupational groups, validators and providers under a national framework for endorsing these credentials.
- Ensure a shared language of credentials for easy understanding.
- Quality assurance – credential standards must be established and must fit with employer needs
- Identify and advocate for policy changes

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Thank You