

This article was downloaded by: [Flinders University of South Australia]
On: 07 October 2014, At: 22:20
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,
UK



Journal of Convention & Event Tourism

Publication details, including instructions for
authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wcet20>

The Miracle of Training in Event Management

Janet Landey CSEP^a & Julia Rutherford Silvers CSEP^b

^a PAR173, Party Design CC , Johannesburg, Gauteng,
South Africa

^b Speaking of Events , Albuquerque, NM, USA
Published online: 22 Sep 2008.

To cite this article: Janet Landey CSEP & Julia Rutherford Silvers CSEP (2004) The
Miracle of Training in Event Management, Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, 6:3,
21-46, DOI: [10.1300/J452v06n03_03](https://doi.org/10.1300/J452v06n03_03)

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J452v06n03_03

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the
information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform.
However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no
representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness,
or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views
expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and
are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the
Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with
primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any
losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages,
and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or
indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the
Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

The Miracle of Training in Event Management

Janet Landey
Julia Rutherford Silvers

ABSTRACT. The Event Management Training Program developed for South Africa's Tourism Learnership Project National Certificate in Tourism: Event Support NQF Level 4 was designed to deliver a relevant, accurate, valid, and reliable program of study for learners in the field of event management and event tourism. This case study encompasses 240 learners in the Tourism Learnership Project, 300 community volunteers at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and 2,500 volunteers trained against four unit standards registered on the National Qualification Framework for the ICC Cricket World Cup.

The pilot of the Tourism Learnership Project in Event Support has been an unbelievable and amazing project during which we have witnessed the miracle of young, previously unemployed South Africans growing in knowledge, self-esteem, and confidence to emerge as wage-earning, valuable, and respected new entrants into the event industry. The training has provided them with a solid foundation of event management knowledge and a host of core tourism industry knowledge ranging from South African tourism, heritage, and sustainable tourism knowledge through the basics of operating in a business, occupational health and safety, HIV/AIDS, and the prime focus of customer care so essential for the success of the South African tourism industry.

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the development and implementation of an entry-level event management-training program and the

Janet Landey, CSEP, is Accredited THETA Provider PAR173, Party Design CC, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa.

Julia Rutherford Silvers, CSEP, is Author, Curriculum Consultant, and Instructor Designer, Speaking of Events, Albuquerque, NM.

Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, Vol. 6(3) 2004
<http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JCET>

© 2004 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.
Digital Object Identifier: 10.1300/J452v06n03_03

effect it had on participants in the pilot programs of the Tourism Learnership Project in Event Support and others in relation to the goals of the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) mission. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com> © 2004 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS. Events, training, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

In February 2001, the Minister of Labour, MMS Mdladlana launched the National Skills Development Strategy—Skills for Productive Citizenship for all with a mission “to equip South Africa with the skills to succeed in the global market and to offer opportunities to individuals and communities for self-advancement to enable them to play a productive role in society.”

This strategy charts the ways in which South Africa can build its skills to enable it to compete more successfully in the global economy; attract investments; enable individuals and communities to grow to eradicate poverty and to build a more inclusive and equal society.

SAQA—the South African Qualifications Authority—an independent body consisting of 29 members appointed by the Ministers of Education and Labour were charged with the responsibility of:

- *Overseeing the development of the NQF.*
- *Formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications.*
- *Accrediting bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements against the standards and qualifications.*
- *Overseeing the implementation of the NQF.*
- *Registering national standards and qualifications.*
- *Ensuring that registered standards are internationally comparable.*

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is the set of principles and guidelines by which records of learner achievement are registered to enable national recognition of acquired skills and knowledge, thereby ensuring an integrated system that encourages life-long learning (see Table 1).

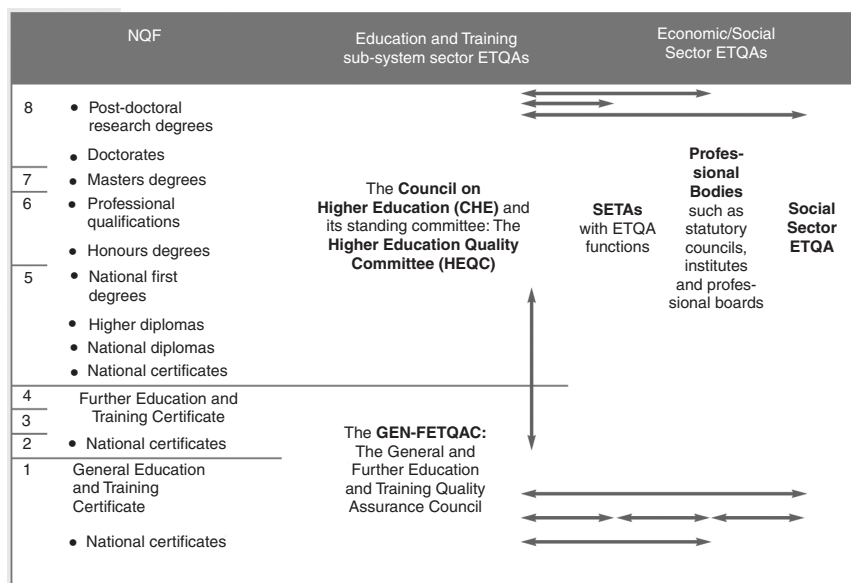
NQs are work-based qualifications—individuals are assessed doing their job in their place of work. They need to demonstrate that they can do their job consistently well under normal work pressure.

Twenty-five Sector Education and Training Authorities—SETAs—were established in terms of the Skills Development Act. A SETA is a body consisting of representatives from the sector who must research, plan and design our education and training at industry sector level to ensure global competitiveness. The key role of the SETA is to:

- Develop and implement Sector Skills Plan for the sector.
- Establish, implement and promote Learnerships for the sector.
- Perform Quality Assurance of Education & Training activities (ETQA).
- Manage Levies and Pay Grants.
- Support SMME development in the sector.
- Other duties identified by the Skills Development Act.

THETA, the Tourism, Hospitality & Sport Education & Training Authority, is the SETA charged with the development of unit standards

TABLE 1. SAQA National Qualification Framework



and national qualifications for occupations within its scope, including Event Support, which was registered as a Learnership with SAQA. *Learnerships are work-based learning programs combining theory and practices that result in a National Qualification on the NQF.*

The Tourism Learnership Project is part of The Business Trust initiative of 145 companies in South Africa working in partnership with government. It undertakes targeted job creation and capacity building programs, while the economy is put on a growth path that will provide sustained improvements in the lives of the majority of South Africans. The strategy is to focus on tourism for job creation and schooling for capacity building.

The scope of this paper covers four Event Management training interventions linked to the objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy.

1. Funding through The Business Trust and THETA for Phase 1 of 60 Learners on a Learnership in Event Support provided the valuable foundation and support systems necessary for a total quality system covering training, assessment, moderation and verification that would contribute towards the objectives of developing a culture of high quality lifelong learning and fostering skills development in the formal economy for productivity and employment growth.
2. The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in August 2002 and the ICC Cricket World Cup in February 2003 provided the opportunity to train 184 learners selected from different communities in Gauteng with the specific goal of these learners returning to their communities and contributing towards the national objective of promoting skills development for employability and sustainable livelihood through social development initiatives.
3. A project with the Commission on Gender Equality at The World Summit on Sustainable Development took training to over 150 community volunteers with a combined "experience" of over 755 unemployed years!
4. Training of over 2,500 volunteers in 12 cities for the ICC Cricket World Cup was undertaken against 4 registered unit standards from the Event Support Learnership.

The goal of the Event Management Training Program developed for the Tourism Learnership Project National Certificate in Tourism: Event

Support NQF Level 4 was to create a valid, reliable, fair, flexible, and sustainable curriculum to upgrade service levels, build capacity and promote job creation in this field, and generate increased economic revenues from events and event tourism. Stakeholder accountability, increasing size and economic importance of events, together with the high risks and responsibilities of events challenges us to raise the awareness and levels of professionalism, in order that we may be recognized as a professional industry.

The learning material for the Event Management unit standards was initiated at a workshop in August 2001 at Johnson & Wales University, Rhode Island with Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP, designed by Julia Rutherford Silvers, CSEP, and tested, revised, and implemented by Janet Landey, CSEP, as the lead employer and accredited provider under the Tourism Learnership Project.

To achieve the qualification the learner must accumulate a minimum of 126 credits in fundamental, core, and elective categories as specified in the compulsory unit standards (illustrated in Table 2). One credit equals ten notional hours of learning, which includes the learning time (study, lectures, projects, etc.) as well as the practical time (actually doing on-the-job tasks).

THE TRAINING MATERIALS

The Event Management Training Program was designed as an entry-level program, which, based on the levels of knowledge of the target population of learners, had to focus on the lowest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, giving learners first an awareness of events and tourism, then providing them with an understanding of the scope of event management so they would be able to assist with the production of events. The introduction of the "why" and "how" of events and event management provided the foundation for understanding and applying the "how to" within the experiential learning conducted at and through the workplace. And while the training materials and training program were designed primarily in a pedagogical format due to the structure of the program and the experience levels of the learners, many andragogical tactics and techniques were incorporated to capitalize on adult learning principles, allowing learners to transfer and integrate their applicable life skills into the learning and event practicum contexts.

The training materials for the Event Management Training Program consist of a Learner Guide, Master Guide (for Trainers, Workplace

TABLE 2. National Certificate in Tourism: Event Support NQF Level 4–126 Credits

FUNDAMENTAL			CORE			ELECTIVE		
Unit Standard Titles	L	C	Unit Standard Titles	L	C	Unit Standard Titles	L	C
Operate a personal computer	2	6	Introduce South Africa to tourists	4	7	Support event co-ordination	4	20
Plan and conduct research	4	6	Introduce South African heritage to tourists	4	7			
Analyze and understand social issues	4	4	Contribute to sustainable tourism in SA	4	4			
Function in a team	4	4	Operate in a business	4	4			
Interact orally and in writing in the workplace	4	10	Oversee arrival and departure of customers	4	3			
Collate, understand and communicate workplace data	4	5	Care for customers	4	3			
Demonstrate an understanding of societal values and ethics	4	4	Maintain occupational health and safety	2	2			
Organize oneself in the workplace	2	3	Contribute to information distribution regarding HIV/AIDS in the workplace	4	4			
Demonstrate an understanding of issues effecting people with special needs	4	4	Understand the inter-relatedness of event elements	4	10			
Any other communication and language standard at NQF4 or above		2	Operate in the national and international event industry	4	3			
Any other mathematical standards at NQF1 or above		11						
TOTAL CREDITS		59			47			20

L = Level; C = Credit.

Mentors, and Assessors), and PowerPoint presentation for each of eight modules. Each module guide contains four units, a list of suggested resources including the pertinent books, guides, and Internet sites, and an overview of the qualification purpose and outcomes.

In addition to the fully replicated content of the Learner Guides, the Master Guides contain Trainer Notes, Workplace Mentor Notes, and Assessor Notes, as well as the answer keys to all the assessment exercises. The Trainer Notes include training instructions, suggestions, and

recommendations for guest or outside presenters and activities pertinent to each topic. The Workplace Mentor Notes include suggestions for additional activities to reinforce the content and concepts in the context of the workplace's practical operations, as well as techniques for on-the-job coaching, application, and other reinforcement activities. The Assessor Notes include methods and strategies for assessing the recognition, retention, and application of the knowledge and skills that are transmitted.

Each unit contains three topics, each introduced with a one-page overview of the content and concepts, and illustrated with graphics, call-out charts, and case study and other examples. In-class group activities, workplace activities, home activities, and self-evaluation exercises follow each topic. In addition, each unit includes a vocabulary section, a portfolio of evidence activity, and a unit evaluation consisting of extended response questions.

The in-class group activities encourage facilitated small group and class discussions, which allows the learners to integrate and relate their adult experiences and perspective to the content. The workplace activities encourage the application of material to the specific workplace and the events produced or supported by the workplace. Many of the home activities are designed to integrate the concepts into the learner's daily life and environment. The portfolio of evidence activities encourage learners to conduct relevant research and compile a file of resources suitable to support future event-related employment and endeavors.

The activities and exercises used to reinforce and evaluate learner comprehension and retention include alternate response questions, assertion/reason questions, assignments, case studies, completion questions, demonstrations, grid/matching questions, multiple choice questions, projects, role-play exercises, simulations, and structured stem questions.

The module units provide an organized and logical system for developing proficiency in each of the skill-based competencies, which are directly linked to the internationally validated outcomes identified by industry professionals, as confirmed in cooperation with Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP of Johnson & Wales University and the George Washington University, and further validated by faculty at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), which currently manages the Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP) certification program on behalf of the International Special Events Society (ISES). In addition, in January 2003, the ISES Certification Commission approved the Event Management Training Program as an entry-level program, based on the CSEP

Exam Blueprint outlining the knowledge and competency domains required of a Certified Special Events Professional.

TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Stakeholder engagement has been an important aspect of the project, involving initially a tremendous amount of industry education—not an easy task getting “buy-in” from industry. Training was not seen as a top priority; however, in September 2001, the first pilot project commenced with Party Design as the lead employer and 60 learners—23 of whom were already employed in industry and 37 previously unemployed learners who were placed in industry workplaces (Figure 1).

A rigorous accreditation to become a THETA provider covered all aspects, ranging from legal, equipment, facilities, trainers, assessors, moderators, quality assurance through to the confidential collection and storage of learner details and accomplishments.

Potential learners came from the Department of Labor database of unemployed youth interested in the tourism industry and word of mouth. A profile is provided in Figure 2 and 3. Once the initial 60 learners started the course there was a steady stream of applicants for the next

FIGURE 1. Party Design Stakeholder Engagement

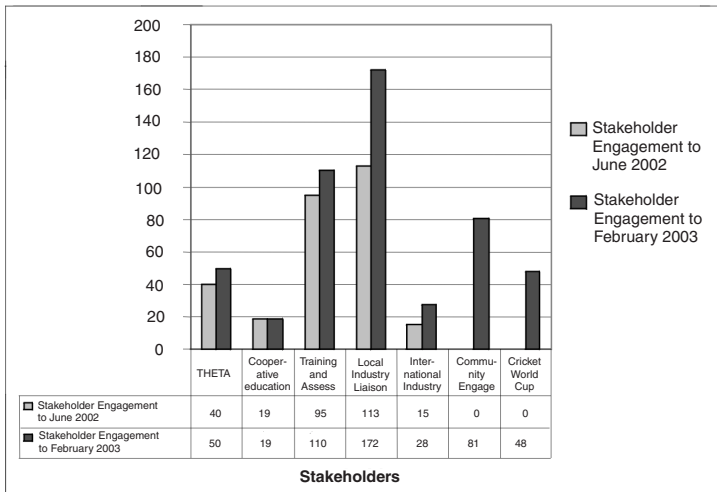


FIGURE 2. Race Breakdown of Learners

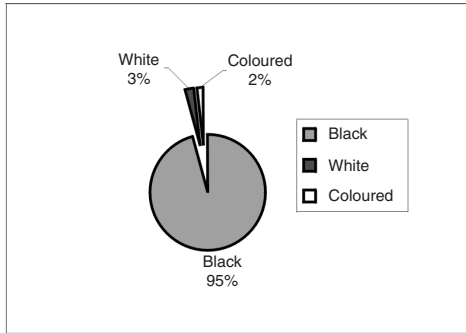
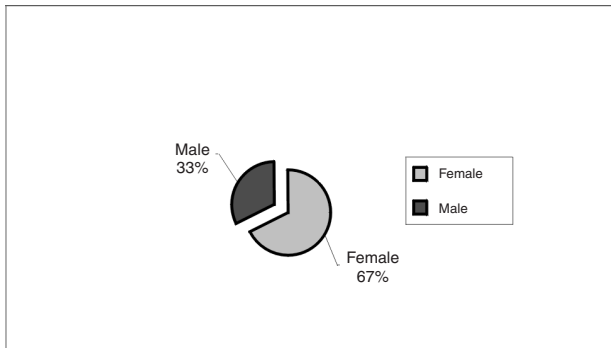


FIGURE 3. Gender Breakdown of Learners



course. In the next phase of 183 learners, we were able to select learners in different communities, from the group of over 400 applications which had come in through word of mouth.

The selection and induction process and matching of learners with workplaces was completed to meet the requirements of the National Skills Development Strategy.

Training and integrated assessment commenced:

1. Learners were given a handbook “Passport to Professionalism” which covered the background to the NQF, the 21 Unit Standards

including Specific Outcomes, Critical Cross Field Outcomes, Embedded Knowledge and Assessment, Career Paths, Organizational Policies and Procedures, Appeals Procedure, Quality Assurance, Integrated Assessment background and other relevant information that would assist in the Learnership project.

2. Theoretical training included workshops, lectures and guest speakers over a period of 80 days—of these, 32 days were spent on the Event Management-specific training.
3. Knowledge and understanding worksheets for each of the 32 event units were completed.
4. Learners enjoyed the excitement, the joys, the long hours of experiential on-the-job training covering a broad spectrum of events in a variety of disciplines ranging from event security, décor, registration, accreditation, back-stage, lighting, sound—the opportunities were wonderful.
5. Portfolio of evidence assignments were part of continuous assessment and particularly important in summative assessment.
6. Multiple choice was used in the summative assessment for assisting in vocabulary knowledge.
7. Self-assessment summary sheets were used by the learners to systematically work through all the Activity exercises in the training material—this also acted as a tool for building capacity with performance assessors.
8. Line management/supervisor assessment—a daily report sheet completed by the learners, with comments from line managers grew in importance, particularly for the second group of learners as this was handed in weekly and was a check against which the weekly stipend paid to learners could be authorized.
9. Peer assessment—learners working at the ICC Cricket World Cup had assessment books which included peer assessment from fellow volunteers—this was interesting and for the next phase we will definitely grow this aspect as it exposes learners to the important stakeholder engagement aspect in business.
10. Customer assessment—the addition of learners to our normal work force made us aware of the importance of regular feedback from our customers and the necessity to solicit this information—this then became part of the applied competence assessment.
11. Group assessments were utilized to prepare learners for individual assessment—assessors were able to go through the assessment process checking that learners were prepared and were knowledgeable about workplace policies and procedures, appeal procedures,

- special needs requirements. Group assessment was used to ensure that the self-assessment activities were completed, thus not using valuable time in the actual assessment period.
12. For two years the Gala Banquet for ISES, the International Special Events Society has been utilized as the summative assessment of the group work. Learners in their community groups have been challenged to research, design, plan, coordinate and evaluate an event and sample tables set, judged and utilized on the evening. This has been a good showcase to industry and the tradition will continue and grow as the levels of competency grow.
 13. Personal interviews follow a structured format using assessment instruments to ensure that the process is fair, valid, reliable and current.
 14. A performance assessment document was developed which rates the general areas of competency on a scale of 0-6, where 0 reflects “unable to perform this task”—through to 6, “able to lead others in the task”—this is of great benefit as it rates the levels of competency—i.e., event support, event coordinator, event manager, event producer.
 15. Summative assessment on the final case study where learners select an event and document the theoretical knowledge and understanding—this covers all the unit standards on the course.
 16. All assessment interventions are noted in the learners’ files and on the personal management system.
 17. Evaluations are generally inputted onto the computer system—this also gives good experience in respect of the IT unit standard.
 18. Moderation of the assessment by an internal moderator is required and THETA sends an external moderator and verifier.
 19. Learners are issued a Certificate of Completion, which clearly states that the final certificate issued by THETA on behalf of SAQA will be issued once the process has been quality assured.

In August 2002, Johannesburg hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)—the 183 learners on the National Certificate in Event Support all gained valuable experience as volunteers either at the Johannesburg International Airport welcoming delegates, or at the Ubuntu Village working as meeters and greeters, or VIP hosts, and backstage at the Opening Ceremony.

In addition to the training that learners had already received, additional event specific training took place. All volunteers for the WSSD completed a two-day course in customer care to become a “S.A. Host.”

FIGURE 4. Previously Unemployed Learners from the First Phase–Current Wages

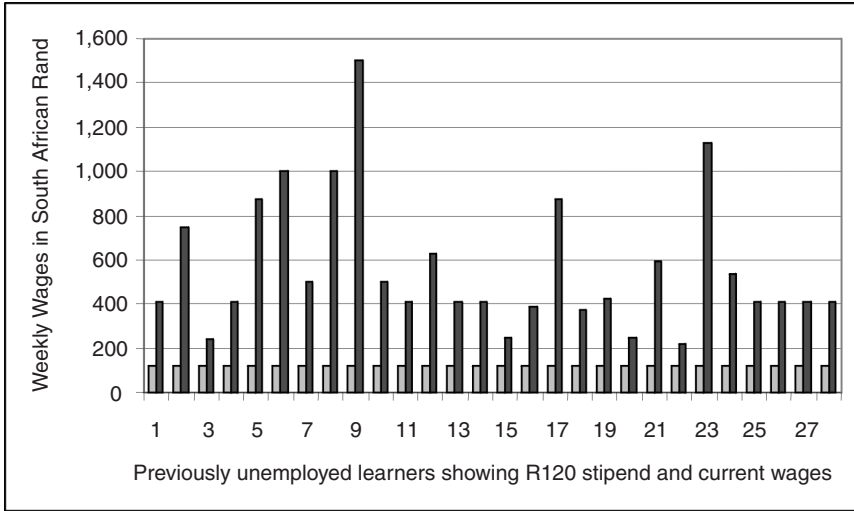


FIGURE 5. Graph Showing Wages of Previously Employed Learners at Start of Project and Current Earnings

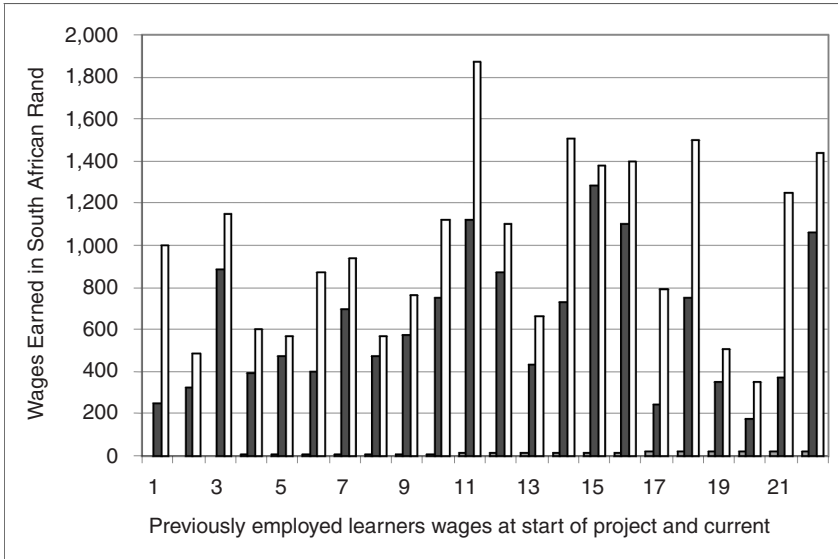
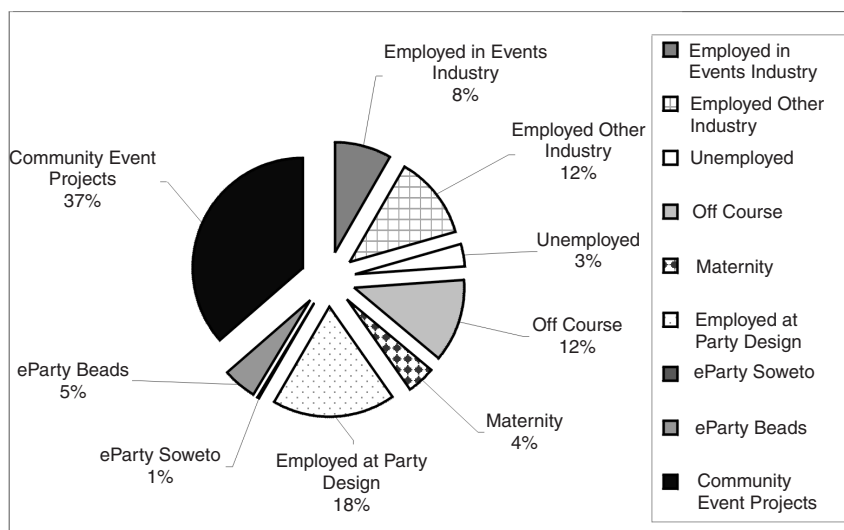


FIGURE 6. Breakdown of Learner Status



The experience was wonderful and learner evaluations emphasized the pleasure of good customer care and interacting with people, particularly the famous ones!

In addition to our own learners, a number of opportunities for community volunteers to participate in the World Summit on Sustainable Development were identified—through the Commission on Gender Equality Party Design Training were requested to assist at the Old Woman’s Goal on Constitution Hill—this was to run for the period of the WSSD—the purpose of which was to provide a space for women delegates to the World Summit on Sustainable Development where they could network, share information, and caucus around gender issues as they intersect with the conference themes. The highlight of the project that ran for a month was the opening night for 1,000 guests managed and catered for by the “newly trained event team.”

Training included the unit standard “Organize Yourself in the Workplace,” WSSD Event and Environmental Specific Training, Customer Care and four Department of Environment and Health : Safe Food and Service modules.

An “on-site experiential” catering day was planned at the Goal on Saturday 27th July 2002—this was a day for a planned “audit” of the mu-

sic and entertainment skills—entertainers were invited to come and “strut their stuff” and “volunteer” to be a part of the opening night. It was a great Saturday morning—the Department of Environment and Health worked with us to ensure food service compliance and Certificates of Acceptability were issued for the WSSD.

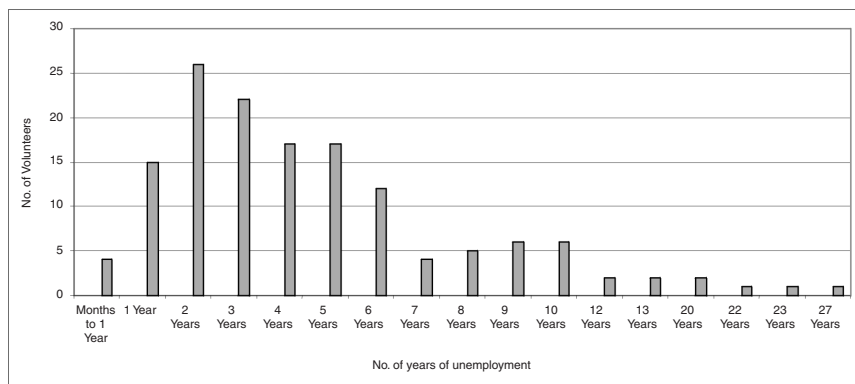
This group of volunteers, with an average age of 40 had collectively been unemployed for over 755 years and needed retraining and building of self-esteem—quite difficult when this was a volunteer project with no expectation of payment. This group also had the opportunity to cater for 700 delegates at Nasrec as part of the Civil Society program for seven days. Working closely with this group over seven days, Janet Landey was able to see the growth as the volunteers became confident and leaders emerged. The first few days were absolutely hands on—but by day four the team were taking ownership and each day became better organized, so much so that by day seven the project was running perfectly! The Health and Environmental Department checked the food throughout the day to ensure the highest health and safety standards. At the end of the project sufficient revenue had been earned to pay all the volunteers at both Constitution Hill and Nasrec an average of R8,00 per hour.

At the ICC Cricket World Cup training of over 2,500 volunteers in 12 different cities was undertaken by Party Design Training—“pro bono.” Volunteers were trained against four Unit Standards registered on the NQF—Customer Care, Organize Yourself in the Workplace, Function in a Team and Occupational Health and Safety. This project highlighted the findings of William O’Toole in his paper “Towards the Integration of Event Management Best Practice by the Project Management Process,” outlining the need for a systematic methodology for the planning and control of events.

The success of this project was mobilizing trainers, facilitators and evidence collectors in all the 12 cities and towns. The two-day training workshop set the tone for the event—the training material was professional, the organizational structure, the program, refreshments—a learning environment was created and probably the greatest comment came from a middle-aged, ex-Army officer as he hugged his training manual to his chest at the end of the two days and said “*it should be mandatory that everyone in South Africa be a part of a program like this—for years I have worked with people in the army, but I’ve never got to know anyone like I did this week end.*”

A volunteer scorebook was given to each volunteer at the final training and kitting out session—this included valuable information in respect of:

FIGURE 7. Reflecting Unemployment Period for Community Volunteers at the World Summit on Sustainable Development



- Code of Conduct.
- Event specific information relating to restricted items and fixtures.
- Match Specific relating to match information and incident reports.
- Venue specific with space for 70 of the expected “most frequently asked questions” for each stadium.
- Job descriptions which covered the purpose, knowledge, skills and attributes for all roles.
- Assessment specific—listing all the specific outcomes of the 4 unit standards, plus an additional 250 “prompts” to remind the volunteers of the expected behavior and what assessors would be looking for.
- Assessor notebook with all the specific outcomes and prompts listed, and in addition space for peer, supervisor, coordinator, assessor and general assessment comments.

Throughout the 50 match days, a volunteer operations center tracked every detail from the signing in of the volunteers to meals, to positive and negative feedback—everything was documented on a database. Evaluations showed that over 95% of the volunteers felt valued, proud of being a part of the ICC CWC, felt the training would be beneficial in their everyday lives, would do it again and felt that they had made a positive impact on the event.

A complete database of all the volunteers documenting the training interventions, the role the volunteer played and the actual events worked on was handed over to the South African Sports Commission for future use.

Volunteers were given the option of being assessed against the Unit Standards and to be registered on the THETA and NQF database. Workplace experience and competence was assessed during the actual events and volunteers were then required to complete knowledge and understanding workbooks for each of the unit standards. To date, over 450 volunteers have completed these and the process continues in respect of final assessment.

Dr. Ali Bacher, Executive Director of the ICC Cricket World Cup, publicly stated that this had indeed been the “World Cup of the Volunteer” and letters of praise flooded in for the friendly and efficient manner in which the volunteers conducted themselves, their exceptional pride in their work and how they made all the spectators feel welcome and comfortable.

From an industry point of view, 16 Event Managers from the Pick ‘n Pay Group attended a two-day seminar using the Event Support learning materials. The results were excellent and validated that the learning material had been written for all levels from entry level through to masters—the difference being in the depth of detail and assessments.

THE CHALLENGES

The Learnership was not without its challenges. Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP, author of “Special Events—Best Practices in Modern Event Management,” when asked, “*What does it take to be a competent event manager?*” swiftly replied, “*The ability to make good decisions.*”

A likely cause of not being able to make decisions is because over 95% of our learners come from “previously disadvantaged backgrounds” where simple choices and decision making was not even an option—the normal choice of what to eat for breakfast or which shoes to wear cannot be exercised if you only have one pair of shoes, if you’re just happy to get a meal.

Our biggest challenges on the previously unemployed learners in particular came from the very basics—the Critical Cross Field Outcomes adopted by SAQA—this is where the foundational gaps were found and into the second learning phase our focus changed from initial grounding

in Event Management as the key knowledge to working on the establishment of a solid foundation on these life-skills, so very necessary for the sustainable growth, recognition, and professionalism of the individual and our industry.

CRITICAL CROSS FIELD OUTCOMES

- Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made;
- Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organization, community;
- Organize and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively;
- Collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate information;
- Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation;
- Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognizing that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

In order to contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the society at large, it must be the intention underlying any program of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of:

- Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;
- Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;
- Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
- Exploring education and career opportunities;
- Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

TABLE 3. Some of the Challenges in the Workplace

Challenge	Our experience thus far . . .
Employers were concerned that they would not be able to offer full-time jobs at the end of the Learnership.	<p>The workplace experience has definitely assisted in "growing" learner's confidence.</p> <p>We see it from the dress, the attitude, walking tall. The workplace has also provided a new "network" for learners.</p> <p>We see it in the friendships, the support and participation among themselves.</p>
Employed learners in the workplace are already valuable members of the team, so the time that they are now taking off for training is disruptive—particularly if we try and do the Learnership in one year.	<p>We see it in the opportunities for part-time work that has come from industry. We see it in those entrepreneurs who have become suppliers, distributors and customers too. This is a challenge—the SAQA Quality Spiral is a tough one, so even learners already in the workplace cannot just be RPL'd (Recognition of Prior Learning) against the Unit Standards—they need to attend the theoretical training. There has been no theoretical material at entry level available until now. Our solution moving forward is to instill a culture of learning in the workplace—put the learning offerings on the table and let the learners and their supervisors plan to do the Learnership over a number of years—doing bite size chunks of learning, with certificates of recognition for the single Unit Standards as they are achieved.</p>
Employed learners in the workplace find that their peers are "jealous"—"this is not fair, you're having fun, we're doing the work, etc."—particularly as with the new knowledge and recognition, the learners returned to the workplace more confident and suddenly a threat to the next level of workers.	<p>Continuous stakeholder engagement is essential, get everybody on board—identify special training needs—ensure that the whole company is aware of the importance not only of those doing the training, but of the team that needs to keep their eyes on the main business ball to ensure sustained growth of the company. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to attend a course, e.g., customer care, social understanding, operate in a business, teamwork, etc.—the motivation from the workshops is amazing.</p>
Employed learners are torn between wanting to do the training and "protecting their jobs"—if the employed learner is out of the office on training then the supervisor and department start building relationships with the people who are there, or any temporary staff. The learners also become more responsible in their jobs—they become better, they have a greater value, and suddenly they feel that work is too busy, so they can't attend the training.	<p>The planning of the training is extremely important—quarter business periods can be utilized for this.</p> <p>The real key is in ensuring that everyone on the team is confident enough to ensure that their department runs smoothly without them.</p>
Unemployed learners join the workplace, and the expectation is that "they go to training" so they must know everything—this is in spite of the fact that in a one month period, the learner may only have attended four days of training.	<p>The previously unemployed learners need a solid induction and solid learning period before joining the workplace. Ideally at least a month—this way the learner enters the workplace with more confidence and knowledge, and thus the "first impression"—which seems to last forever—is one of a confident, knowledgeable learner.</p>
A huge challenge is in developing understanding and self-confidence in our learners to be able to communicate orally and in writing with confidence.	<p>It has been necessary to take what the learners have learned—in English—and through a series of workshops, work with them in discussion groups that cut across the different languages and cultural barriers to move them towards deeper understanding. The Social Understanding Unit Standard has been an amazing experience for us all. If I had a choice, I would mandate that everyone in this country go through a course on Social Understanding—the attitude changes are fantastic!</p>

Challenge	Our experience thus far . . .
Daily challenges for learners range from money issues, to bereavement, rape, abuse, HIV/AIDS, transport—the list is endless. The challenges above, plus the fact that learners can't always get away from the workplace means that additional training workshops and assessment times have to be rescheduled—costly in terms of time and money.	Counseling is a full-time job and also highlights the necessity to develop policies and procedures to address these issues. This requires a full-time project manager to reschedule training and learning experiences for those affected. We have had to stress “accountability” and our responsibility to ensure that attendance is carefully documented.
Bathing, grooming, etiquette—habits, cultural and heritage traditions—so much diversity . . .	A humorous approach by trainers seamlessly integrates this challenging and hugely important aspect into the learners' daily lives. The biggest key is in instilling in us all a sense of enquiry—actively seeking out knowledge, and relishing the diversity of our people.
The paperwork—an absolute necessity and important not only to do the necessary, but where appropriate is to ensure that we document as much as possible to contribute towards research projects in the future.	Documentation of everything has taken us on our own personal voyage of discovery and growth as we improve and fine tune our computerized Personnel Management system to capture every moment of our Learners' lives so that we can all learn how best to move forward.

MIRACLES

What a miracle it has been as we have been a part of the growth and seen “butterflies flying” as the volunteers gain confidence, new knowledge, and a sense of belonging and pride. Lots of skills transfer; lots of cultural understanding gained. This was part of a growing exposure to how many young people, with so much talent and willingness to work, are hungry for learning, hungry for involvement.

The “miracles” in this training program have come not only from the “applied competence” accomplishments—but in the confident manner in which learners walk, talk and believe.

- Working with communities that have not been exposed to training and workshops has been an amazing experience—the unanimous feedback after any kind of training were comments like *“this was the best day of my life,” “I didn't know that this kind of life existed, I've never felt this excitement before in my life.”*
- Feedback from the learners on the project has changed from not having direction to positive ways forward. A Learner on applying to enter the Tourism Learnership Project *“I consider myself as a person who is proficient, but not well armed in qualified skills. Which I think for the past years is the reason I could not be employed.”* The same Learner at the end of the project took us on a guided tour of his community and the proposal to start a small telephone business and a business plan to have his own company in Event Hire and Marketing. *“I intend to start my own business. For*

the beginning a telephone container business . . . Further into event hire and marketing.”

- Other participants consented: *“To be a financial manager, help the community in terms of job opportunities and life skills. To have a big company.”*
- *“Workshops and educating my community about the event sector. Share my skills and own my Consulting event company.”*
- *“I want to see our community holding big and successful events. I also like to see tourism industry growing in Alexandria.”*
- *“To manufacture candles and have my own company and employ people to work for me.”*
- *“Is to run my own business as an event company. To see myself getting up in the morning working and getting paid like normal people.”*

Projects with communities have already taken place with the learners actively running these events using best practices in event management.

- In Alexandra Township, a Soccer tournament for Under 12’s.
- At St. Michael’s in Alexandria, a dinner event.
- In Bram Fischerville, a skills audit of the talent in the community was attended by over 1,000 of the community—40 different groups performed—there was an exhibition of the crafts and arts of the area. This project was used as part of a research project for the effect of media communications on developing communities in South Africa.
- An HIV/AIDS candlelight event was held in Bram Fischerville.
- A golden oldies luncheon for some old age pensioners.
- In Bertrams, the Thusanang Youth Network successfully managed the Youth Day celebrations for over 1,000 in the community. Local industry supported the project—local caterers were trained, soccer, netball, cultural and heritage entertainment added to the success of the day.
- In Orange Farm, a successful tour professionally organized by the learners has resulted in a number of projects moving forward—working on funding and turning dreams into reality.
- Learners have worked with the Sisters of Mercy in the Winterveldt.
- A wonderful project in which Hilary Keizan got guests at her 50th birthday to bring toys for the start up of a Toy Library for the community in Bertrams.

- In Nellmapius, Mamelodi learners are working on a community project that is building skills in the community and also feeds over 90 orphans every week.
- In Thembisa, opportunities for Bed and breakfast and conferencing have been identified and the learners have got involved with the Youth organization and together successful held an event for over 70 orphans last week.

An empowerment facilitation company, eParty Design (Pty) Limited has been registered and SMME projects are well on their way.

- The bead project made exquisite beaded bee's for Mr. Nelson Mandela's guests at his 85th birthday party.
- A candle-making project is supplying Party Design and has it's first public "outing" at a local fun day where they will be doing a candle making activity for children.
- A sewing project successfully manufactured over 3,000 bags for volunteers for the ICC Cricket World Cup.
- Entertainers from communities have been exposed to the corporate world and a number have already completed successful paid events.
- A branch of eParty Design has been established in Dube Soweto and this group has completed a number of event décor jobs.
- Community groups have been taught stilt-walking skills, cleaning cars to music, singing sweepers, dancing gumboot cleaners.
- Dolly Rathebe, one of our legends from the Sophiatown era, has just completed building an entertainment center in Sofosonke. Dolly's grandson attended the learnership and is now assisting in the opening and running of the center.
- A great project called "Communities in Transition" is evolving whereby training against the Unit Standard "Social Understanding" will take place with corporates in the communities—this will establish catering and souvenir craft suppliers as well as the community event managers, tour guides, taverns and so on whilst at the same time exposing our local "tourists" to the magic that is in the communities.
- In Tshwane, some of the learners are working on an amazing Urban Village development, which launches with a jazz concert including a French orchestra. This Village will ultimately create employment and SMME opportunities for over 2,500 local community residents.

The possibilities in events are amazing—we're building capacity in communities—training is a special event—special events have the ability to touch the lives of millions—investing in our people, through investing in events—events that strive for authenticity and the expression of the unique characteristics of our communities—events to build capacity in our communities to service the future tourism needs—creating destinations where visitors can do what the local residents do. Making a better life for all.

CONCLUSIONS

In the context of South Africa's Skills Development Act, the Event Management Training Program materials support the Tourism Learnership Initiative by providing:

- A transparent and consistent format that provides the Learner, Trainer, Workplace Mentor, and Assessor with comprehensive and cohesive standards of competency;
- A program syllabus that avoids trainer bias in presenting the materials ensuring the standardization of delivery;
- Skill-based competencies linked directly to internationally validated performance outcomes with wider opportunities for employment and career success;
- The elevation of worker skills and performance with both short-term and long-term results.

The significance of this program is multi-faceted, including establishing occupational standards in event management for South Africa, the training of thousands of people to support the event and tourism industry in South Africa, and providing an internationally validated model of entry level event management education. As a direct result of this training program, the Tourism Learnership Initiative will achieve credibility, respectability, and will ultimately become sustainable for many years to come.

The miracle of this training program showcases several benefits:

- Training accelerates the development of the workforce.
- Eighty-five percent of the previously unemployed learners in the first pilot have successfully been placed and in this group, average earning of R487.

- Exposure to existing events fosters interest in creating new, community events.
- The curriculum is adaptable to many programs and many levels—governmental, industry, and academic—with the assessment scalable based on the depth into each topic.

It has been an exhilarating, exhausting experience, sometimes including bitterly disappointing issues—usually stemming from basic values, emotional baggage, and a plain lack of money for the basics like transport and support in the learners’ homes—but mostly magical moments in which we see every individual growing particularly as their talents and contributions towards a project are recognized.

The real success of this program is in investing the time and money in training to ensure that we are able to take the learners through to where they deserve to be as confident, independent, successful learners at Level 4, and guiding them through events to show applied competence—making a meaningful contribution towards the future growth of themselves, their communities, our industry, and our country. This has been a fantastic program and the more we are exposed to the communities, the more we know that this is where the real success will come from. The people are crying out for training—they just don’t know where to start, how to access the miracle—this is just a small start.

Special events have the ability to touch the lives of millions. Investing in our people through investing in events—events that strive for authenticity and the expression of the unique characteristics of our communities—will promote using events to build capacity in our communities to service the future tourism needs, creating destinations where visitors can do what the local residents do, and making a better life for all.

This project took us into a community world which highlighted the role that events could play in uplifting the quality of life in communities through cultural, heritage, educational, communicational, sport, business, political and social events. Recognizing that each community destination has its own unique character and charm, events have a role to play in building capacity by growing and creating authentic events for local communities for themselves—not “staged” events for tourists, but events that guard the integrity of the destination and in the long term, community events and destinations that tourists would wish to be a part of.

REFERENCES

- Godfrey, K. and Clarke, J. (2000). *Tourism Development Handbook*, London: Cassell.
- Goldblatt, J. (1997). *Special Events: Best Practices in Modern Event Management*, London: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Labor Market Skills Development Program, Dept. of Labor. (2001). *National Skills Development Strategy: Setting the Context*, Natal: Natal Witness Commercial Printers (Pty) Ltd.
- Labor Market Skills Development Program, Dept. of Labor. (2001). *Ensuring Quality in Education and Training—The Role of Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies (ETQAs)*, Natal: Natal Witness Commercial Printers (Pty) Ltd.
- O’Toole, W. and Mikolaitis, P. (2002). *Corporate Event Project Management*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2nd Edition.
- The South African Qualifications Authority. (2002). Implementing the National Qualifications Framework: Criteria and Guidelines for ETQAs [online]. Retrieved July 21, 2003, from <http://www.saqa.org.za/saqa.asp?main=publications/publicationscover.htm&menu=pubs>

APPENDIX A

The Event Management Training Program Syllabus

Module 1 The Professional Event Industry

- Unit 1—The Role & Scope of Professional Events: The Role: Why Events Are Held; The Scope: Types of Events; The Importance of Events for the SA Tourism Industry
- Unit 2—The People Involved in Professional Events: The Stakeholders in an Event; The Organisational Chart; Client, Customer & Guest Expectations
- Unit 3—The Requirements for Professional Events: Where Events Are Held; When Events Are Held; What a Professional Event Includes
- Unit 4—The Management of Professional Events: The 5 Phases of Event Management; The Needs Assessment; The Feasibility Study

Module 2 The Event Plan

- Unit 1—Project Management: Logical Sequencing & Critical Paths; Time Lines; Production Schedules
- Unit 2—Communications: Stakeholder Communications; Monitoring & Reporting Strategies; Conflict Resolution
- Unit 3—Financial Management: Budgets; Bid Procurement & Evaluation; Cash Management
- Unit 4—Documentation: Record Keeping Procedures; Information Management Systems; Archives & Portfolios

Module 3 The Event Site

- Unit 1–Site Inspections: Site Selection; Facility Capacity & Constraints; Local Attractions & Housing Requirements
- Unit 2–Site Development: Diagrams & Floor Plans; Storage & Waste Management; Power & Utilities
- Unit 3–Integrating The Event Elements: Human & Vehicular Traffic Flow; Seating & Staging Requirements; Contingency Planning
- Unit 4–Accessibility & Special Services: Special Services for Special Needs; Special Services for Special People; Signage

Module 4 The Event Participants

- Unit 1–Staffing: Staff Roles, Responsibilities & Scheduling; Support & Temporary Staffing; Casual & Temporary Labour Relations
- Unit 2–Volunteers: Recruitment; Orientation & Training; Motivation & Recognition
- Unit 3–Guests: Invitations & Brochures; Registration, Credentials & Admissions; Protocol, Seating & Ushering
- Unit 4–Other Stakeholders: Sponsors; Participants & Performers; Vendors & Suppliers

Module 5 The Event Experience

- Unit 1–Event Design: Theme Development; Integrated Event Design; The Programme Agenda & Running Order
- Unit 2–Catering & Food Service: Menu Development; Food Service Styles; Alcohol Management & Beverage Service
- Unit 3–Entertainment: Spectator Entertainment; Interactive Entertainment; Ceremonies
- Unit 4–Hospitality: VIP Hospitality; Guest Hospitality; Staff, Volunteer & Performer Hospitality

Module 6 The Event Environment

- Unit 1–Décor & Staging: Décor Elements; Staging & Scenic Props; Décor Details
- Unit 2–Presentation Services: AV Equipment & Services; Learning Environments; Entertainment & Marketing Environments
- Unit 3–Production Elements: Lighting; Sound; Special Effects
- Unit 4–Equipment & Rentals: Staging & Equipment; Tables, Chairs & Other Furnishings; Heating, Cooling & Environmental Control

Module 7 The Event Support Services

- Unit 1–Transportation & Parking: Transportation; Traffic; Parking Services
- Unit 2–Tours & Ancillary Programs: Sightseeing Tours; Spouse & Companion Programmes; Sports Activities & Tournaments
- Unit 3–Awards, Prizes & Gifts: Awards & Recognition; Prizes for Contests & Competitions; Gifts & Amenities
- Unit 4–Performers & Personalities: Speakers & Emcees; Dignitaries & Presenters; Celebrities & Special Guest Appearances

APPENDIX A (continued)

Module 8 The Event Safeguards

- Unit 1–Safety & Security: Risk Management Procedures; Safety Issues; Security Issues
- Unit 2–Medical & Emergency Services: Crisis Management Procedures; Medical Emergencies; Emergency Services
- Unit 3–Legal Obligations: Agreements, Contracts & Leases; Occupational Health & Safety; Intellectual Property Rights
- Unit 4–Insurance & Compliance Instruments: National, Regional & Local Regulations; Permits, Licenses & Other Compliance Instruments; Proper Insurance Coverage