

Get skilled, do an apprenticeship! You can learn skills from day one, you can enjoy great working conditions, you can earn while you learn.

For a long time we've been involved in employing full-time apprentices but in the last 5 years we've decided to try the SATs program and we find that it's a means of exposing a young person to our company, and to our trade, and to what we do.

It's a more gentle way of finding out, 'is this the career for me?' for a school-based apprentice because they can then do the transition from school to work a lot easier. A young person is taking on their first try at a career, they then I think realise how important their school work is so it's common their school results don't fall off they actually improve.

We've probably 5 years ago started an information evening through local press because travel is a real issue for any apprentice, often they're dependent on family to get to work or local transport, so we have a relationship with schools close to our factories on the south side of Brisbane.

We use the local press to advertise and get a community interest story about our work and the opportunity for apprentices both school-based and full time. When you analyse our workforce many of the staff positions have originated from a trade qualification starting either as a school-based apprentice or full time apprenticeship.

Some of our best applicants and our best results have come from school-based apprentices. In 2007 the World Skills Competition was held in Japan and in 2006 one of our school-based apprentices represented Australia so it's proof that you can start as a school-based [apprentice] and still get to the ultimate in doing your apprenticeship.