

## The selection process - Not just elimination

The selection process into the TDM (tool, die and mould-maker) Apprenticeship Programme has proved a critical step in choosing people who have the relevant qualifications and skill set to fill a vacant position. Though many companies will agree that the selection process is expensive and often, depending on the type of position and seniority, some positions may not go through strict selection processes such as embarking on psychometric tests.

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The TDM Apprenticeship Programme, under the banner of NTIP (National Tooling Initiative Programme), has always invested in a recruitment and selection process that benefits both candidate and the company. The lengthy recruitment process, facilitated by NTIP, allows the client organisation to invest their time and financial resources into their core business activities. The process consists of a number of steps including advertising the apprenticeship, planning a career day for which attendance by the candidates is a prerequisite to enter the program, receiving CVs and application forms that include motivational letters, character references and matric results, assessing the applications, interviewing the most suitable candidates and administering psychometric tests. The intense selection process however has brought returns in the long run as this has allowed for the programme to bring candidates that are a suitable match for the programme from the beginning whilst ensuring that a fair selection process has been adhered to.

The programme, which is facilitated by Single Points of Contacts (SPOCs), goes a step further by offering life skills for candidates. The facilitators have either social work and or psychology backgrounds. The candidates are educated on topics such as interview skills, money management, personal development plans, one on one sessions, English and computer skills to ensure that they receive holistic support – both in class and in their personal lives.

Brendan Mayer, factory manager at Mpact Plastics, FMCG Division in Pinetown, was impressed with the selection process that the programme applies. Brendan noted the high level of discipline that the student acquires whilst on OJT is satisfactory considering that the student had just completed his apprenticeship and currently awaits a date for their trade test.

Brendan is involved in the selection process at Mpact Plastics and some of the points he raised were directly linked to the investment made by a company during this process which, over time, includes benefits such as higher production and employee retention.

“The standards have certainly dropped in terms of the pool of skills available in the market,” Brendan noted.

“The first challenge is being able to attract the right candidates who meet the criteria; such as maths, technical ability and relevant linguistic skills. Companies will often resort to outsourcing this role in hope of getting the right candidates. This has its disadvantages as the outsourced company often does not understand the client company values and the skills required

Psychometric tests are also rather expensive and is often not feasible to conduct,” he continued.

Brendan added that, as more companies realised the importance of the recruitment and selection process, more emphasis could be applied which would yield greater results for a company. Stats have shown that employees who were a suitable match to the company from the onset are inclined to be more productive.

Mpact Plastics FMCG division comprises of two manufacturing sites, which serve a wide customer base, including many multinationals and manufacture packaging for the pharmaceutical, food, chemical, beverage, industrial, household and cosmetic industries using various plastic materials. Technologies employed across these two plants include blow moulding injection moulding, single- and two-stage injection stretch blow moulding, in-mould labelling, printing, self-adhesive labelling cap assembly and wad insertion. Both plants also process the Mpact rPET material, Savuka. Broadly titled as our FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) business, this entity operates from two sites – Pinetown (KwaZulu-Natal) and Atlantis (Western Cape). Interaction between the two plants enables Mpact Plastics to offer an in-house service for both container and closures, so that quality and cost efficiency can be optimised. Geographical diversity provides nationwide market access, effective customer response, lower transport costs and the advantage of regional manufacturing. With the emphasis on innovative and quality packaging solutions, the Atlantis plant is ISO: 9001:2008 certified and the Pinetown plant is both ISO: 9001:2015 and FSSC 22000 certified.



## About Mpact

Mpact is a leading producer of rigid plastic packaging and cling film, producing a range of packaging and serving a multitude of blue-chip customers within various industries, including products for the food, beverage, personal care, homecare, pharmaceutical, agricultural, industrial and retail markets.

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*Mpact Plastics is a leading producer of rigid plastic packaging and cling film in southern Africa. We operate out of nine production centres across the country, providing packaging from plants with relevant certifications. We service the food, beverage, personal care, home care, pharmaceutical, agricultural and retail markets. In upholding company values, and as a supporter of the circular economy, we positively contribute to industry associations, enabling various communities to participate in recycling solutions.*

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