

Choose Carefully...

The skills crisis in South Africa's ICT sector has seen resurgence in the number of training providers offering their wares. But not all training providers are created equal and before you put your money down you should know what you are going to get out of it.

Words: Kimberly West

Do your homework, it is important to know what you are getting from your training provider.

> DO YOUR HOMEWORK

The problem is, unless you happen to be in the training or education field, the chances are that you won't know the questions to ask of a potential provider.

While this list is not exhaustive in any way, the following points provide a good guideline.

1 REPUTATION AND EXPERIENCE: Alho admits this is a particularly difficult thing to establish if you are entering the learning arena for the first time. Nevertheless, speak to friends, people in the industry and conduct an online search to assess how each training provider is evaluated. If you are still unsure, ask the training provider for background information and learner testimonials, says Alho.

2 ACCREDITATION: South Africa's regulations require that training providers are registered with the Department of Education and the relevant SETA, notes Mopaki. These accreditations are easy to check and students should never skip this exercise regardless of how reputable the organisation appears. Moreover, it is important to establish the level to which the course or accreditation is accepted internationally, says Xpert Training Academy head, Carla Watson.

3 MORE ACCREDITATION: It is essential to establish that a company is approved to provide a particular course. Mopaki explains that organisation accreditation is very different from course approval and the first often does not ensure the second.

4 PRICE: Although the cost of a course is an important consideration, it should not be the deciding factor, advises Alho. It is important that students investigate the manner in which learning takes place and compare this to the costs

and that particular person's likelihood of succeeding in such an environment.

5 OUTCOMES-BASED: What are you looking to get from your training and how do you intend to use it going forward? This is an important principle to establish before you sign up for a course, as some institutions offer certificates of competence and others certificates of attendance. If this is a general course for your own interest, then a more cost-effective certificate of attendance-based course may be what you are looking for. If you are hoping to secure a new job or raise, says Watson, then your employer is going to want confirmation that you understood and are able to apply the information accordingly.

6 SUCCESS RATES: An organisation's success or pass rate can be indicative of the quality of training offered, says Alho. While a high success rate is no guarantee, it does give insight into how suitable the company's training regimen is for an average student.

7 FEEDBACK: Another point rarely considered when entering a new learning environment is the question of progress reports or feedback. Although different people are suited to a diversity of feedback mechanisms, an indication of progress along the course is critical in order to sound early warning bells, comments Watson.

8 CLASS SIZE: It may appear to be less important when embarking on adult education, however, a class of more than 35 people is not conducive to in-depth learning, says Mopaki. The trainer must have the capacity to deal effectively with each student or else there is a good chance that a portion of the class will be left behind. **1**



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We are a fully accredited service provider. Our primary focus Seta is ISETT Seta and all of our Soft Skill interventions have been approved and accredited by the Services Seta. All our interventions are unit standard aligned. Blazing Moon provides Unit Standard Number and NQF Level on every certificate of competence.

Blazing Moon is competitively priced in the market. Full course material including learner guide, quick reference guide, pen, notepad, catering and facilitation are included in our costs. Our training is facilitated by qualified professional facilitators and we follow a training methodology unique to Blazing Moon.

Our interventions are outcomes based. Before any intervention takes place our learners are required to complete a pre assessment via our online Event Management Application. This allows us to ensure that learners are ready to attend a course before we accept a booking. Once the intervention is complete the learner is required to complete a post assessment. Based on the result the learner is issued with a certificate of competence. We provide the company with a complete report of feedback including results of each learner.

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