

ANALYSE

Maximising Safety; Minimising Risks



Hunter Valley Training Company (HVTC) is Australia's largest and oldest Apprenticeship training company. They are committed to providing quality and innovative vocational education and training opportunities across a range of industries and sectors. With an award winning reputation for providing top performing apprentices and employees, training and health and safety commitment is of critical importance to HVTC and their clients.

THE CHALLENGE

With changes to Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws in Australia in 2012, HVTC sought to find a better way to assess and manage safety risk in the workplace.

The WHS laws mandated a more holistic approach to safety management and placed greater importance on mental health. Many peak industry bodies responded, with a common theme, at various conferences in the years that followed, focusing on improved pre-employment assessment and initiatives aimed at ongoing and proactive management of mental health in the workplace.

OPRA'S SOLUTION

In 2012 HVTC responded with a solution which would overhaul their recruitment processes and help drive proactive management strategies for their 900+ Apprentices.

HVTC initially completed a six-month pilot project with OPRA Consulting, whereby their recruitment process was significantly modified. For the first time in HVTC's 34-year history, comprehensive pre-employment psychometric testing was introduced through the application of the Health & Safety Indicator (HSI).

RESULTS

- ✓ **Risk Identification:** 'HIGH RISK' apprentices identified by OPRA's Health and Safety Assessment were found to account for 70% of total workplace safety violations.
- ✓ **Apprenticeship completion rates:** HVTC maintained an enviable completion rate of 85%, compared with an industry average of 50%.
- ✓ **Safety:** HVTC reduced their Lost Time Injury (LTI) rates by 10% and this has been maintained for a period of 3 years.
- ✓ **Insurance costs:** Through improved apprentice assessment management there was a \$130,000 reduction in workers' compensation cost in the first 12 months.

"Safety testing has helped assess how existing employees were 'hard wired', the safety risks this posed for them and how they could change their behaviours and take ownership to reduce their risk of being injured."

*Janet Lee
Health and Safety Manager
Hunter Valley Training Company*