

SKILLS PLEDGE INITIATIVE

A COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

What is the Skills Pledge?

The Skills Pledge is “a *voluntary, public commitment by employer/organisation to support each employee at all levels to develop/upgrade their skills continuously*”.

The Skills Pledge is a commitment taken by employers to drive their business forward by training their employees. The Skills Pledge will be on a voluntary basis where employers/organisations will make a pledge to train and upgrade the skills of all its employees. During this period employers will be supported by the HRDC through a Mentor.

Objectives of the Skills Pledge project

The main objectives of this project are to:

- ensure that employers/organisations value their employees;
- recognise the benefits of skills development and talent management; and
- employers/organisations willingly invest in continuous empowerment of all their employees.

The main aim behind the Skills Pledge Initiative is to promote training among the Mauritian workforce. In Mauritius, most of the times, training is either done formally or informally, that is, training is either carried out in training institutions (MQA approved) or training is carried out informally, that is, on-the-job. The difficulty arises on how to measure the on-the-job training. For many, formal training is considered to be more important in terms of its likely impact on productivity, skills improvement and raising qualification levels. However informal training is equally important for many organisations as this is the only way that they train their people.

Through the Skills Pledge project, employers/organisations will have access to support and advice from Mentors. The team will work with the employers/organisations to understand their business priorities, help them to identify their skills needs and when required, refer them to training institutions or Trainers to meet their needs.

Benefits of the Skills Pledge project

There exist many benefits for employers/organisations making the Skills Pledge. Few of the benefits are:

- increase competitiveness;
- increase productivity and efficiency, therefore reducing costs;
- increase customer satisfaction;
- improve quality of service;
- better targeted investment and economies of scale;
- improve the motivation of the workforce;
- increase the range of skills and training within business, and focus training to specific business needs;
- increase staff satisfaction and morale - therefore increase the rates of staff staying with and progressing within business; and
- improve reputation as an employer/organisation to potential employees, and as a business with clients, local community and competitors - as it is a public demonstration of the organisation's commitment to value employees development.

What is the purpose of the Skills Pledge?

The purpose is to ensure that all employees are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the organisation. The Pledge can be taken by the Management/Board of Directors on behalf of the organisation. It is a corporate commitment covering the whole organisation. The Skills Pledge initiative is open to all employers/organisations in the private sector. This is an opportunity for the employers or management to show publicly and demonstrably the importance they place on investing in the skills of their people.

What an employer/organisation is committing to in making the Skills Pledge?

This implies employer/organisation is making a public commitment to enable their staff to improve their skills. This will make employees gain a higher level of skills and competencies that are valuable in supporting business needs and their future employability.

Benefits of the project for employers/organisations

Employers/organisations will have access to support and advice from HRDC through Mentors. The Mentors will work with the employers/organisations to understand their business priorities, help them to identify their skills needs and when required, refer them to training institutions or Trainers to meet those needs.

What employers/organisations need to do?

Employers/organisations need to send their expression of interest to HRDC where they signify their intention to participate in the project.

Skills Pledge Charter

For the project, a Skills Pledge Charter with ten clauses was prepared which is as follows:

- 1. We commit to promote learning and development**
- 2 We develop/promote talent and Human Capital in our organisation**
- 3 We commit to link business and learning and development needs**
- 4 We ensure to devise a learning and development plan**
- 5 We commit to effective designing of learning and development initiatives**
- 6 We commit to implement the learning and development initiatives**
- 7 We commit to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning and development initiatives**
- 8 Our organisational members undertake their responsibilities towards learning and development**
- 9 We commit to be in partnership with training/educational institutions and other organisations**
- 10 We commit to a culture of continuous improvement and learning**