

CASE STUDY:

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS AS A SOLE TRADER VIA GOVERNMENT FUNDED TRAINING PROGRAMS

COMPANY: Apprenticeship Careers Australia- Host Employer Forever Electrical

HOTSPOT REGION: Western NSW

TARGET: Encouraging sole traders to consider hiring apprentices to grow their business

Forever Electrical are an electrical contractor operating in Dubbo, Western NSW. Starting out as a sole trader, owner Matt McKay couldn't commit to hiring any staff while he continued to chase permanent business contracts. As the business grew, Matt started exploring the option of employing an apprentice, but was concerned that he may not be able to support an additional wage. While talking with other small business owners, Matt factored in the government financial assistance, which would allow him to financially support an apprentice and grow his customer base at the same time. Matt was introduced to a young jobseeker Jack Bennett, who relocated 150km to Dubbo to seek work outside of his families farming business.

Matt engaged Apprenticeship Careers Australia, a Group Training Organisation, and took the plunge to offer Jack an apprenticeship. Since employing Jack as an apprentice, Matt has discovered the many benefits young talent can add to his business. Having an additional set of hands has improved efficiency and the added safety risks associated with working alone have significantly reduced. Matt has noticed that working in a team has made the daily routine more enjoyable and he feels that he is giving back to the community by sharing his skills and knowledge. Matt also stated that there are many positives in being able to train a new worker from scratch, helping mould him in line with the processes and culture of the business. Matt is highly impressed by Jack's attitude and commitment. Jack stays in accommodation during the week and travels "home" at weekends. Jack is passing his TAFE studies and is enjoying learning the theory behind his work. In 2019, Jack was rewarded by receiving the Bert Evans Scholarship.