

CASE STUDY: STAFFING AND RURAL CHALLENGES AT OBIECO INDUSTRIES

COMPANY: Obieco Industries

HOTSPOT REGION: New England/ North West

Who is the employer and what do they do?

Obieco Industries are a licenced vehicle body building manufacturer, based in Tamworth, New South Wales. They provide the full 'turnkey' solution for their customers from design, manufacture and installation. Their range of specialist and custom builds include ute trace, custom truck builds, service bodies, flat beds and tippers.


What were they struggling with?

Obieco Industries main challenge stems from losing qualified and trained staff that they have developed to the mining industry. This is due to the company being in close proximity to several mines and their reputation within the industry of training excellent tradesmen and women, resulting in staff being head hunted or their being no hesitation in their recruitment endeavours when applying for these opportunities. Also, being a company that employs 60 staff, Obieco Industries finds it difficult to compete with the salaries offered in the mining sector.

Another challenge presented to Obieco Industries is being regionally based. They find there is a lack of qualified tradesmen and women due to the lack of candidates in these areas. This makes it difficult for the company to recruit new staff and retain them due to the availability of jobs in the area with more competitive incentives.

What made them decide to take on an apprentice and how did they go about that?

Obieco Industries is a great advocate for providing work opportunities to local people in the Tamworth area. They have great connections and relationships with local high schools and therefore, can offer work experience opportunities to local students. From this, they can determine the quality of the candidate and willingness to learn, and therefore, offer apprenticeship opportunities supported by Apprenticeship Support Australia and Training Services NSW.



Due to an increased number of apprenticeship applications this year, Obieco industries has revised their recruitment strategy for taking on apprentices next year. They will hold an information night, assessment centre including interview, maths and english testing as well as a practical assessment depending on the discipline they are applying for. They will also analyse the suitability of the potential employee to see if they are a good fit against the company core values and a culture fit.

Obieco Industries suggests that their recruitment process would not be as successful without the support for Apprenticeship Support Australia and Training Services NSW.

What did they get out of it taking an apprentice on board?

Obieco Industries suggests hiring apprentices is paramount to any business success, especially being regionally based. This has assisted the company with addressing their staffing challenges with 11 out of 60 employees being local apprentices.

Obieco Industries also mentioned the financial support they receive from the government provided in terms of incentive payments to businesses does help take the pressure off especially when apprentices are being paid full time when they attend TAFE and are away from the workplace. The government also provides fee free TAFE, making it an additional benefit for employers to recruit apprentices.

What are the main takeaways for other employers?

Obieco industries has been able to address some of their challenges by employing local apprentices with the support of Apprenticeship Support Australia and Training Services NSW. The company has also won several awards due to the passion, dedication and commitment of all their staff and experienced unprecedented growth in all areas of business over the time that they have had apprentices on board.