

# Upskilling to add value

CASE STUDY - TOLL GROUP



Growing the skills, expertise and confidence of their people is a top priority for leading transportation and logistics company Toll. Why? Because they know from experience that by investing in quality staff training, their business will prosper, and their employees will thrive. An added bonus was the estimated cost savings as a result of the training.

## Upskilling to add value

Here in New Zealand, Toll provides a broad scope of services, including parcel delivery, freight transportation, warehousing, storage, and supply chain management. To stay at the top of their game, Toll invests in regular staff training programmes that develop the communication, health and safety, and leadership capabilities of their teams.

Since 2019, Toll has been upskilling staff through learning and development specialists Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication. Their customised training programmes are designed in close consultation with Toll's managers and supervisors to ensure the specific needs of their people - and the organisation - are met.

Despite a challenging two years, Toll have placed emphasis on upskilling and supporting their people. The training has focused on aspiring leaders, as well as customer services. The programmes included everything from teamwork, personality traits and developing assertiveness to identifying with Toll values and understanding how to apply them in the workplace.

Due to the outstanding success and outcomes of the last two years, Toll continues to provide their people with the Workplace Communication training, with the aim of all remaining relevant staff to complete the programme this year.

The training has had a powerful impact. Not only have participants' newfound skills, and confidence boosted their performance in the workplace, but they have also added immense value outside of Toll - at home, with their families and in their communities.

## Targeted health and safety training

Transport and logistics are high-risk industries, and Toll is "safety obsessed" in everything they do. As part of their ongoing commitment to creating an incident and injury-free workplace, Toll and Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication worked together to develop personalised training that targets their specific areas of risk and concern. The training has increased employees' awareness and knowledge of health and safety hazards, and thanks to their improved communications skills, it has given them the confidence to voice any concerns.

"Raising my voice about safety concerns and operations have been clear, and I feel more confident speaking up."

## Leading the way

Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication's high impact leadership training has paid big dividends, empowering employees to step up in their roles and reach their full potential, both professionally and personally. The programme did not just open participants' eyes to opportunities to advance their careers within Toll - it also boosted their workplace performance and will ultimately aid in staff retention.

Participants learnt what it takes to become an effective leader - how to give instructions and performance-focused feedback, run meetings, prioritise, and delegate tasks, motivate people, and meet deadlines.

Two learners said they are focusing on communicating successfully with positive body language at home, and it has helped their communication with their children. One person said he had never had a proper conversation with his son before the training and had noticed a real difference.

## Honing capabilities in communication, problem-solving and continuous improvement

The ability to face problems head-on with skill and confidence is a trait we could all do with more of, and it was a key focus of the Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication programme. Participants learnt how to think critically and apply a solutions-focused approach to workplace problems. Supervisors noticed an immediate impact of the training (including improved staff motivation, accountability, and the ability to take ownership in various situations), and so too did the learners.

"I have learnt to identify physical, cultural and environmental barriers at work and discuss how to overcome these barriers with management and team leaders."

"I work in many different jobs within Toll, and one of them is inventory controller. Training has given me the opportunity to solve stock problems, customer email enquiries and investigations."

Problem-solving, working smarter and embracing the Toll culture of continuous improvement were vital aspects of the training. As part of the programme, employees had to develop a continuous improvement project highlighting a solution to a real workplace problem. The findings of the project were then presented to the leadership team at the final graduation – and thanks to the strong oral communication focus of the course, learners were able to effectively communicate their projects in what would have previously been an incredibly daunting situation for them.

Toll New Zealand's Executive General Manager, Jon Adams, was "blown away" when he saw the transformation of his staff.

"The programme is excellent and focuses on helping our team members learn communication skills, continuous improvement and problem-solving skills, all underpinned by our Toll values."

"Along with others in the management team I was blown away by the first-time presentations given by the team. It's very humbling to support some of the most important people in our business in growing their confidence and developing skills outside their natural comfort zone. I look forward to seeing them flourish," Jon says.

## Targeted training achieves real results:

Feedback from Toll NZ management gave the Workplace Communication training a giant tick of approval. They said it was professionally run, met their expectations, and had a positive impact both on the business and on their employees. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 lockdowns and two cyber-attacks, attendance was excellent, highlighting the resilience, commitment, and motivation of learners to complete the programme.

Says one manager, "Email mannerisms, communication around listening with intent and asking questions has improved significantly. This programme has provided a look into how a small amount of teaching can yield huge results. I'm a huge advocate of this training."

Not only has the training had such an impact but it has also resulted in cost savings for the business. Wayne Sivern, National Training Manager - Operations & Compliance, estimates the training has resulted in savings of over \$60,000 per year.

## Key business impacts for Toll



Cost reductions - estimated to be over \$60,000



Improved employee engagement with role and store



Effective communication between staff



Improved understanding and application of health and safety knowledge



Reduction in calls to customer services to deal with issues