

POSTER SUMMARY

**TRAINING SUGAR LEADERS:
KEEPING THE SMRI TEN-WEEK COURSE RELEVANT**

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Training and development is a recognised key success factor in ensuring the viability and sustainability of any organisation. Southern African sugar companies have embraced this philosophy, and make use of Engineers-in-Training (EIT) and Management Development Programmes (MDP) to nurture their future leaders. Intrinsically complementing the operational training on such programmes is the annual SMRI Ten-Week Course in Sugar Engineering. The course caters for graduates working in any of the production, processing, maintenance, agriculture or research functions in the sugar industry. It encompasses the theoretical aspects of sugar manufacture, including sugarcane agriculture, sugar bio-refineries and new technologies. There is a practical project where delegates produce crystalline sugar from sugarcane using the SMRI's various pilot scale equipment. The streams are sampled and analysed, and Factory Performance Calculations done. Delegates also gain experience in report writing and reviewing literature. An advantage of the course over others run globally is that the SMRI course is presented by subject matter experts from both the SMRI and the local sugar companies. Companies regard the course as fundamental to the development of engineers and use delegate performance as a tool to identify future industry leaders.

This poster highlights how the course has remained relevant to the industry's training needs since the first course offering in 1993. Changes to the 2018 rendition of the course are presented; this includes changes to subject matter, course material and the restructuring of the programme so that individual modules can be attended, e.g. extraction and refining. Comments from past delegates on the course are given – these delegates now being senior managers in the southern African sugar industry.

Keywords: Training, development, sugar technology, learning, cane-to-crystal, EIT