

Some thoughts on the supply of skills from Higher Education

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SASTA Workshop 15 April 2010

Some initial observations

- no SILVER bullets
- what ever the solution it will be a long time in coming
- co-ordination and partnership is key
- all players in the value chain are accountable
- fragmentation of that value chain leads to problems

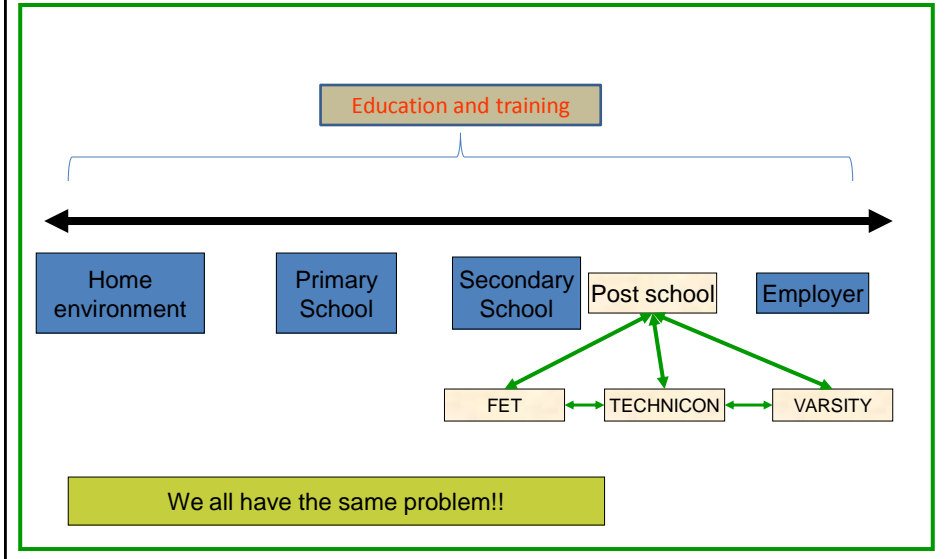
Introduction

- Sugar Industry is NOT unique!
- but it covers a broader value chain than most “industries”
- all this does is expand the problem
- the ‘AGRICULTURE’ stigma may not help Sugar’s image
- remember Sugar is not unique!!

The role of Higher Education

- does not do “vocational” training per se
- this is the job of the FET sector and “technicians”
- this is not hierarchical but complementary
- it’s the matching difference between “problem solvers” and “problem fixers”
- my view is, these “training” roles have been confused – so sets the fundamental problem!

The HE value chain



So what can we do?

- encourage government to spend more on primary education i.e. **maths**, **arithmetic**, **numeracy** and **maths!!**
- a good dose of communication (English) as well (its called literacy)
- spend more money – SA industry **not** really good at supporting **education and training**
- have many more conversations like this one
- then do something about it

Some questions for the industry

- Is your value chain broken (i.e.. is it properly connected from the soil to the restaurant table)?
- In Illovo's example what does 39% technical and 8 % education spend mean? (I assume this is indicative)
- Where is this money been spent and does it have maximum leverage to expand the skills pool?
- Do you really know what skills the modern Sugar worker must have? (**hard** and **soft**)

One final thought!

- when most of us started our careers we knew nothing about the "job" but had some theory and practical knowledge
- we came into an environment with maybe 5 or more engineers, managers, academics, artisans, accountants etc, etc, etc.
- those 5 or more nurtured us and transformed our knowledge into skills
- the global skills shortage has changed that!
- the 5 or more are now 1 or 2 and they have swamps and crocodiles to deal with!!

Thank you