

12-2-2009  
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To All Who Have Contributed,

My name is Gary Clementson and I am a 23 year old, 4<sup>th</sup> year electrical apprentice from Perth, Western Australia. My apprenticeship has brought me such joy and success that I felt the need to express my many thanks to you all for such a positive experience. The success of my apprenticeship is directly related to the support shown to me by the Federal Government, Group Training Australia, Thornlie TAFE, my employer Electrical Group Training, and my host contractor Team Electrical Services.

Following high school I started a university degree in Bachelor of Environmental Science, of which I only completed one year of training. Following a 12 month travel I decided to start an apprenticeship, with the idea of quality training and a lifelong certification that could be taken anywhere in the world. I certainly had no idea I would receive so much more.

Off the job training has certainly been a key element in my prosperous career. Electrical Group Training have subsidised not only my compulsory training, but countless night school and weekend courses, including a six month, after hours course, which allowed me to receive a dual trade certification, as an Instrumentation Technician. On the job I have had the pleasure to work in a wide variety of environments within the industry, and been allowed to work on some of the more unique projects. My up to date equipment, supplied by the tools for the trade programme, and EGT's combined safety procedures with Team Electrical's, sees all my work completed safely and efficiently.

My personal safety has been held in the highest regard by my employers, with the implementation of onsite safety visits by field officers, provision of all required personal protection equipment, job safety analysis, and risk assessment protocols. I am frequently supplied safety updates, isolation equipment and even annual change of year safety training days held at EGT's head office. On the completion of my apprenticeship I will also have a hearing test supplied.

Not only did the Group Training Scheme offer me personal safety, but also job security. Electrical Group Training offers the option to change between host employers to gain more experience, where with normal apprenticeships you are locked into the one employer. My experience and hard work whilst employed by EGT allowed me the honour to receive the EGT Apprentice of the Year Award three consecutive Years. Following this I was awarded the W.A Group Training Apprentice of the Year 2008, which had me travelling to Cairns to speak at the annual Group Training Conference and be a nominee for the national title. Group Training Australia also offered me a once in a life time opportunity to attend the Today's Skills, Tomorrow's Leaders programme, held in Canberra. Showing even more support, EGT and Team Electrical sponsored all the safety equipment and training for my entry into the two day, 134km white water race, The Avon Descent. I finished the race in 11 hours, and with their help, raised \$1200 for The Epilepsy Foundation of W.A.

*"Today's Skills Tomorrow's Leaders 2008*

*Each Year 21 group training apprentices and trainees, high achievers in their chosen professions and potential industry leaders of the future, are chosen to participate in an intensive program held at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. They come representing all states and territories and from varied industry backgrounds. The creative learning environment is a unique opportunity for participants to develop their leadership and self management skills. They are challenged to take their current training successes to the next level and provided with practical tools to assist in clarifying their vision for the future."*

This program was definitely the highlight of my career thus far. The amazing atmosphere and energy of all the participants was certainly enough to inspire everyone to share, learn and plan for a positive future for the nation. We learnt, before you can lead, you must plan, time manage and set achievable goals through the implementation of practical steps. At the official opening of the event, we went to parliament house where key politicians listened to our views on apprenticeship training and the benefits and disadvantages of being an apprentice in Australia. I left this intense program with the highest of endeavours for myself and the future of my industry.

The success of my apprenticeship is a perfect example of the Group Training Scheme system coming to fruition. My hard work and initiative was met with overwhelming support and training, to develop me into an industry leader and a positive ambassador for the training system.

I would like to thank you all for all the levels of support and nurture you have shown me throughout my apprenticeship. When I started I was a bar tender who had never even touched a pair of pliers, and now I have an outstanding portfolio and memories of achievements I will forever cherish. Special Thanks to Alan Charlton, Peter Tuck and Stuart Diepeveen.

Thank you for your time and involvement,

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