

Apprenticeships & Traineeships

THE wimmera
Everything you need.

Growing their own at O'Connors Farm Machinery

O'Connors Farm Machinery is well-versed in apprentices and trainees, having had them work in their workshop, spare parts and administration departments in its 50-year history.

But it is their program with heavy diesel mechanics that truly shines.

Fully-qualified heavy diesel mechanics are hard to find in the agricultural machinery industry, particularly in regional areas, so O'Connors has perfected a training schedule to achieve results in an area their business depends on.

"We like to grow our own," said HR and Marketing Manager Lisa Day.

"They are trained in a pretty good environment, and we're committed to continually providing apprenticeships."

There are currently six apprentices out of a team of 15 in the Horsham workshop, while other dealerships also employ apprentices.

Lisa said O'Connors has also ventured into employing school-based apprentices, which had worked well for both the businesses and the apprentices.

"We usually don't like to take apprentices too young and would prefer them to have finished year 12.

"But school-based apprenticeships give the opportunity to experience what the job is like and explore their options."

In fact, O'Connors are keen to expand their relationships with local schools.

"We're looking at doing a lot more promotion of our apprenticeship program through schools and career expos," Lisa said.

O'Connors have built a reputation as a preferred employer for apprentices, and use Workco to employ almost all of their apprentices.

"We don't like to take apprentices too young because they need to be emotionally mature," Lisa said.

"We have a great relationship with Workco, and find it better to use them because they take care of the paperwork side of it, and if it doesn't work out they can place the apprentices elsewhere."



"We've had a lot of success with apprentices, when you get the right ones. They might not work here forever but most stay for at least a couple of years after they are qualified."

O'Connors Farm Machinery: Apprentice training is vital

2008 STARTED AT O'CONNORS AS MATURE-AGED APPRENTICE

COMPLETED TRADE SCHOOL

3RD YEAR APPRENTICE:
Appointed workshop foreman

Mentors APPRENTICES

FURTHER STUDY
ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF MANAGEMENT
ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF MANAGEMENT & HR

LEARNING CURVE:
MANAGEMENT OF 12-15 STAFF

COMPLETED WIMMERA LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Awarded Young Leader in Business

at the 2012 Powercor Wimmera Business Awards

"I never just wanted to be a mechanic - I wanted more, and O'Connors gave me that opportunity to step-up."



Nigel Rogers, 30

WORKSHOP FOREMAN

"I was looking for stability and career development. I'm a father of two and O'Connors is a family-orientated company"

O'CONNORS look for:

- ➔ Enthusiasm
- ➔ Initiative
- ➔ Applicants to impress during their work experience trial

Grew up on a farm - always interested in mechanics

ATTENDED BALMORAL COLLEGE

AGED 14 WORKED AT GARAGE IN BALMORAL

AGED 16 STARTED A PRE-APPRENTICESHIP AT DOUGLAS MINERAL AND SAND MINE THROUGH VET STUDIES

WORK EXPERIENCE AT O'CONNORS LED TO BEING OFFERED AN APPRENTICESHIP

"I didn't enjoy school. Trade school suits me much better because I'm doing something I love."

NOW 2ND YEAR APPRENTICE DIESEL MECHANIC

Enjoys
Working on headers & tractors

STUDYING THROUGH SUNRAYSIA INSTITUTE OF TAFE

BOOKWORK + ON-THE-JOB TRAINING + TRADE SCHOOL (2X3 WEEK BLOCKS)

Shaun Bloomfield, 19

APPRENTICE



"It's a good place to work, I get along with everyone. When I finish my apprenticeship I plan to stick around at O'Connors for a fair while - I love it here and it's close to home."

O'CONNORS provides:

- ➔ Career paths
- ➔ Quality training
- ➔ Large company benefits
- ➔ Opportunities at various dealerships
- ➔ Support and guidance
- ➔ Social workplaces

Advice to people thinking about an apprenticeship:

"Try your best in everything you do - you will get more out of it if you show that you are going hard."