

Aquaculture Business 26TEN Project – Case Study

In 2018, a large Tasmanian aquaculture and food processing business identified a need to improve employee communication, digital literacy and general literacy skills. They worked with 26TEN to put together a grant application and were successful.

The business employed an Adult Literacy Skills Officer (ALSO) who worked closely with the project team to:

- provide reading, writing and maths support to identified employees, to help them develop their skills and confidence to be able to do their job better
- support the business to rewrite documentation in plain English to allow greater accessibility for employees with low literacy.

Their project had good outcomes and highlighted the need to continue to support the development of a work environment where employees openly discuss literacy and feel comfortable asking for support. The business applied for a second round of funding and were again successful. The same ALSO continued to work with the business in 2019 to:

- educate managers (through a new training program developed as part of the project) on how to support employees with low literacy and reduce the stigma often associated with receiving help
- support employee competence and confidence using internal digital tools and software
- continue to support employees to improve their reading, writing and maths skills
- create an assessment to determine readiness of employees to complete additional training
- create a workplace policy to support literacy skill development across all job roles
- explore, test and review a video learning approach for safety training
- create a plain English text message process allowing for effective organisation-wide communication

Several factors contributed to the success of this project:

- the ALSO developed a positive working relationship with all employees
- each employee involved in literacy training received over 25 hours' worth of support – enough to make a significant difference
- the whole organisation were on board with the project
- the ALSO was flexible and worked around employees' timetables

The business received such value from their ALSO that they have continued to employ her part-time - even though 26TEN funding has finished. The business will soon be rolling out their workplace literacy policy and will continue to support employees with their reading, writing, maths and digital skills as needed.