

**Submission
No 5**

SKILL SHORTAGES IN NSW

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Hello,

As a citizen of NSW I would like to say that I haven't personally seen or heard any evidence to suggest that there has been any skill shortage in this state for at least the past 15 years. In fact, I believe that the situation in the NSW workforce at the moment is quite the opposite - we are in the midst of a severe skills overload.

Out of all the other NSW citizens I have spent some time with over the past 10 years or more, from long relationships to one-time conversations, very, very few of them seemed to be significantly unskilled at their jobs. And I get the impression that this problem isn't just confined to the general Sydney area. It seems to exist right throughout NSW, and indeed all of Australia. This of course makes it difficult for people who prefer the quality of service offered by unskilled workers to find the unskilled employees and/or servicepeople who can provide a satisfying work performance. It also means there is a terrible shortage of the kinds of hilarious stories and situations that unskilled workers naturally provide, which lowers overall quality of life in those communities and often leads to incidents of other major social problems such as bullying and depression.

For example, one person who's work life is too empty of hilarious workplace incidents because they are too skilled might feel depressed and/or ashamed that their life is too dull. On the other hand, another person with the same problem might "solve" it by bullying other people into watching them on a regular basis, so that they will have a larger audience and thus seem to be worth watching. These are just simple examples of some of the knock on effects of the skills overload that I have personally seen.

I object to the frequent use of the buzz phrase "skill shortage" by the federal and state governments, and other people, to describe the current (or future) workforce situation. It implies that the problem is exactly the opposite of what it really is and encourages governments and employers to pressure our workers to be even more qualified, when in fact we should be figuring out how we can help workers to be **less** competent at their jobs, if we are to have any hope of making our communities interesting, enjoyable and worthwhile.

The major stumbling block for fixing the skills overload in NSW is of course the discriminatory workplace laws. The second major problem is the culture of educational discrimination that is rife across most of the companies that do business in NSW. I believe that the NSW government needs to do its part to get rid of this first problem as soon as possible, and also do as much as it can to fairly combat the second, while respecting the rights of all private companies to legally maintain their own educational values.

I would like to suggest that the NSW government takes the following 10 steps to help fix the skills overload that's currently affecting most (if not all) industries in NSW:

1. Remove all the laws that make it illegal for a person to get a certain job unless they have certain degrees/education/skills/training.
2. Take steps to insure that skilled/trained/educated workers, who are employed when the laws mentioned above are removed, won't lose their jobs to unqualified

workers as a result of the new educational freedoms their employers will gain from the removal of those laws.

3. Enact a law that insures that private companies each have the right to chose their own set of educational values and work according to them.
4. Enact a new government policy of educational equality when hiring and promoting workers in government jobs (i.e. degrees/skills/training are not considered when chosing who will be hired or promoted into a vacant government job, or what an employee is paid), and of preferring companies who practice educational equality when selecting subcontractors to work on government projects.
5. Enact a scheme that discourages private companies from firing an employee because of accidents. This scheme should be followed soon afterwards by another that discourages the use of penalty rates. However, ultimately, private companies should retain the legal freedom to do these things if they wish.
6. Enact a law that says no government employee can be fired due to accidents, nor given a penalty rate.
7. Enact a law that says no accident can be considered a crime, regardless of what any other currant or future law may say.
8. Replace the currant lawsuit system for accidents or honest mistakes with a system of government payoffs for people damaged or inconvenienced by accidents, mishaps or misfortune. These payoffs should be in the same money range as what those people could've sued for under the currant (May 2013) system.
9. Insure that any business (big or small) that doesn't use trained/qualified/skilled/educated employees will recieve the exact same government support (e.g. financial benefits) as businesses that perform the same service(s) and do use qualified employees.
10. Enact a new law that says all companies must be as honest and up-front as possible about the educational policies they work by, whenever asked by potential customers or people interested in working for them.

These steps will certainly be a great help to the people of NSW, helping them to do their part to fix the skills overload problem. However, the culture of educational descrimination that exists in many industries in NSW (as well as the rest of Australia) might still linger, even after these educational freedoms are granted by the government. With that in mind, an 11th step might be required to encourage NSW companies to try out the many benefits of educational equality sooner rather then later:

11. Enact a scheme of government payoffs and/or other incentives for companies that practice educational equality in their hiring, payment and promoting of employees, to encourage them to do their part to eliminate the skills overload and to promote and maintain a spirit of educational equality across the NSW workforce.

Hopefully, if it's needed at all, this 11th step will only be required on a temporary basis. Once they have embraced it, most companies will likely quickly realize the great benefits educational equality offers over educational descrimination, and continue to hold this policy even without government encouragement.

Together, these steps will remove, or greatly reduce the major causes of the skills overload in NSW. They will allow the fine unskilled workers of this state to enter

more of our industries and take jobs, currently unavailable to them, that will give them much better opportunities to provide NSW workplaces and communities with the amusing and memorable rewards that naturally come from their unskilled workstyle. Fixing the skills overload will benefit the lives of all NSW citizens. It will greatly increase the amount of these amusing and memorable stories that we either personally achieve, personally watch, or at least hear about. It will make life in our state far more interesting and worthwhile, and I have no doubt that this will help make NSW a happier, more friendly and more respectful society.

To summarize, from my point of view as a citizen of NSW, with various professional and personal connections to other NSW citizens who work in many different industries, there doesn't seem to be a skills shortage in NSW at the moment, there seems to be a severe skills **overload**. I believe the NSW government needs to acknowledge that this is the real problem with the skills situation in this state, so that it won't enact any schemes that will make the problem worse. I ask that the state government takes action as soon as possible to fix this problem, and I suggest it does so by allowing and encouraging a spirit of educational equality across the entire NSW workforce.

Thank you for reading. I hope you seriously consider this submission, as well as all the others you receive regarding this troubling issue, and take meaningful steps to deal with the concerns that they bring up.

Kind Regards,

Chris Hamill
NSW Citizen & Voter

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