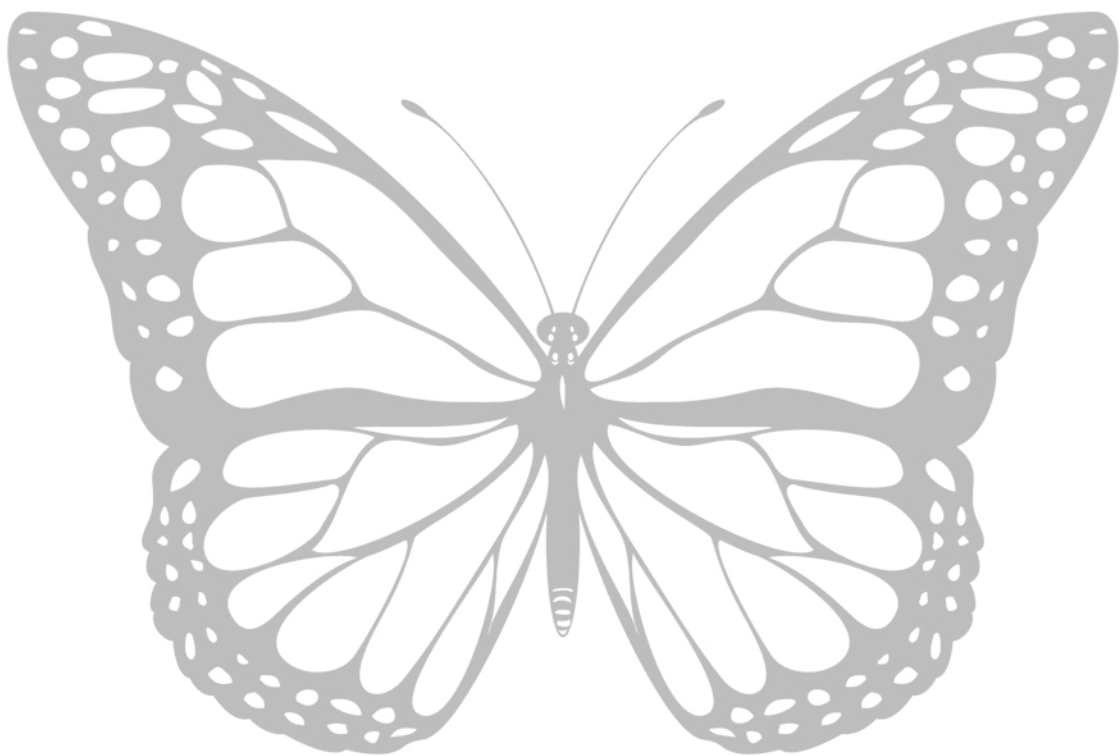


case study

# Design Landscapes



## **the company**

Design Landscapes is an international landscape contracting company with offices in Australia, Hong Kong and China specialising in large scale commercial projects. They take pride in their staff, respect their skills and support their learning and development potential and goals.

With over 90 staff including 20 apprentices, they are continually recognised for their high standards and innovative workmanship - consecutively winning awards for their Excellence in Construction. They have achieved over 50 Awards from the Landscape NSW and ACT and Master Builders Associations over the last few years alone.

Design Landscapes values training as a key ingredient to developing and promoting staff internally and works closely with staff to create learning and development pathways through their career planning initiatives.

## **the situation**

With their business growing at a rapid organic rate, Design Landscapes know their staff needed to be more proactive and involved in the planning as well as the execution of projects. The company needed to ensure that their internal project methodology was understood and adopted throughout various levels of operations and encouraged staff to provide suggestions for continual improvements, based on their practical application. To partner with processes relating to internal methodology, Design Landscapes expect their site managers to have relevant project management qualifications in line with industry recommendations commensurate to the responsibilities of managing multiple works.

In 2010, mbh were chosen as training partners for Design Landscapes in project management and have worked hard to forge a trusted relationship through understanding their business and tailoring relevant “live” training scenarios to ensure that staff who attend are provided the education and support they need to successfully achieve their qualification. Mbh understood that maximum learning outcomes would be achieved for Design Landscapes where studies were modelled around relatable scenarios and experiences built around participant(s) industry

## **training solution**

Design Landscapes identified staff with a mixture of behavioural and skills based aptitudes for project management and their ability to mentor internal staff whilst implementing their projects.

A gap was identified for various managers within the business to undertake Diploma and Advanced Diploma accreditations and to learn new and innovative techniques in project planning and implementation, communication, cost and procurement management.

Design Landscapes staff selected were scheduled onto mbh public courses being conducted across Sydney and the South Coast of NSW. The purpose of this was twofold, most importantly for Design Landscapes to assist with scheduling staff to attend training, whilst maintaining current project workloads without detriment to the business. Secondly, it provided the attendees an opportunity to a cross section of project management practitioners from a variety of industries such as community services, local and state government, civil construction and finance. Participants were able to share their knowledge, experiences, tools and techniques and discuss issues they faced whilst learning new methods and scoping out a project utilising in class case studies. It is however important to note that assignments and assessments were set for participants according to their industry of expertise.

mbh truly understand the time constraints placed on their students during in class learning and recognises that once training is completed, assessment tasks often decrease in priority. Post training, mbh continued to liaise with Design Landscapes to set up one on one follow ups to work with students on their individual workplace assessments. These assessments were focused on actual projects and tools the company was using at the time. Most importantly, the communication between Design Landscapes and mbh training was paramount to ensuring that the staff provided their assessment evidence and had access to assessment staff via face to face meetings, phone and email and achieved recognition of their success through issuing of their qualification.

## **Benefits**

The series of Project Management courses has further embedded a culture of knowledge, learning and skills enhancement to Design Landscapes. Solid cost and scope management has been achieved through robust reporting. Design Landscapes continue to grow and enrol staff with mbh on project management courses. mbh "get it" - they guide and work with Design Landscapes and trainees from pre-enrolment to completion and beyond.

