



**MINTRAC**

National Meat Industry Training Advisory Council Limited

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This publication is supported by Meat and Livestock Australia  
and the Australian Meat Processor Corporation.



National Meat Industry  
Training Advisory Council Limited  
**MINTRAC Scholarship Program**

E M P L O Y E E U P S K I L L I N G S C H O L A R S H I P

## Phil Cranney

### **MINTRAC Employee upskilling scholarship 2005**

**Supply Manager to Sales**

**Fletcher International Exports**

**Qualification: Graduate Certificate in Agribusiness**

**Tertiary Institution: University of Melbourne**

#### *The scholarship*

MINTRAC's funding has been essential in helping me undertake my studies. Without the funding provided, I would not have entertained the option of studying while working full time.

Given that the finances were organised, I could concentrate on doing my studies without worrying about meeting the financial commitment of higher education studies as well as a young family. This was a critical factor in gaining my family's support to study while in full-time employment. While I sacrificed much family time in order to complete my studies this year, it was made a great deal easier since there was no drain on the family's finances.

Knowing that the company and the meat industry had invested a great deal of money and time in my education, there was sufficient incentive to apply all my available resources to the course. This vote of confidence in my ability and potential provided the drive for me to do the best for the meat industry and the company.

#### *Personal benefits of the study*

Personally, I gained a great deal from the study. New knowledge learnt, seeing the results of my hard work, and the interaction between students were all factors that contributed to my personal growth.

The *Leadership in Agribusiness* subject gave me the confidence to speak in front of groups and the knowledge and skills to develop a presentation.

The *Financial Management for Agribusiness* subject helped me develop a personal investment plan and analyse the financial health of my family's business.

Gaining a 87% mark in *Economics for Agribusiness*, gave me a boost in confidence to follow and finish the Graduate Certificate with a higher level of enthusiasm.

*Marketing Management for Agribusiness* made me realise my flair for marketing and I consequently moved into sales for the company.

Overall, my confidence to attack tasks was increased significantly.

#### *Benefits to your company*

Fletcher International Exports has gained a great deal from my studies. Improvements in knowledge, skills, and application have translated to benefits for the company.

Although I was unsuccessful in attaining the position, the Leadership course gave me the confidence and skills to apply for a Manager's position. The company now has options for future appointments and increased competition for advertised positions within the company.

I was able to suggest some changes to our internal investment policy, having developed certain skills and knowledge from the financial management subject. The company now has a template for future internal investment decisions, such as machinery acquisitions and other capital works projects.

A further understanding of Economics has given me the skills to assess the profitability of sections of the processing plant. While I have not used these skills to date, I am more than happy to apply this new skill to help the company's sustainability.

The marketing subject has lead to me moving into sales for the company, and therefore giving the company's sales team more depth and possibly new ideas for the marketing of a range of different products.

In summary, my personal growth, as a result of my studies this year, has resulted in some major benefits for the company now and into the future.

#### *Benefits to the meat industry*

The benefits to the whole meat industry are not obvious on the surface. However, a more skilled workforce should translate into a more competitive industry.

Feeling the need to give back what the industry has given to me, I am more likely to become involved in industry issues or working parties for the greater benefit of the whole meat processing sector.

Exposing MINTRAC scholarship holders to work practices in other industries, will have major positive flow-on effects for the industry. For example, through my study of Warrnambool Cheese and Butter factory in the Financial Management subject, I can see where the meat processing industry could learn from the massive restructure experienced in the Dairy industry, in particular milk processing. I believe this particular course gives the student excellent exposure to best practice procedures in other Agribusiness industries, or at the very least, learning opportunities from business misadventures.

#### *The future*

My future plans are to continue my study and finish the *Masters in Agribusiness*. My better than average marks achieved this year is a credit to our company and MINTRAC for having the foresight to allow a full-time employee to study.

I have already had one promotion, and will continue to strive for higher management positions within the company. I will work to apply every aspect of the course to my work environment in order to improve our competitiveness in the market place.

I wish to leave a positive impression on not only this company, but the whole industry.

#### *Suggestions*

I believe that the recent emphasis on maintenance improvements will certainly pay dividends if the industry can retain these employees after they obtain their qualifications. This move is very encouraging, as the demand in competing industries for people with these skills is strong and every endeavour to increase the skill base will be a positive for the industry.

I have had no problems with the actual scholarship scheme and believe that it is working very well for people involved in the program within this company.