

Employers go for diversity

MORE and more employers are trending towards a diverse apprenticeship age range to improve productivity and life skills, according to Sarina Russo Apprenticeship Services general manager Mark Berlese.

Mr Berlese said more mature and mid-career apprenticeships had great advantages for younger apprentices and created a more balanced and stable workforce.

“Electrical specialists Stowe Australia realises their business needs to explore new ways of meeting their skill demands, which is why they employ apprentices ranging from 16 to 43 years of age,” he said.

Stowe Australia’s apprentice coordinator Duncan McKenna said recognising the value of older workers and age diversity was a sound business strategy.

“We believe adapting your business to an ageing workforce will translate into significant savings in recruitment, training and productivity,” he said.

“Our mature-aged apprentices bring with them invaluable skills that have a positive influence on our young apprentices.

“Our mature-aged employees go the extra mile. They stay in the job longer, are absent less and are a stabilising influence at work.

“Their maturity, loyalty, ability to make informed decisions based on life experience, helps the younger kids deal more effectively with different people and different workplace situations.”

Sixteen-year-old apprentice electrician Matthew Dixon, of Victoria Point, said he loved his trade and was thankful that Stowe Australia gave him a go.

“I love a challenge and I’m determined to prove that I’m the best apprentice electrician that I can be. It’s also great to have older apprentices around like Darryl Butcher to give me some extra advice and guidance,” Matthew said.

Forty-three-year-old apprentice electrician Darryl Butcher said he had a lot of valuable skills and life experience to offer Stowe Australia and believed if you had a can-do attitude you would come up trumps in



SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD apprentice electrician Matthew Dixon, of Victoria Point, is pictured with fellow apprentice at Stowe Australia, 43-year-old Darryl Butcher. Sarina Russo Apprenticeship Services says businesses are tending to employ apprentices from a diverse age range.

the employment market.

“I also get a kick out of helping the younger blokes about the importance of reliability, attention to detail and politeness,” Darryl said.

“These simple things make a huge difference but are often overlooked by many Generation Yers who seem to only be interested in instant gratification.”

Mr McKenna said Stowe Australia contributed to its apprentices’ learning because it understood the need to create an environment where all apprentices were treated as learners, as well as workers.

Mr Berlese said the apprenticeship

system was an effective vehicle for work-based learning and gave people an opportunity to do real work and receive real pay while undertaking training towards their chosen career.

“Employers like Stowe Australia realise to ensure the quality and quantity of tradespeople they need to employ Australian Apprentices and grow their own skilled workforce,” Mr Berlese said.

“With skill shortages being felt across the local business community, mature aged apprentices are an untapped source of employment who have so much to offer employers and younger staff members.”