



## **Report to SITA on the ICT Leadership for Education Managers Course**

July 2009

### **Introduction**

This project, funded by SITA, involves seven secondary schools who are meant to undergo a variety of courses offered by SchoolNet SA. The [ICT Leadership for Education Managers](#), is designed for decision makers at educational institutions and departmental offices. It is crucial to involve and capacitate senior management in leading the adoption of ICTs. In this way the effective use of ICTs becomes a catalyst not only to improved administration but also to pedagogical change.

The modules consist of topics such as the following:

- What school managers can do with ICT
- Management of ICT resources
- Uses of ICT for both administration and teaching
- The school ICT policy or technology plan
- Professional growth scenarios

The schools involved in this initiative were identified by SITA. This course provided the principals and deputy principals at these schools with insight into ICT policies and techniques for ensuring that their computer centres are used effectively and that their ICT resources are well managed.

### **Report on the Training**

#### **Scheduling the training:**

The training was initially arranged to be conducted at the Zenzeleni Community Centre as agreed with SITA. Participants were invited and it was then reported by Zenzeleni that out of their 23 computers, only 3 of them were working well. The venue thus had to be changed to Hilton College along with the dates. Participants then voiced concerns that Hilton College was not part of the public transport route and would thus be difficult for teachers who did not have private transport to attend. Eventually SchoolNet was able to arrange with St Nicholas Secondary School to be the host venue. The dates for the workshop were organized as per initial arrangement, 29<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> of July. Participants were contacted and informed of the new dates and they were happy to go to St Nicholas as most of them live in Pietermaritzburg.

## Training

Twenty one education managers were invited (3 from each of 7 schools). Nineteen were able to attend the workshop.

Upon arrival, the trainer found that the venue was not equipped with a data projector. Further problems were experienced when he tried to share the CD across the computer network. It was decided to copy the CD onto each PC, however not all PCs had CD-ROMs. He then decided to go ahead with the training with some improvisation.

He reported that most participants needed basic computer literacy. He thus had to revert to module 1 which engaged principals in basic computer literacy through the use of contextualized scenarios.



The next day started with the leadership descriptors and the visual ranking task. Participants were divided into groups and produced very exciting and thought provoking discussions. He then allowed groups to update their course workbooks. People with limited experience in ICT, found some questions very



challenging, questions like *“What I can do to develop competencies in my teachers in accessing and use electronic information and communications resources such as the Internet and e-mail, for the benefit of the manager, educator and the learner”*. Some people were arguing how the workshop can expect them to deliberate and lead on these issues in which they also have challenges. They used this point as a reason why it is a challenge for some to fully engage in the deliberations required in [MODULE 2](#) (*What teachers and learners do with ICT*) and [MODULE 3](#) (*How schools*

*manage ICT*). The entire day 2 was spent largely on completing course workbook and related activities.

The last day of training focused on Internet skills and how to conduct searches on the world wide web. The trainer started by introducing people to the internet and he allowed them to use scenarios on the internet so that they could discover different aspects on their own. After this activity delegates were asked to join our [online community](#). This would allow principals to participate in the principals' discussion list. Towards the end of the day they were visited by Janet Thomson (*SchoolNet SA' CEO*) who thanked the principals for taking the positive step.



According to the trainer, despite the problems here and there, the workshop was very successful. People went out of the workshop with the road map that will ultimately lead to ICT integration across the curriculum.

Janet Thomson reported that when she arrived she met the principal of Umthombo at the door who was leaving early due to commitments of some nature. All other participants were busy typing up their evaluations of the training. The room was very quiet and there was a relaxed atmosphere between the trainer and trainees. She spoke to each participant individually and each said that they had enjoyed the training but discovered that there was a great deal more to having computers in their schools than they had at first thought. Some of them said they were enthused to return to their schools and implement some of what they had learnt. None of them seemed clear about the project or details of what was happening and particularly around hardware and connectivity. Most of them complained that they had technical problems at their schools but did not seem to realise that SITA was addressing these problems. She mentioned the conference in September and most participants were able to go to the SchoolNet website and register, which was impressive.

### **Trainee Comments:**

Comments below were extracted from the course evaluation forms.

- Sandile was very helpful. He did a good job. Well done.
- I have gain a lot of knowledge as far as computer is concerned; thank you Sandile.
- More time is needed if you are computer illiterate.
- The workshop was conducted in a professional manner.
- There were some challenges due to the fact that the room being used did not have other tools and equipment required for the course. I have learned a lot which could not be learned at school alone as an individual without a trainer.
- I feel the workshop is an eye opener for the people who were touching the computer for first time as well as refresher course for people who were not using them most often.
- I benefited a lot from this workshop. However, for beginners more workshops should be organised.
- The course was too motivational and I am looking foward to more courses like this one.
- To me this course was too motivational because I last had my computer lessons in 1998, now I have gained updated information which will make me to be able to help other educators.
- The workshop has been very useful to me since it provided me with up-to-date and relevant information. However I feel that more time was needed so as to familiarise ourselves with the skills that we have gained.



- More time is needed for this kind of a workshop.
- The workshop is an eye opener and is very appropriate for our school. The facilitator knows his stuff and is able to pass it to others. However the time allocated was too short especially for us who are beginners.
- the workshop was an eye opener for me the ICT PROGRAMME WILL MAKE MY MANAGEMENT SKILLS EFFECTIVE AND RELEVANT
- This work was very interesting and useful to me and the facilitator was very friendly and helpful.
- Thank you very much SCHOOLNET for scheduled us in to this workshop.
- I would recommend this course of workshops for other education managers because i find the course so useful ; after the course i feel that my computer skills have improved

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the comments above, it is clear that the education managers were very enthusiastic about the training that they received, and that they gained a lot from this workshop.

We would like to recommend that SITA ensures that all of the schools involved in the project are briefed on what to expect and what is the responsibility of the school. Furthermore contact details of the relevant people for hardware support and installation service providers should also be provided. Perhaps a launch event of some kind could be considered. It is also recommended that these schools get hardware as soon as possible in order to put into practice what they have learnt from this workshop.

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