

We build stuff for people.

Starting with self-esteem.



The Hout Bay harbour is buzzing with new life. Craftsmen, inventors, artisans. They've come together. To build all sorts of things for people who need stuff built. But first to arrive were the unemployed. And the homeless. So the craftsmen, the inventors and the artisans taught them useful skills. Which happened to build their self-esteem. And now they work here. So you see, you don't need to go to China. You need to come to 31 Harbour Rd, Hout Bay. That's where your next new idea will be made. And new lives will be built.



Selected by WDC.

Where ideas get made.



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The Employable Nation Project



Maker
Library
Network



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 BRITISH COUNCIL / CONNECTING THE CREATIVE COMMUNITIES OF THE UK AND SOUTH AFRICA



The Employable Nation Project

“Teaching people how to be employable”

Workspace – a playground for creativity

Design Hub | Makerspace | Shared Workshop

Workspace is a public benefit organisation located at the Harvest Centre, in Hout Bay Harbour.

We are dedicated to providing a platform for knowledge and skills exchange across the social, cultural and generational divides.

We aim to provide resources for all people from all backgrounds, ages and abilities to use “making as a tool for empowerment, economic opportunity and the building of social capital

The focus of the facility is to provide a creative space for makers to engage, make and display their crafts. Within that mandate, the members of Workspace are committed to sharing their skills to help uplift disadvantaged people within the Hout Bay community.

Workspace, in conjunction with the British Councils ConnectZA program and local NGOs, formally train people as makers through the TEN program.





The TEN Project was founded on the notion that many school leavers from disadvantaged backgrounds did not have the physical and emotional skills to enter the workplace.

This is largely due to rapid urbanization, breakdown of family and tribal values, absent fathers and emotional/psychological scarring from the trauma of South Africa's past.

Of course the privilege that many other children enjoy with good schooling, early opportunities and tremendous social capital, is not the same with the majority of their peers.

We intended to develop a program that opens up the ideas and the possibility of real life success to the underprivileged child. Our program doesn't promote the idea that "you can do anything you set your mind to" – it promotes solid values and skill equipping that helps the participant realistically select a career that offers them a life, as opposed to just earning a living.

Workspace follows the Business for Development (B4D) model which means that, besides assisting existing artisans, artists and tradesmen to earn a living by utilising their current skills by providing them with the infrastructure, we are evolving our model towards sustainable development where we will train new artisans, artists and tradesmen, thus enabling them to enter the economy.

Whilst we teach traditional practical skills, our focus is on the convergence of traditional skill and hi tech making methods. Everything we teach will start with the traditional method and move towards the high tech alternative.

We understand subjects like coding and 3D drawing as essential future skills, but know that "making" in whatever form, will always be necessary. The convergence lies in software training.

Everything about this training program points the participant towards this fundamental, but allows the scope for the "analog" type.

The practical elements

The program is a total of 28 days but does not have to be done consecutively. The current program is running over 12 weeks at an average of two full days per week.

The program culminates into a dinner event which has been planned from day one of the training under the teamwork component. We continue with the event planning right through the program, alongside other ongoing skills such as computer operation, 3D Design, the playing of Chess/Go and Lunch conversation topics.

The participants will be selling tickets for the event within the first two weeks of the course.

During the course we eat lunch together daily with an invited guest who we serve and get used to integrating with people outside their comfort zone. It's also a chance for each participant to practice their personal sales pitch which we develop from early on in the program.

The course will run from 09h00 to 16h00 on the days as indicated on the program and the following skills will be covered:

Service /Love: through the making of tea coffee and the baking of bread.

Dedication: experiencing the difficulty of throwing a ceramic pot on a wheel.

Reliability: designing and constructing a shoe that will allow one to walk the distance.

Trust: through learning the skill of welding and understanding the trust being implied when driving in a welded car or sitting on a steel chair. We produce a kids steel and wood chair.

Teamwork: from day one, the group is divided into teams and "hybrid teams" and tasked with arranging a for profit public event which is held at the end of the process. The products produced during the 12 weeks of the program are auctioned off on the event night. Proceeds are deposited as seed capital for the participants future endeavours.

Vision: in this module we design and make a metal pendant which is taken from a 2D drawing to a 3D piece. Using 3D printing we construct a mold and cast the piece from copper/ pewter or silver.

Respect: trees are the givers of life, we learn about wood and the associated machinery. The participants construct a wooden bird feeder to their own design

Communication: miscommunication starts wars. We use screenprinting as a method to understand the power of provocative messaging on tee shirts.

Understanding: the single most complicated machine in our workshop is the sewing machine. Designing, constructing and sewing an apron is the objective of this module.

Work ethic: this is linked to our computer module. Participants are taught skills ranging from spreadsheets to 3D drawing. The focus is the ability to work unsupervised through tasks that involve researching Google and using social media. The goal is to see the difference between work and play, but the reward is the learning of computer skills.



Over and above this list, many other subjects are touched upon: Reading and writing Plans, Basic Economics, Social etiquette, Politics and World history. We are trying to build up a generation of adapted, normalized and integrated young people who have become aware of the social nuances and differences between communities.

We see it as teaching the rules of the "game of post modern, first world life"

Some have even described this course as a finishing school. At the end of the course the trainee will be able to make 10 different products which, if he or she doesn't continue onto an FET college, can make at Workspace and sell in our gallery.



Throughout the process, trainees are regularly assessed and interviewed so as to determine where their strengths and aspirations lie, and by using this info we are able to place a candidate in a formal, more focused training course, leading up to a national qualification. At this point we endeavor to place the trainee in an internship program within their chosen industry however, all previous TEN graduates to date, have used the course as a stepping stone for greater things.



More than just a skill

Trainees are included in the day to day running of the program, such as assisting with cooking the daily communal lunch, and cleaning of the shared training facility. All of this is designed to create a sense of pride and respect for their workplace and themselves, as well as promoting a serving heart for their fellow human beings.

We expect a very high level of dedication and quality of attitude from trainees, we want them to be punctual, well turned out, and of a positive nature at all times.

Workspace is also more than just a workshop – it's an exchange where wisdom and experience is passed on, it's an incubator where new ideas and businesses are birthed and it's a network of like minded individuals.





Why now?

THE ROLE of further education and training (FET) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (abbreviated TVET) colleges, now and in the future, is arguably one of the most-talked about topics on the education frontier in South Africa. No socio-political commentary or analysis on higher education and training can be said to be complete without an acknowledgement of the critical role that FETs and TVETS ought to play in addressing the dire skills shortage our country faces, more so in the trade and technical skills arena.

The reality of Hout Bay is that people lack the resources, educational and financial, to get to FET Colleges outside of the area and if they are able to bridge that gap, the further reality is that often, course choice is driven by the wrong reasons.

Workspace and the TEN Project offer the participant a moment to breath and experience some possibility.



In closing

Creating a pool of employable psycho-socially developed individuals will have a ripple effect; through themselves, and into their community, and it will truly make a massive difference to Hout Bay.

Consider partnering with us to afford people the chance to make a real difference in this community. With your help and input and the existing desire for change in Hout Bay, you could make that change happen.



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