

Beyers Chocolates - developing confectionery skills

On any normal day, a billion people around the world eat chocolate, according to a KPMG consumer report that also predicted global revenues of \$117 billion in 2014. While the report states that South Africa is one of eight markets that drives 70% of the world's confectionery growth, Kees Beyers, owner of Beyers Chocolates, believes there is a noticeable gap between European and South African standards when it comes to confectionery training.



Beyers is one of the largest manufacturers of premium boxed chocolates in South Africa, but as a niche player the company has to be responsive, flexible and innovative to capture market shares. One way it achieves this is by providing extensive training and diverse development programmes to all its employees.

"We work in a changing and competitive environment, thus the need constantly to assess our training and development initiatives, needs to be informed by ongoing market and sectoral dynamics," explained Beyers. "We have an internal practice of taking on a number of learners on a permanent basis each year, and given the various core and support departments that make up the company, working at Beyers offers a genuine opportunity to gain a broad base of knowledge and skills that cuts across a number of disciplines."

The company has been recognised, by Food and Beverages SETA, as excelling in upgrading the skills and competencies of its production and packaging staff, and SAQA ensures that internationally endorsed national qualifications frameworks are met.

Long-term vision

Due to the large amounts of training done at Beyers, the staff are able to accumulate the skills required to work in a world-class chocolate factory; however, Beyers has a long-term vision to provide even more opportunities for learning about the art of confectionery.

"We are currently busy with a key initiative to upgrade the skills of our artisan assistants, as well as launching new programmes for supervisory and management level staff. At Beyers we understand the need to transfer not only the skills,

but also the love and passion with which our products are made. It's an ongoing requirement and one which we respect tremendously," he said.

Beyers employs 250 staff full time and 550 staff in season (eight months of the year). Many of its employees have been with the company for an extended amount of time, and the Beyers service awards now start in the 20-year category.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>