

CAROLYN LEBEN



OPEN YOUR CAREER OPTIONS. PROFILE No 6

Course: **Certificate III Electrotechnology**
GTO: **MIGATE Inc**
Host Employer: **XStrata Mount Isa Mines**



Carolyn, you had a different career before. Tell us a bit about that.

I went to Calvin Grove University and studied to be a secondary teacher in commercial mathematics.

In taking on a Mature Age Apprenticeship, what was the biggest hurdle you had to overcome?

Making sure it actually worked for everyone in our family. It had to combine with what we were doing in our lives and not put everybody out.

Were there financial obstacles?

No financial obstacles. Day care for the children was a huge part of it, but not so much that it would actually interfere with progressing my apprenticeship. My husband also works for XStrata and we'd already moved so that he could continue his work there.

And what does he think about this career change that you've had?

He thinks it's wonderful. He's already planning his retirement. Ha ha.

How did you get into electrotechnology?

When the kids returned to school or started school I decided it was time for me to return to work. I wasn't really happy with the idea of going back to teaching and when we moved to Mt Isa we had to renovate our house. From those renovations I decided that an electrical career would be the go because that was one of the things that I couldn't do myself or find someone else to do.

How did a Group Training Organisation assist you in getting the job?

The application process was through Migate, a Group Training Organisation. We were then interviewed by personnel from XStrata, after that I was selected to start.

How does the Group Training Organisation help you on a day to day basis?

Basically if you need any assistance you can go and see anyone at anytime at Migate and say this is my issue, how do I go about resolving it? Apart from that

we start at the beginning of the year with fortnightly meetings with the operations manager. The doors always open to go and see him if I do have any issues.

What do you do now specifically?

With XStrata I'm positioned with two electrical tradesmen who supply water services. We look after the electrical equipment that pumps all of the town's and mine's water.

What's the best thing about your career?

The reason I chose an electrical career was there's many options without actually having to leave the electrical side.

What choices do you have in electrical?

You can do a trade after your electrical apprenticeship. You can do refrigeration, instrumentation or there's radio tech. One thing that I would like to do is instrumentation and from there start my own business and hopefully get into property development.

Has anyone ever given you a good piece of career advice?

Yes, my electrical tradesperson at XStrata. His view is that you're not to be a tradesperson that just fixes something. You should be a tradesperson that fixes something so that it doesn't have to be fixed again. I think that's a good bit of advice.

I think so as well. Good luck Carolyn and thank you.

Carolyn brings a wealth of work and life skills to her apprenticeship training. A key factor in her choice of career change to an electrical trade was the diversity of options available. She sees the ability to embark on new challenges such as taking on dual trades in instrumentation or refrigeration or completing a Diploma of Electrical Engineering as brilliant opportunities.

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