MAINTAINING COMPETENCE IN HIGH-RISK INDUSTRIES

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According to a recent study, there are multiple sectors and roles that lead the way when it comes to high-risk operations and ensuring consistent skills development. Aviation and pilots, logging workers and derrick operators in oil, gas and mining are some of the riskiest and most challenging for employee and employer alike. This makes it critical for companies to ensure that their employees within these industries are provided with the best possible training and support. This not only gives them the skills they need to remain aware, but significantly mitigates risk for both company and employee.

It is this ethos that drove Cranfield Training, a company accredited by the South African Civil Aviation Authority, to invest into modern and relevant training solutions that could provide companies operating within high-risk sectors with a trusted and reliable form of skills development and training. The company, like most others, was directly affected by the limitations of the pandemic. Unable to train physically or provide face-to-face engagements, Cranfield explored alternatives that could provide ongoing training from anywhere at any time, but that would still align with stringent compliance mandates and regulations and ensure that organisations operating in high-risk sectors can train, upskill and support their employees.

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Richard Bosman, Marketing and Logistics, Cranfield, commented: “For many high-risk companies, especially smaller ones, the cost of training adds up, especially if you include transport, accommodation, expenses and then the training itself. This, plus the challenges imposed on the sector by the pandemic, has made it difficult for companies. This is why we decided to work on an alternative training platform that allows for companies to access high-level, accredited training from anywhere – training that meets authority mandates while reducing the burden on the bottom line.”

The investment was double-pronged. On one hand, Cranfield Aviation can offer high-risk companies with courses that come without the expense of travel, accommodation and time away from work; on the other hand, the company can provide consistent and relevant training to individuals that were dealing with the demands of these sectors.

"As many of these high-risk companies have an intense focus on safety over productivity, continuous training is a vital part of any operation, regardless of the person’s capacity or role,” says Bosman. “All individuals have to undertake continuous professional development so they remain compliant, and so they can enforce and manage their own safety and wellbeing. By creating an accessible and scalable platform, we’ve been able to provide trainees with seamless training across multiple platforms so nobody has to compromise on anything, especially their time.”

The Cranfield training platform is designed to accommodate restrictive requirements, is aligned with regulatory authority expectations and is simple and easy to use. Designed in collaboration with aNewSpring learning Management System (LMS) from New Leaf Technologies, it delivers a mix of theory, blended learning and facilitator-led instruction that adapts according to the subject matter, the role and industry-specific guidelines. The platform provides certification even if learners cannot physically attend training and offers a proctoring function that physically films and records the user during assessments. This ensures that certain courses have the physical proof they need to confirm that the person doing the final course assessment is the right one.

The Cranfield training has developed an impressive array of courses that have high-risk employees and organisations at their core. Human Factor Training that’s relevant to the mining, oil and gas, wind turbine energy, transport, medicine, maritime, power generation, manufacturing and production sectors, and provides training and skills where human error can cost lives. Drug and Alcohol Management, Just Culture Training, Communicable Disease Training, and Health, Safety and Environment skills development courses focus on health, wellbeing and physical safety. And Hosting Environment Awareness Training, Hydrogen Sulphide Training, and Automated Safety Audit Checklist Software all provide additional support, skills development and awareness around behaviours and actions within challenging environments.

New Leaf Technologies collaborated closely with Cranfield Aviation Training to implement the LMS and ensured that the final product was easy to use, interactive and compliant. It has been a landmark training platform evolution that has put the company on the global stage and allowed it to compete even more effectively and attracting new markets while discovering smarter ways of improving the materials it has on offer. Using the variety of training programmes, learning activities and practical training solutions on offer from aNewSpring and its eLearning content authoring tool that allows for the organisation to build its own programmes using templates and custom functionality, Cranfield was able to expand its course offering to up 80 unique courses as of 2022, digitise its course content, and provide consistent and successful training of over 3,200 employees for demanding sectors in record time.

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