

Certificate Awarding Ceremony - address by Cllr Mpume Sithole

Programme Director,

Councillors,

Head of Engineering,

Senior Managers present,

Union representatives,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Fellow learners,

Let me take this opportunity and thank you for inviting us to witness the ceremony on behalf of the Mayor of eThekweni. Today is a wonderful day for all of us, especially on the side of service delivery.

As government, we have so much pressure in terms of delivering services however this requires skilled, competent and dedicated workforce. Siyanibongela nonke ngokuzuzisa le lithuba lokuqeqeshwa, ngoba njengoHulumeni ka-ANC sidinga abantu abanamakhono ahlukeni ukuze sikwazi ukuletha izidingo kubantu, ikakhulukazi inqalasisizinda.

South Africa is severely lacking in artisan skills, which has forced the country to "import" thousands of technical skills that are simply not available locally.

In the recent past, government was forced to import 1,000 artisans from Thailand due to a shortage of skilled workers locally. I am speaking about big projects such as Ingula and other power stations, we are forced to import skills.

South Africa has a well-documented skills shortage – particularly in maths and science. While these skills are highly sought after in fields such as engineering and IT, there is also a growing lack of technical skills in the country, such as electricians, welders, mechanics and other manufacturing fields.

Today we are sitting with a huge challenge of Youth Unemployment and unemployed graduates. This could be easily resolved with right skills such as plumbing and welding. As a city, we need plumbers to fix our water leaks problems.

According to Human Resource industry reports, however, there are approximately half a million jobs in South Africa that simply cannot be filled due to a lack of necessary skills. We encourage youth to take up right skills in order for them to get jobs.

I would like to congratulate all of you and wish you luck with all the future endeavours. I hope the municipality will create opportunities internally and externally for you to grow. Please do extend your skills to those who have interest.

Siyabonga, sinifisela inhlanhla nekusasa eliqhakazile. Sithi halala!!!