

Matt King

SPEAKER	CONTENT
WOMAN	Welcome to the National Careers Institute podcast. In this series, we'll hear from some former VET graduates and learn about the pathway they took to get the careers they wanted. Vocational Education and Training is a great way to start, change or boost your career, and there's no time like the present to explore your options. Visit yourcareer.gov.au to find out how to take the next step in your career. And now here's your host, Australia's National Careers Ambassador, Scott Cam.
SCOTT	Thanks for joining us. And on behalf of the National Careers Institute, welcome to our podcast series. If you haven't heard our chats with some of our other VET graduates, make sure you have a listen. Our guest today is Australian VET alumni Matthew King. Matt is a trainer at Swan Trade Training Centre in Perth where he delivers the Pre-apprenticeship Certificate II in Electrotechnology and we'll find out a bit more about that. School holidays have finished. He's back at work. Matt, how are you, buddy?
MATT	Yeah, going well. Really good. Really good to be back and seeing the students' faces, it's always good.
SCOTT	Yeah, that's terrific. Now, you're a sparky by trade. So you've had...you've had a VET training in your past as well. So what made you want to become a trainer?
MATT	Look, I didn't have the greatest time at school.
SCOTT	Mm-hm.
MATT	I think a lot of guys...
SCOTT	Not many tradesmen did, mate. (CHUCKLES)
MATT	No, that's right. So, you know, I went in and it took me a while. I did a mature age apprenticeship. So it wasn't until I was about 25 I felt that I was at the stage where I could take on some additional learning. And I saw the relationship that I developed with my trainers and saw the way that they impacted me and I realised that there's a better way to do stuff. So I really saw an opening there where I could go in and train people myself.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	I'd done a lot of youth work beforehand before I started my trade. So a bit of a combination of my current skill set, basically.
SCOTT	Fantastic. Now, you actually established the course at the Swan Trade Training Centre, which is the only school-based pre-apprenticeship electrical course in Western Australia run by in-house staff. So you started this whole course in Electrotechnology, which you're going to have to tell us a little bit about because I'm not too sure what that is.
MATT	Yeah, look, we were pretty lucky in the round 2 of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program. We were able to get some money to build a training centre and we established it in 2012. And, look, we're pretty lucky to be able to run electrical. You know, in-house staff gives us the ability to be able to cater to what we want to do, our own timetable. We embed our students into our training centre, so they're not just doing their trade, which I'll talk about in a minute, but they also do their maths, English, business course and design graphics with us.
SCOTT	Right.
MATT	Just gives a little bit more flexibility.
SCOTT	Yeah, yeah. That's fantastic. Now, you used to run your own electrical business and you're an electrical contractor for your brother's company. How are you staying relevant if you're not, you know, working too much? How else do you stay relevant, I should say, you know, if you're not working in that full-time? Do you take on other training or you pick up new skills about how your trade is progressing?
MATT	Yeah, look, it's really important and I try and make sure I get all the industry, you know, newsletters and videos and stuff that come out. And I'm pretty lucky to have a wide network of

SPEAKER	CONTENT
	contractors that I can have a chat to and find out what's happening with the industry 'cause it changes constantly, there's new technologies coming through.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	So it's important that we try and stay up to date with what's going on with those things. So apart from doing my own jobs, I make sure I'm, you know, keeping up to date. I also just spent... I did... I took 12 months leave without pay. In the end, only did a six-month stint with FMG up in Port Hedland...
SCOTT	Right.
MATT	..working with their training. And that was really eye-opening 'cause I've never done the FIFO life.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	And it's one of those areas that our students seem to really be wanting to look down.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	So I was really lucky to have the opportunity to go do that and be able to bring back some of those mining elements in, especially on the safety guidelines, actually into our training centre to make sure our students are prepared for when they enter that world.
SCOTT	Yeah. And, mate, just in a nutshell, electrotechnology. Just give it to me in a brief little... What exactly is it?
MATT	Electrotechnology is the pathway to become an electrician, basically.
SCOTT	Right.
MATT	So it's all the foundational skills. Basically, so I've got a Cert III in Electrotechnology. So it just means basically what you do to become a sparky.
SCOTT	So it's a pre-apprenticeship, basically, is it?
MATT	Correct. Yeah. So our students, they do their units that they need to through the RTO that we auspice with, but because of the pre-apprenticeship, they get to do over 200 hours of work experience. So when our students leave here, they've got skills, they know what they're doing and they're able to... be able to talk about the fact that they've been in the workplace. So I think that's really important. That's why the pre-apprenticeship, for me, sort of holds that value because you do have to do that work experience component to pass the course.
SCOTT	You're listening to the National Careers Institute podcast. Our guest today is Matthew King, finalist for the 2019 Teacher/Trainer of the Year. Now, Matt, you've got two young kids. That's fantastic. As a parent, because we talk about this a lot, I think a lot of parents, you know, probably a little bit against going into VET. They want their kids to go into uni. But as we know, the VET training is just outstanding. And I've been through it, you've been through it. Would you, you know, would you push your kids towards a VET qualification?
MATT	Yeah, look, I definitely recommend it and I'm quite lucky, at the moment, my daughter, not as young anymore, she's now 19, she's doing a hairdressing traineeship. So she's going down the VET pathway. And my son's in Year 9 and he's looking at what he can do next year and then Year 11 and 12. I've put to him that I'd like to bring him over to the Trade Centre. His caveat on that was, he said, "Dad, you're not teaching me if I go to the Trade Centre."
SCOTT	Yeah, that's right. (LAUGHS)
MATT	And I said, "No probs."
SCOTT	I think that's fair enough. (LAUGHS)
MATT	Yeah. Definitely.
SCOTT	And of course...
MATT	I think with the VET stuff, it gives students a chance to actually have a look at what they might want to do, especially in the school sense. You know, I think the VET in Schools is an area that we can really give students a chance to develop life skills as well as seeing, "Is this the career I want to go down?" So I really push the school side where I can.
SCOTT	Yeah, and it gives the kids a taste of what's to come. It gives them a taste of whether this is the

SPEAKER	CONTENT
	trade for them and they might move sideways within a VET training course and it's a great concept. The school-based apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeships courses and things like that I think are fantastic. Of course, it's not just for young people, the VET training. Do you have any mature age students who are taking your course at the moment?
MATT	Not through us. We're based in the school, so you need to be in the school age to do it, Year 11 and 12.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	But I did a mature age apprenticeship...
SCOTT	Yeah, outside of your school-based one, within your training facility, have you got mature age people?
MATT	What we do is we do open courses where they can come in and pick up skills. You know, we also run carpentry and metal courses.
SCOTT	Mm-hm.
MATT	So they're able to pick up skills for that area. And we're just looking at what we could possibly deliver through the RTO for external people that would like to come in. But I think trades at any time in life, whether it's young, old, you know, you might as well give it a crack because it just opens so many doors. I mean, I'm a sparky by trade and I'm now teaching inside a school.
SCOTT	Yeah.
MATT	Now, if you said that to people probably back when I started in 2012, they would have said, "No way."
SCOTT	No way!
MATT	Even the school itself had to add a line to the EBA agreement called the trade trainer clause, basically, because they'd never heard of it before.
SCOTT	Mmm.
MATT	So, you know, while I've done a VET course to get where I'm going and did my Cert IV as well to be able to deliver the course, you just don't know where your VET course may take you in life.
SCOTT	That's right. That's right. Now, mate, you were the 2019 runner-up in the VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year Award at the Australian Training Awards. Congratulations on that. What is it about the way you teach that took you to that national stage? Was it just your passion, you think?
MATT	I think the passion and, look, I love my students, I love every single one of them, and, for me, you know, it gives me the option to be able to teach these students that learning... You know, a lot of them come to us and they're sort of a bit browbeaten by school. You know, that they haven't done very well. They muck up. They don't like to sit in the classroom all day, every day. So they come in and they feel like they can't learn. So what I love the most about what I get to do is I get to see these students, they come in to me at the beginning of Year 11 and they leave at Year 12 strong men and women who have got skills, have got confidence in who they are and feel like they can go out there and tackle what the world's thrown at them. So that's probably, for me, the most important thing that I love about it.
SCOTT	Yeah. Oh, look, I just think that's fantastic. And young people who are taking on VET training, they need people like you, Matt. They need people with passion. They need people that really want to see young people, as you said, come as boys and girls and leave as men and women...because of you. And, you know, we thank you for that passion and your efforts that you put in. Mate, thank you so much for taking the time out, for sharing your story with us today. If you're interested in finding out how Vocational Education and Training can help you get the career you want, visit the National Careers Institute website at yourcareer.gov.au . Thanks a lot, Matt. I'm Scott Cam. Thanks for listening.
WOMAN	Thanks for listening to the National Careers Institute podcast. To explore how to start, change or boost your career, visit the National Careers Institute website at yourcareer.gov.au to view the online resources to help you make informed decisions about learning, training and work

SPEAKER	CONTENT
	pathways.