

Big Skills Strategy for Productive Project Execution

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As soon as the London Olympics 2012 were awarded to Great Britain, British Government set up in 2006 Olympics Development Authority (ODA), a body headed by one of the ministers in British Cabinet. One of the considerations before ODA was while organizing the London Olympics 2012 event successfully, it must also contribute to socio-economic benefits to UK, particularly five Host Boroughs. Namely Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Hackney, Newham and Waltham Forest. The strategy adopted by ODA was based on white paper titled "Job skills Futures 2008 which focused on ensuring skilled workforce deployment, increased employment for locals particularly women, disabled persons and minorities by contractors for construction of venues & infrastructure as well as staging the London Olympics 2012, as envisaged in Equality, Inclusion, Employment and Skills (EIES) program.

Skill Development Strategy

The development and execution of employment and skill development strategy for the London Olympics 2012, was done by two organisations i.e. ODA and London Organising Committee of the Olympics and Paralympics Games (LOCOG). ODA was the public body responsible for developing and building the new venues and infrastructure for the London Olympics 2012. LOCOG was a private company responsible for preparing and staging the London Olympics 2012.

While ODA focused primarily on construction related activities LOCOG was responsible for non-construction activities like catering, retail, security, volunteering etc.

ODA Strategy for Employment & Skilling

ODA Strategy aimed at:

- Promote sustainable employment opportunities and boost skills locally and across UK.
- Encourage contractors to pay the London living wage
- Deliver a construction workforce of at least 10-15% from five host Boroughs
- Ensure at least 7% of workforce is made up of previously unemployed before working on London 2012.
- Place at least 2250 people into trainee, Apprenticeships and work placements (upto 2012)
- Bring about change by increasing opportunities for women (11%) and disable people (3%) Minorities (15%)

Training was made integral part of the construction program to meet the current demand of the Olympic Park Construction while preparing for future material needs in major projects e.g. Cross rail, Stratford City, Thames limth and projects in Thames gateway.

For achieving this ODA worked with Learning and Skills Council (LSC), London Development Agency (LDA), five Host Boroughs, Job Centre plus and contractors. ODA followed 2-4-1 principle (two year planning, four year building and one year testing) in achieving its objectives and goals.

Job skills futures the ODA's Employment and Skill Strategy was published in 2008, suggesting that it would deliver 200 training interventions, work placements apprenticeship opportunities. The vast majority of training was delivered and on project rather than through classroom based sessions.

ODA published an integrated equality scheme in 2009 "Everyone" with following objectives:

- Inclusive Design

- Employment opportunities
- Business opportunities
- Community engagement
- Integration & Capability

There were extra efforts to create:

- a) Positive employment, skills and economic legacy for UK after the Games
- b) Create new Job opportunities
- c) Create opportunities for continuing employment
- d) Imposed skills & qualifications for local workforce
- e) Better link between employers and Job seekers

The contracts entered into between ODA & various stake holders reflected the strategies, benchmarks, targets and requirements of "Job Skills Futures & EIES which helped DDA develop rigorous process to support, facilitate and measure the progress of all contractors.

LOCOG - Employment and Training in Non-construction sectors

LOCOG had to receive and train greater numbers, in advance of the event and into proper positions with limited training needs. The activities of LOCOG included , hosting of recruitment events, provide venues and staff aid source candidates, provide pre -employment training to match the requirements.

Employment and skill Managers were active link between the industry and candidates. ESM's were responsible for driving and capturing contractor demand

Olympic Park Construction / Skill forecast (2008-2011)

Phase	Period	Civil Engg	Building	Engg	Construction
1	Aug 2008 - Jan 2009	58%	24%	6%	12%
2	Feb 2009 - July 2009	45%	30%	13%	12%
3	Aug 2009 - Jan 2010	29%	36%	23%	10%
4	Feb 2010 - July 2010	20%	38%	32%	8%
5	Aug 2010 - Jan 2011	15%	56%	22%	7%
6	Feb 2011 - July 2011	42%	33%	12%	13%

Achievements

- 25864 people worked on the park for 5 or more days
- 3559 Training interventions provided against target of 2250
- 2397 Construction skills certification scheme cards awarded
- 671 supervisors provided with be spoke training

457 Apprentices experienced work against target of 350

Table Showing Park and Village Targets and Benchmark Workforce Data

Employee Category	Benchmark/Target Percentage of Workforce	Actual Percentage of Workforce on the Park	Actual Percentage of Workforce on the Village
Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds	15%	21%	13%
Women	11%	4%	3%
Disabled people	3%	1.1%	0.9%
Local residents (Five Host Boroughs)	10-15%	24%	28%
Previously Unemployed people	7%	13%	10%

Table Showing JSF Brokerage Targets and Benchmark Workforce Data

Employee Category	Benchmark/ Target Percentage of Workforce	Actual Percentage of Workforce
Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds	15%	60%
Women	11%	17%
Disabled People	3%	6%
Local residents (5HBs)	10-15%	71%

Success of ODA Strategy :

- a) Collaboration between competing contractors/firms
- b) Women engaged in construction projects
- c) High number of apprentice engaged
- d) Active art reach programme - motivating to youth on construction sector
- e) Attitude change
- f) Diversity & Inclusion - Good representation of Diverse workforce - Gender, Race, Disability, Locals
- g) Sustainable workforce for future projects.

Lessons Learnt:

- a) Having a dedicated team with single point of contact was useful in achieving targeted training interventions which helped in satisfying contractors needs and ODA's aspirations & objectives
- b) Coordination , partnership , collaboration and communication among various stakeholders was key to success
- c) Flexibility of funding regimes helped in getting on the ground and delivery of ODA's objectives
- d) Valid workforce data and ability to forecast trade and number requirements with regular monitoring of progress was critical
- e) Making the links between equality, inclusion, employment and skills helped improving benchmarks and targets significantly.

Applicability of Big Skills Model :

- a) Infrastructure Projects including Smart Cities, Housing Complexes, Highways, Airports, Railways, Bridges , Roads and Ports.
- b) Mass Skilling of youth for employability
- c) Mass up skilling of workers for high end projects.
- d) Mass Skilling for employability of Local / PWD/ Women/ Unprevidged Groups.