

EPPP-TV Episode 8 Transcript

Jazmine Huggins:

Hello, and welcome to the final episode of EPPP TV for the year. I'm Jazmine Huggins, and I want to say congratulations to you all on making it through 2020. It's definitely been a challenging year, and I can understand why a lot of people are keen to put 2020 behind them. That's why we're looking to the future today, and being EPPP TV, we're going to look at how vocational education and training, or VET, is going to play a huge role in training tomorrow's workers.

Jazmine Huggins:

Our first guest today is Charles Brass, a futurist from Futures Foundation in Melbourne. Yep, you heard right. He gives thought to the forces and trends which are shaping Australia's future. We're going to sit down with him for some rapid fire questions on the future of work. We'll also be meeting Tyrone and Maddie, two former VET students who are currently setting themselves up in the careers of their dreams. We'll head to Western Sydney and find out about robot wars and what they have to do with one of the rapidly growing industries of the future.

Jazmine Huggins:

First up, let's say what Charles Brass has to say about the future of work.

Charles Brass:

G'day. I'm Charles Brass, a futurist with the Futures Foundation, whose business is helping people engage more effectively with the future.

Charles Brass:

The biggest change has been happening now for 30 or 40 years and it continues to happen, and that is that the range of options that people face when they enter the workforce is vastly greater than it was 30 or 40 years ago.

Charles Brass:

When you are presenting yourself for work, you need to demonstrate a degree of confidence, self-awareness, resilience, all of those skills that let an employer know that you're someone they actually want in the workforce. A recognition and awareness that the future is not staying the same, things are changing rapidly and you have to be prepared to be sufficiently adaptable, sufficiently resilient, sufficiently aware of the circumstances of that you're in, that you can personally respond.

Charles Brass:

I want to ask people listening to this to think about the world that they already occupy. Look around yourself and ask yourself what is there that you can see in the world around you that needs doing that is not currently being done. That's the way to look at industries of the future. I tell you from my experience, here's what I think you're going to find when you look around yourself and say, "What can I see around me that I reckon we ought to be doing that we're not doing?" When I think about the industries in the future, I think about this. There is no shortage of stuff that we reckon needs doing. We just have to find a way to get it done. I bet there are people listening to this who are thinking about this and saying, "Yeah, I can see stuff that needs doing and I want to do it."

Charles Brass:

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The truth is, things that are not humans, things that are not people, have been coming for jobs for over 200 years. Most of the stuff that needs doing needs some human involvement somewhere, and that's the challenge for us. It's not so much that robots are coming to take our jobs. Yes, they are. We're trying to find all sorts of ways for very good reasons. Lots of the early jobs were very dangerous and very boring. We'd love to get rid of dangerous and boring things, but the challenge for us is to say, how do we interact with those robots in such a way that there's still something useful for us to do where we can make a difference? The effect is, in almost every job, there is that opportunity.

Jazmine Huggins:

Thanks for that insight, Charles, and for giving us a lot to think about when it comes to the future of work. As we've discussed in previous episodes on EPPP TV, trades are a continuing source of lots of jobs for young people. Last episode, we had a look at the construction industry and the role that's going to play in our economic recovery. While there are a lot of great opportunities and a variety of options if you are interested in training in a trade, that is not the only path that VET offers. Let's meet two people who are building successful careers in very different industries.

Tyrone Pynor:

My name is Tyrone Pynor and I currently work within media, more broadly, but specializing in radio ops and broadcast ops. I present, playing music, talking about the music, and within broadcast ops I'm working with cameras, doing a lot of filming productions and news gathering.

Tyrone Pynor:

During the last years of high school, I got offered a traineeship, a school-based traineeship. It was in the business sector, business studies, or business services, sorry, and it meant that I had to work at a bank one day a week and study for two years doing business services. That was fine, it was something at the time that I knew I wanted to do, I knew I wanted to try, and it was a source of income for 16-year-old Tyrone. I mean, any kid would love the thought of being paid to go to study.

Tyrone Pynor:

I had gotten to a point where I was graduating from my traineeship for business services. At the graduation ceremony, I'd given a speech and I was quite open about how I'd fallen in love with creative media in general and that maybe business wasn't actually for me. It was great that I spent two years during high school, if any period of my life, during high school, that I'd spent these two years working within the business sector.

Tyrone Pynor:

An opportunity presented itself that night of my graduation. A man from SBS approached me and he just asked, "We have this position going, would you be interested?" It was such an easy decision for me to be like ... It was the creative pathway for me because that was the itching bone in my body that I needed to scratch. I stepped into my role at SBS, a 12-month traineeship, six of those months I studied a Cert IV in Screen and Media and the other 12 months I was working there full time. After that, I got offered a position to be a junior cameraman, which I loved. It was where I wanted to be at the time and it just made sense.

Tyrone Pynor:

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I did that, and being within the SBS building, I think you make so many connections. Being around for two years now I would have been there, I found my feet, I found connections, the workplace is beautiful, I was comfortable enough to pitch a music show. I pitched a music show and they ran with it. I started a music show online, on socials, hosted, produced, directed shot some of it.

Tyrone Pynor:

I think my whole journey in general is just a big surprise to me. I mean, I continue to surprise myself every day with the opportunities I get and what the world presents me and where I end up and some of the key learnings. I mean, learning to know my self-worth I think has been the best thing I can take from this journey thus far, is just knowing what my skills are worth, constantly learning to trust in your process, back yourself all the way, and seize every opportunity. Every opportunity that comes your way, take it with open arms and run, just run with it.

Maddison Camilleri:

Hi, my name is Maddison Camilleri and I am a structural drafter at SCP Consulting in Sydney. I studied my traineeship through TAFE New South Wales. I studied a Certificate IV in Civil Construction Design.

Maddison Camilleri:

A structural drafter is someone who draws up the plans for buildings. The word drafter, that's where it comes from, we're drafting up the plans that buildings are built from. Structural just means that I specify in structures, so I'm looking at the parts that hold the building together, like columns and slabs.

Maddison Camilleri:

What I started with was I did a VET course during my HSC, and I did that in interior design because I thought that's what I wanted to do. Through that VET course, I learnt a lot more about interior design and discovered that it wasn't exactly what I wanted to do, so then I went back to the drawing board. The reason why I loved interior design was because I loved floor plans, I always loved looking at floor plans, and so I learned a lot more about the people who actually drew up the floor plans, and they're drafters. That's how I came across the job that I have now.

Maddison Camilleri:

I finished my HSC and then I applied for a traineeship doing structural drafting and I got it. Then from there I went to TAFE and then studied. I'm now continuing my study outside of my traineeship and doing a diploma of building design. That means that I'm focusing more on architectural drafting rather than structural. I work full time, five days a week, and then I'm also studying part-time as well. It is a full-time course, but I manage to squeeze it in during my travel time and on weekends. But the thing that I love most about my job is the variety of different jobs that I get to work on. This week I'm working on a defence job, but last week I was working on a residential job and a school. It's a variety of different buildings and that's what I love most about it.

Maddison Camilleri:

I think the biggest thing that surprised me was that I have grown a lot as a person since starting my traineeship. I've become a lot more independent, a lot more confident in myself. Another thing that also surprised me was the construction industry and how it's more of a male-dominated field. I knew going into it that it would be hard, but times have changed and there are a lot more women. I work with a fair

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few women in my own personal team and I think I want to encourage more young women to join as well.

Maddison Camilleri:

The biggest piece of advice that I would give to my high school self is it's okay if you don't want to go to university, there are other options, there are other pathways. You can get a successful career out of a traineeship or an apprenticeship and there are stepping stones. University can be something in the future, but it doesn't have to be exactly what you do after your HSC. I think success is hard to define because everyone defines it differently, but for me, success is looking back on your day and thinking, have I made an impact on the world and am I happy with that change.

Maddison Camilleri:

One of the biggest challenges for me was coming out of being a small town country girl who lives on a farm and joining a career in the construction industry, which I knew nobody personally within the industry. It really helped me come out of my shell, and the way I did that was through my traineeship and finding an excellent employer.

Jazmine Huggins:

It's great to see people succeeding in their chosen fields and benefiting from the hard work they've put in. Maddie and Tyrone are proof that that can lead to some pretty interesting career pathways outside of the traditional trades.

Jazmine Huggins:

One of the awesome opportunities offered by the EPPP is the Youth Engagement Strategy PLUS program, or YES+ for short, delivered by TAFE New South Wales. This initiative allows you to take part in vocational taster courses in lots of different industries, from automotive to fashion and landscaping or digital media. There are taster courses to suit all your interests. One area which is super interesting is robotics, and today we're going to head to TAFE New South Wales Miller campus to meet some students who are currently taking part in an information technology and robotics course and find out what they're learning and what kinds of jobs that they can apply these hands-on skills to.

Sean:

My name is Sean. I am currently in year 10 and I go to Campbelltown Performing Arts High School. Pretty much the YES+ program, it's a taster course. We do three different courses. We currently just did electrical, we just finished IT and robotics, and now we're just moving on to carpentry.

Sorin:

In my robotics class, we have been doing it for ... This is our third week on it. We have been focusing primarily on programming these Lego EB3 bots, and also looking towards career paths and opportunities that we can take towards our robot-making dream jobs, stuff like NASA or even working at Woolies as the automation for the production.

Colin Tyrrell:

I'm Colin Tyrrell. I'm actually head teacher of IT at Blue Mountain's TAFE New South Wales College. I'm here as a visiting teacher with the robotics program, part of the YES+. Is robotics science fiction, is it real

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world? Good question. Today, we have real thing. You have the Tesla self-driving car. It's a robot by all stretch of the definition. You have those little vacuum cleaners that go through the house, it's robotic. You have automated robots in the auto industry making the cars. In fact, the car today is virtually totally made by different robots. In Sydney here, we've got the big projects by Woolworths and others making the automated warehouse. It's all automated, it's all robotic. They're the jobs of the future.

Sean:

Through the course, I've learned how to use the software, how to program, how to control the robots with the software so we don't actually crash into things. We've also played around a bit with color grading using the color sensor on the robot to detect color so it stops automatically.

Colin Tyrrell:

My aim of my part of it is to engage them in an aspect of life that's ever increasing. Automation, robotics is taking over the world, to quote someone else, but they're all going to be affected by it. Everything I do in there is directed at here's a real life example. One of the challenges they had is they had to spray an orchard by going up and down [inaudible 00:15:10] orchard through rows of trees and not taking out the trees. The other aspect of it's been, well, one day they're trying to get to Mars so how are you going to drive around Mars when you can't remote control any [inaudible 00:15:22] from here to there because it's nearly an eight-hour turnaround time. I try and put everything in a real world aspect.

Colin Tyrrell:

Vocational education is so important. We see a lot of people go through uni and then come back through TAFE New South Wales to do more hands-on stuff. That's computer science students who'll come back, graphics art students who will come back, they'll come. Unis, there's a lot more theoretical, they're changing, but vocational education is all about getting the students prepared for in the workplace, in dealing with clients, dealing with the employers, finding work, how to find work, how to progress through that work structure. The Youth Engagement program, it's all about getting kids involved in something they may not have thought about, so giving them an opportunity to get out there, whether it be electrical, whether it be carpentry, whether it be robotics. Robotics is just an arm to get them into something like programming or get them interested in skills that they didn't even know they were going to get.

Sean:

I was interested in mainly because, technically, IT isn't just all codes and stuff. You can also learn a lot of hacks from using shortcuts. I make music myself, so I thought if I took the IT I'd probably be able to implement my skills and knowledge from this course into making music.

Sorin:

A lot of them times, even here, it's still good that they told me stay in school, keep learning your subjects, take your IT subjects because a lot of the time with the robotics, it's mostly being on the computer, learning how to use CAD softwares and getting to that. Once you get your diplomas or you get your certificates, then in my sake, what I want to do is I want to get into an electric technology career and then try and branch out from there, see if I can get into an engineering, and then just go hop from one place to another, to another, up until I can get enough experience to hopefully get to my dream, NASA.

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Jazmine Huggins:

How awesome is that? If you'd like to try your hand at something like robotics, speak to your careers advisor about the TAFE New South Wales YES+ taster courses.

Jazmine Huggins:

Well, that's a wrap our final episode of EPPP TV for the year. Thanks so much for joining me as we've explored vocational education and training and some of the awesome opportunities it can lead to. I'd also love to thank all our wonderful guests who've shared their stories and experiences with us over the year. It's been really inspiring, and I think it's fair to say that we've all learned a lot. For now, enjoy the summer holidays, stay safe, and don't forget to give some thought to what you might like to do with your future. See you next time, guys.