

CENTURY BOTTLING CO

TRAINING TO GAIN



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Century Bottling Co invests heavily in personnel training and development and has been rewarded with the Employer of the Year Award by the Federation of Uganda Employers, as well as improved productivity and staff morale

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Century Bottling Company (CBC), headquartered in Kampala, Uganda, is understandably proud to have received an Employer of the Year Award 2011. CBC won the award from the Federation of Uganda Employers ahead of stiff competition from all the top organisations in the country, from banking, manufacturing, telecommunications and other production and service sectors.

“We won the Gold Award for Excellence in Human Resources,” says Moses Mbubi, CBC’s country HR manager. “The particular citation was for ‘Talent Management to Maximise Productivity.’” The examining committee reviewed the company’s total development process, from the management of the newest recruits up to senior executive level.

“Our managing director has to review our talent management strategy himself. For each employee, we identify skills and development requirements that are flexible, core and critical,” Mbubi explains. “Individuals receive different support, depending on their needs.” The company guards against its talent pool becoming exhausted by aiming to always have two people ready to replace any role, from middle management upwards. Employee motivation strategies include profit share, as well as career development. CBC recruits new people as they leave full-time education, at around 22 years of age, so even new arrivals working on the line will have a mechanical engineering diploma.



CBC's managing director and the minister of Education and Sports lay a stabilised soil block for a tank at Misindye Primary School

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“Our investment in in-service training and development covers both technical and managerial skills,” he continues. “We spend 0.4 per cent of net sales revenues on training; that now amounts to over US\$500,000 a year. The more product we sell, the more resources will be available.” Training people to a high level will inevitably mean that they become attractive to competitors and other employers, but CBC has strategies in place to retain its key staff.

“Our Talent Development Committee classifies talent, accounting for

critical skills, core labour, flexible labour, and so on,” Mbubi explains. “People with critical skills are those we really want to keep. We hire five or six people for our graduate programme, every other year, who we expect to develop and grow into supervisory and managerial roles over four or five years.”

0.4%

Amount of net sales revenues CBC spends annually on training

The value of the strategy becomes apparent as soon as CBC’s figures are considered. The company was established in 1986 and was acquired by South Africa-based Coca-Cola Sabco in 1995. That year, it sold three million unit

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cases, each containing 5.678 litres (1.5 US gallons) of product; in 2011, sales reached 26 million unit cases.

“Sales have grown strongly over the past five years, at between five and 10 per cent,” says Norton Kingwill, who has been with Coca-Cola Sabco for over 20 years and was appointed managing director and country manager of CBC within the last year. “We have two bottling plants in Uganda, in Kampala and Mbarara. We have around 700 permanent employees and we flex our personnel up to around 1,000 to meet peak demand, in the festive season in December.” He reports that growth has been driven by a number of factors, including Uganda’s growing population and economy, improved market penetration and CBC’s move into products beyond its core brands of Coke, Fanta and Sprite.

“We have been able to encourage people to drink more carbonated beverages but we have also moved into

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26 MILLION

Unit cases sold by CBC, 2011



Guests share a light moment at the launch of the Coca-Cola and UN Habitat RAIN (WASH) project for eight schools in Uganda

100 per cent juices and ‘designer’ waters,” Kingwill says. Altogether, the company has around 30 SKUs. Growth required investment in increased capacity, which has come in the form of both new plant and business improvement. “We built two new ‘greenfield’ plants and increased our production capacity and, two years ago, we opened a new Kronos PET bottle line.

Previously, our entire product was sold in returnable glass.”

A second PET line will be commissioned in October 2012, increasing manufacturing capacity by 80 per cent. The switch to PET has been primarily driven by consumers’ desire for convenience. Energy advantages in production are not clear,

“WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO DRINK MORE CARBONATED BEVERAGES BUT WE HAVE ALSO MOVED INTO 100 PER CENT JUICES AND ‘DESIGNER’ WATERS”



Boreholes being handed over to the community

although the disposable bottles obviously save expenditure on washing and cleaning. But PET is not without challenges; plastic bottles are sometimes referred to as the ‘bloom of Africa’. Uganda as a country and CBC as a company are at the forefront of efforts to increase recovery and recycling of used PET bottles.

“We were the first company to set up collection centres for PET bottles,” says Maureen Kyomuhendo, head of public affairs and communications. As well as being environmentally responsible,

700

Permanent CBC employees

the collection efforts enable Uganda’s poorest citizens to generate an income for themselves, by collecting PET bottles in their neighbourhoods and further afield and selling them into the recycling industry.

“Our two collection centres have weighing scales and provide collectors with protective gear, such as gumboots and gloves, and with bicycles for transport,” she explains. The importance of this initiative cannot be over-emphasised; income from plastic collection can make the difference between starving and eating properly. The




Managing director Norton Kingwill pauses with some staff soon after receiving the Employer of the Year Award

project is about empowerment, as well as environmental responsibility.

CBC is driving to become 'water-neutral', through the recycling of 'grey' water, reduction in water usage, and replenishment programmes in the community. The Coca-Cola System has contributed US\$30 million to RAIN (Replenish Africa Initiative) in Africa; in Kampala, the direct impact is to improve access to fresh water for 15,000 urban poor, through installing 145 pre-paid meters and piping. The company is working with eight schools in the country under RAIN 2, to promote water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and together with USAID, CCF and COOPI, constructed boreholes and solar powered water pumps worth US\$500,000 to enable 30,000 Ugandans to return to their homes after the civil war in three districts of Dokolo, Lira and Amuria.

The company is also involved in health initiatives such as HIV/Aids prevention, and the Nets for Life anti-malaria initiative in partnership with Standard Chartered Bank and the Church Of Uganda. For Century Bottling Company, corporate social responsibility is not just a paragraph in the annual report—it is a way of life, one that, along with its employee development strategies, wins increased business, as well as awards. **BE**



Some of the new bicycles handed over to a new PET collection centre to ease transportation of PET

For more information about Century Bottling Co visit: www.cocacolasabco.com



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