

Training a Cost or an Investment

How do you view training and development in your business?

Do you need to quantify and measure it? Is the value you place on developing your staff and management purely monetary or is there a greater benefit to the individual and to the organisation?

In a study carried out by the *International Institute of Management Development* **80%** of respondents were unable to quantify the effect of development. Yet millions of pounds are invested, in management development alone, each year in the UK.

It just doesn't add up. It is engrained in all good businesses to test, measure and know their numbers. So why spend millions without knowing the result.

So what is the value of training? Many organisations say they now agree that their work force is their greatest asset and so investing in their development is both necessary and worthwhile these organisations place a high value on training. However, some still see training as a necessary interruption to work and productivity and place very little value upon it.

The fact is that the value of training is and always has been difficult to measure. However we find that in organisations which place a high perceived value upon development the real benefits are far greater than in those organisations which do not.

Changing the perception of training in an organisation is like changing any cultural belief but it can be done by ensuring that the true value of this work is communicated clearly and openly for all to see.

But as we all know saying something has a value is not enough it has to be demonstrated, so how do we do this? Well quite simply by changing the approach we have to what training and development is and why we need it.

Here's a thought! Why do training just because everybody says it is the way to develop and motivate yourself and your staff, increase production, keep up with the Jones's what ever reason you think of.

Why not start at the other end. What is it you are trying to achieve? What does your business need?

Improved staff retention, better skills to get better results, what ever it needs find that out first. Then start thinking about the solution.

Here are some questions you should be asking yourself

How does your organisation currently identify a training need? Who identifies the need and who is it communicated to and how is it communicated? Once identified how is that need met, do you look for the most convenient and cost effective course and supplier, do you select the course which uses the latest trend and buzz words or do you select the one that is the closest match to the need you have identified?

Once the training has taken place what processes have been put into place to integrate the new learning into the business and to radiate it out into the wider organisation as is necessary?

However you currently manage this process the key is how effective is it, who benefits from the training and development – the individual, their team or the organisation. If the answer is not all three then the process you currently follow does not add true value.

More importantly do you have a way of measuring it? If you don't know what you want to achieve how will know if it works.

The Jedi way is to begin with the end in mind. Before a training need is identified time must be invested to find the true business or personal objective. Only then can the exact purpose for the training be agreed, how will it benefit not just the individual but the wider organisation. What outcome is to be achieved and how will this be measured and implemented. Will a training course be the best solution, if so which one and for whom. We would challenge that it is not important what the course is called and what technique the provider uses – the only important question is will it enable you to achieve the outcome you need.

76% of training doesn't work. It is a convenient distraction and provides a welcome relief from the rigours of "real life".

To change this you must have processes in place to integrate the learning into the workplace after the initial input. This starts before the training begins by making sure it is relevant and supports your business objectives and only finishes when the knowledge and skills that were trained in are habits and common place in the business. Too many times in organisations we hear yes I attended this course, I even have a certificate, but I never had time to put it into practice or it turned out that wasn't the right course for what I needed.

Training courses and workshops don't work, People do. There is no greater waste than that of human potential and unused knowledge.

"To know and not to do is not to know" George K Hardey

At Corporate Jedi we will never get involved in any delivery of any kind unless we know the purpose, the outcome and the process by which it will be integrated. We believe that this method of working will add not only perceived value but true value to the organisation as a whole and what's more the value will be tangible and measurable.

In fact we believe in this so much – we guarantee it!

When you know you are getting a return on your spend that is an investment.

If you would like to discuss the issues and challenges you currently face in your organisation and how this simple yet highly effective approach can work for you then simply call **0870 067 3174** or email **force@corporatejedi.co.uk** to arrange to meet the Jedi.

Helen Leng

Master Jedi

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