

COST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO TRAIN STAFF

Training budgets are usually the first to undergo cuts when an economic recession knocks on the door. Yet having a skilled workforce is a critical element of success for any organisation and company. The importance of training your employees, both new and experienced, cannot be overemphasized.

"Effective training of new employees will ensure a workforce that is proficient, effective and productive. But the importance of employee training doesn't end with new workers. Manager training and development is equally important to workplace safety, productivity, and satisfaction," says Arnoux Maré, CEO of Innovative Solutions Group™.

He adds that it is therefore imperative to not skimp on providing your staff with the right training. "The SMME sector often cuts the training budget when times are tough. The worst thing to do is to bring in a scaled-down training and development programme that doesn't address your employees' needs or doesn't align with strategic imperatives. The cheaper or slightly more time efficient training option is not always beneficial to your company."

Maré offers five practical suggestions on how companies can continue with the development of their staff even through difficult times.

1. In-house training and sharing knowledge

It might not be an obvious approach but the knowledge you require may well be sitting in your own organisation. Sharing information is a very productive and cost effective way to transfer knowledge. Give team leaders the opportunity to host mini training sessions to share their skills and knowledge. You can even call on partners or clients to do the same.

2. Performance management

Regular reviews and one-on-one sessions between managers and employees are very important to gauge the level of training but at the same time also to develop staff without incurring extra costs.

3. Discounts on training

Instead of sending individuals for training, rather look at group training options which could result in a discounted price.

4. Collaboration is key

Do you have contacts in other companies that are facing similar issues? If so, you could consider what opportunities there may be for your employees to spend time in another organisation to learn new ways of doing things and new ways of thinking.

5. Self-learning methods

Online courses are popular choices for self-directed learning. Staff can access the courses from their own desktop at a time that suits them. E-learning is a very efficient way to reduce overheads while at the same time tracking progress made.

These online courses are, however, not an instant fix. You need to put measures in place to ensure your staff responds well to this type of training.

Maré, whose companies employ over 7,500 employees who are outsourced to clients in various industries such as mining, transport, engineering, agriculture and hospitality, says the Group will continue bridging the skills gap in the workplace.

"Our approach is quite unique but has proved to distinguish us in the current market. We are constantly employing a process of learning and growth which in the end benefit not only ourselves but our clients as well. Our main focus is to enhance the current skills of our labour force through various opportunities such as further education, on-the-job training, mentorship programmes and promotion," he says.

Maré is confident that Innovative Solutions Group™ will continue to contribute to job creation and skills development through outsourcing. He projects that the group will show 30% growth for the new financial year and aims to employ 15,000 permanent employees by the end of 2018.