

Things to keep in mind when choosing a training provider

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Many companies see training as a luxury, meaning that it is often one of the first areas organisations cut back on when their budgets come under pressure.



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As much I believe in the value of on-the-job training, there are certain skills and competencies where formal training programmes and courses can deliver an excellent return on investment for the business.

Rather than cutting back on their investments on training when the economy is under pressure, organisations should therefore rather ensure that they're getting quality and value for money from training and education. That starts with choosing the right training provider and courses.

Here are a few criteria that you can use to ensure delivery of quality programmes.

1. Find a reputable partner

When you're evaluating training providers, take the time to investigate their reputation in the market. Ask each provider you are considering for some reference sites, and be sure to contact them to find out about their experiences. This will take five minutes of your time, but may save you thousands in training costs.

2. Choose a specialist

Find out which trainers will be responsible for delivering the training on the courses you are considering, and evaluate their expertise and qualifications in the subject matter. Someone with a strong, proven theoretical grounding is good; a trainer with practical experience in the field is even better because he or she will be able to talk about real-life situations.

3. Fulfil specific training needs

Training is expensive, so be sure you know what outcome you expect from your investment in a course or workshop for an employee. Look closely at the course overview and determine beforehand if it will fulfil your need.

If you are choosing training on behalf of your employee, discuss the expected outcome with him or her. Ask the provider for a detailed course outline and discuss how each topic on the list will cover the employee's training need with him or her before the course commences.

4. Look at the take home value

It's not enough for the training course to deliver practical skills and knowledge that the employee can apply as soon as he or she returns to the office - it must also offer value in the materials the employee gets to take away from the sessions.

Researchers reckon that you remember less than 20% of what you learn during a training intervention. For that reason, a course's value is vastly increased when the employee leaves with reference manuals, online support, and other such tools and materials.

5. Assessing the learner

The topic of assessments can be controversial. Some people believe they unsettle the learner, while others believe that they're essential to the learning process. Whichever side of the fence you sit on, choose a provider that aligns with your needs.

The fact that your training provider has all the right accreditations is not enough on its own to guarantee that its services are of a high quality or that it will meet your needs. Know what you want from the training and do your homework properly to ensure that you choose the right training partner.

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