

Six reasons why training pays off

By [Sandra Swanepoel](#) 9 Dec 2015

Every business with a payroll in excess of R500,000 pays a Skills Development Levy to the government for each employee and can claim back a portion of that amount in the form of training grants. Why leave that money on the table when companies can use it to improve the performance of their workforce? Here are some of the ways that an investment in training can pay off.



1. **Improve employee performance**

The most obvious reason to invest in training employees is that it will help them to become more efficient, productive, effective and informed. Depending on the training, they'll be able to answer technical questions from customers without asking a colleague; more skilled and hence faster at doing their work; better equipped to make good business decisions; or able to add new tasks and duties to their job description.

2. **Retain talent and improve company morale**

Most employees want to feel valued by the company they work for. Giving them possibilities for self-improvement is one of the best ways you can help your people feel that you appreciate their talents and hard work. Offering the right training opportunities to your employees will help you to retain your best talent and improve morale throughout your organisation.

3. **Boost customer service**

One of the best reasons for investing in training and development is the halo effect it will have for customer service. Not only does training equip your people with skills and knowledge to enable them to do their jobs better, it also improves their job satisfaction. Happy employees usually mean happy customers. Whether you're training your people to use your systems more effectively, educating them in ethics or law, or helping them develop softer skills such as negotiation and sales techniques, your customers will benefit.

4. **Comply with regulations and laws**

There are two aspects to consider here. The first of these is that staff may need to be trained in the laws and industry regulations that govern your business so that they can comply. For example, the company's consumer-facing staff might need to understand what the Consumer Protection Act says about customer service, while the payroll team will need constant training to keep ahead of a changing tax environment.

The other point to consider is how training and development can help you comply with employment equity and black economic empowerment codes. A good training and development programme can help you to build a representative workforce that meets the needs of these laws and regulations.

5. Create career paths and succession plans

Your employees will want to feel as though there is a roadmap for their future with your business. By mapping out a training and development programme for them spanning a couple of years, you can help them to plan their career in your organisation. Taking this medium term view of career development for your staff will also help you to create succession plans for key roles in the organisation. Thus, you'll be in a good position to promote from inside the company when a key person leaves or moves up the ladder.

6. Company-wide consistency

Most employees have some gaps in their skills base, experience and knowledge. The more proactive ones will go out and find training and mentoring to close these gaps. Others will rely on colleagues to help them complete certain tasks. Either way, the result is inconsistent performance.

A good training strategy will help harmonise your skills base so that employees can fill in for each other when necessary or work on their own without constant help and supervision from others. A structured programme will ensure that each employee has a consistent approach and set of skills to draw from.

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