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Training is an Investment not a Cost.

The era of professional sport has drawn many comparisons between sport and commercial business, particularly within the area of human resource.

Management within professional sports clubs and commercial businesses realise the need to recruit essential experience, skills and abilities into their respective organisations. Both accept that there is financial investment needed to secure the right individuals with the required experience and talent base. If their recruitment regime is successful, theoretically there will be noticeable results in the performance of their sports team or business.

Unfortunately once the recruiting has been achieved, in many cases the comparisons between professional sports clubs and commercial businesses seem to dwindle, particularly in the area of on-going training and development.

Sporting clubs accept and personify the need for continuous training and development of their team members, irrespective of their experience, past successes or individual talent. Each member of the team is expected to attend regular training sessions to perfect their performance. Even if the team wins a game by a wide margin over their competitors or the team is at the top of the leader's board, they are still expected to maintain a regular training regime. *It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.* J Wooden

On the other hand, commercial business leaders and those who hold the purse strings seem to think that once employed their people should just perform.

When the market is buoyant they claim they do not have need, time or resources for training and when the market is in recession they claim they cannot afford the expenditure. As a result of this approach and particularly during the recent recession, surveys have shown that a large percentage of employees have mentally left the business and are just waiting for the right employment opportunity to come along. Many employees are simply going through the motions and performing to the minimal standard.

There are countless examples of businesses that elected to maintain a realistic training regime during times of recession and as a consequence were able to maintain suitable market share and even grow their market share faster than their competitors as the economy improved.

These businesses were able to retain a high percentage of their skilled workforce, opposed to those companies who had not invested in their personnel through training and development.

Mr and Mrs Sport enthusiast and Mr and Mrs Customer can quickly determine the gaps in performance between their sports team and its competitors or the company they are dealing and its competitors.



Benefits of Training

Learning is not compulsory...neither is survival. W Deming

There are a number of proven benefits for businesses to continue investing in training and development of personnel particularly during a recession:

- Well trained and motivated personnel build value based relationships and generate repeat business with customers. This is a key factor in maintaining customer loyalty!
- As the economy recovers businesses that invest in training will be in a more competitive position to gain market share from those businesses that have severely reduced or even stopped training.
- Having strategic time out for training enables personnel to enhance and perfect their skills, to further develop their confidence and ability to efficiently implement the competencies necessary for the business to be competitive. It beats cutting prices to survive.
- Investing in personnel builds a two way commitment and demonstrates that they are valued at a time when they may feel anxious about job security. It not only builds trust, it also encourages them to perform during these difficult times.
- Through continuing to invest in training now, businesses can avoid any long term skills shortages in their workforce. Many businesses are still recovering from skills lost during the last recession due to lack of investment in their personnel.
- Training increases productivity in the short term, as well as the long term.

Today's Decisions...Tomorrows Realities