

# Training is *NOT* the Magic Bullet...

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## Avoid these five pitfalls to get more out of your staff development.

Seminar leader and writer Paul Karasik points to the findings of *Training* magazine: businesses in the United States spend over \$44 Billion a year for educational programs.<sup>1</sup>

Use *your* training budget wisely by avoiding the following five pitfalls:

### **Pitfall #1: Categorizing Training as solely an investment or cost.**

It's both. Don't look at training solely in terms of "Return on Investment" as most attempts to quantify ROI are inaccurate.<sup>2</sup> Training pays dividends but you don't buy it for a return, you buy it to survive—in this sense, training is a cost.

### **Pitfall #2: Throwing money in the wrong direction.**

For example, if a manager asks to attend a class on disciplining insubordinate employees, it may be a valid need but investigate a little more first. Other courses on team building or managerial skills may be more appropriate.



### **Pitfall #3: Sending under qualified or overqualified employees to training events.**

Make sure your employees have the prerequisite knowledge for the class. Employees won't understand Excel formulas if they don't understand basic math.

On the other hand, don't send employees to a class they could teach BUT BE CAREFUL—employees and employers are more apt to overestimate than underestimate skill levels—especially when the skills were self-taught. It may be a case of "You don't know what you don't know."

### **Pitfall #4: Fantasizing about training's magical fix-it-all power.**

Sometimes the problem may be internal business processes. If your employees are qualified and use appropriate software, the problem may not be a lack of training. Consider hiring a 6 Sigma consultant to evaluate and map your current practices.

Also remember that training sessions cannot always replace difficult remedies such as therapy or termination.

### **Pitfall #5: Assuming your employees will use what they learn.**

Of these five tips, the most important thing to remember is that if employees forget what they learn, your money has been wasted. And most trainees do forget unless management and other team members challenge the trainee to apply, review and share the knowledge.

Whether you train your employees in-house or use outside providers these principles will serve your company well.

## Attention Owners, Managers and Trainers:

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- **Microsoft Access**  
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- **QuickBooks Pro**  
February 23rd

1. Karasik, P. (2005). How to Make it Big in the Seminar Business. McGraw-Hill. Page 3.

2. Dust, B. (Jan. 2004). The Myth of Training ROI. www.gyrus.com. Retrieved November 21st, 2006.