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Why up to 90% of Your Staff Training Could be Wasted...



Would you like to achieve a ten times greater return on your training investment? Silly question, right? Well, the chances are you can do just that because according to the latest research, on average, only ten per cent of every dollar you spend on your staff training is effective.

Ten per cent effectiveness? You wouldn't put up with that kind of performance in other parts of your business would you? Well, get set for this — you probably already do!

In their book, *'Transfer of Training'* authors and researchers, Board and Newstrom, identify that most training is only ten per cent effective. They attribute this to three major reasons:

Firstly, some training programs fit into the category of pure *'enter-train-ment'*. Participants have fun, derive short-term motivation and little, if any, long-term behavioural change.

The second and more serious reason, is that the training is often a knee jerk, poorly prepared response to a recently sighted problem. Whereas it needed to be part of a continuous and planned process for the development of the people being trained.

The third and most interesting (and critical) reason I will give you later. Let's review the first two reasons.

The first reason

Ever been bored while at a conference or training? Of course. We all have. Good presentations fight and even expel boredom. Interesting, interactive and fun presentations get everyone paying attention. Result? When we enjoy it, we remember it and take away more. The trick lies in balancing the learning with the fun.

An inside secret! Picture this scene: I am sitting with a client who has asked me to do a keynote presentation on sales or marketing. How do I find out if training is part of the culture of the company or a Band Aid fix?

Easy! My key question when taking a brief is this: "Apart from my presentation, what other things are you doing in the company to support the sales or marketing message I am delivering?"

The second reason

What is the response over 80 per cent of the time? Looking a little perplexed they answer, "Nothing, that's what you're here to do".

Now, with agreement, I can be of extra

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value and usefulness, by helping to create a development plan to achieve greater results. It helps the client and I really am able to multiply the return on their investment. Everyone wins!

How do you get a far greater return on your investment in training?

Back to Board and Newstrom and the research: They identified the key factors that have the greatest impact on training effectiveness on the manager, the trainer and the participant, are:

- *Before the training*
- *During the training, and*
- *After the training*

These influences were, like many things, obvious when pointed out. They put these factors together and created the matrix on the opposite page.

The top three factors

I have shown this to many managers without the ranking numbers filled in and asked them to identify the top three factors for training effectiveness.

The most important factor they normally choose, is *the Participant during the training*.

Makes sense, doesn't it?

If the Participant pays attention and gets involved in the program, then the training will be effective. However, in the research, *the Participant during the training* came in numbers five, six and seven out of nine.

Did that surprise you?

Their study revealed that the top three factors in order are:

1. The Manager before the training
2. The Trainer before the training, and
3. The Manager after the training.

Essentially, they showed that the most important person in making training effective was the manager both before and after the training.

(Email me for a more complete copy of the matrix. It's free and fascinating reading and includes what managers and trainers must do to be effective and maximise their investment in training).

The third reason

I promised you the third reason was the most critical and the most interesting. Here it is:

Managers, although central to training effectiveness were, in the vast majority of cases, totally ill-equipped to be highly effective.

Why?

They were managers not trainers. Yet, no matter what the business, managers are expected to teach and coach!