

Does Your Training Pay For Itself?

If not, why not? asks training design expert **Philip Sweet** who explains everything in his controversial new book.

We find it bizarre as training and organisation development specialists that so many individuals and organisations are paying for training that is designed so poorly that it costs money!!! This surely has to be madness!!!

If you look at most learning programmes, return on investment is nowhere in sight. It is almost as though training commissioners and providers are colluding in the maintenance of culture of poor performance.

“Well, it’s really difficult to measure the effects of learning programmes”, I hear people say, “there’s so many other factors that could be creating the results ...” Well, yes that is true if the learning programme isn’t properly designed. In reality, however, nobody is looking because the common myth is “it can’t be done!”

Well I’m here to tell you that myth is wrong!

We simply don’t have to have situations where we spend our money recruiting a bright and enthusiastic person of our choice, and then, because we think so highly of them, we send them on really



great training, even a degree course. We give them time off work, pay their fees and expenses, cope with them not being there whilst they are learning and then they qualify... AND THEN THEY LEAVE!!!!!!... for a better job that the training we just paid for enabled them to get! How often have you seen this and... why oh why are we doing this?

I know of organisations that are spending millions of pounds on training, coaching, mentoring and organisation development and they have

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absolutely no idea whether its working or not.

I also know of individuals that stretch the family purse to purchase an important piece of training, study night after night, take time away from the family, forgo holidays so money or leave can be used for the training and, by the end of it, they get absolutely zip... and

so it may remain for many years.

Yes, I know in the longer term it may well pay for itself and there may be benefits other than financial, but if it doesn’t pay for itself within its lifetime is it morally correct and ethical

that we purchase it unless it is purely learning for pleasure? This is particularly pertinent if it’s public or somebody else’s or our family’s money!

The bottom line is, other than for some pieces of learning for pleasure, we have yet to see any piece of training that can’t be redesigned so that it pays for itself many times over if we want it to.

Whether we are an individual, a little team, a department or a colossal multinational we just don’t have to do it this way. Fine, if it’s a

conscious choice but to be quite honest, in the middle of a recession, how many would choose training that creates costs rather than a net income?

There are some universities,

management and business schools and trainers working in this way already but they are still unfortunately only a tiny minority. This article will be uncomfortable for some. Delivering in this new way is more demanding but also much more rewarding. The trainer, teacher or tutor needs to be able to help the participants with the application of the learning to all their settings, not just with the provision of theory.

It really is time to cross the Rubicon. This is the right way to go, not just because of the

recession, but also because it is the next evolution of training. It may stir up a hornet's nest of resistance because there are many who gain from and are habituated to the old order of things. It is time nonetheless.

Training needs always to contribute to the bottom line just because it can and should. Whether you are a commissioner or purchaser of training or a provider we want to know what support you need to get this done for your organisation.

If you are already working in this way please let us know and

let's help publicise the results and achievements.

LINKS

Further Reading

Philip Sweet is an accomplished business writer and expert on training design. His book 'Training That Pays for Itself' is available from Gold Stamp Publishing by e-mailing info@thepip.org Price £79.97

Training and Support

Training for coaches, mentors, trainers and organisation development practitioners and for training managers, commissioners and purchasers is available. For details please e-mail roittraining@facilitator.org.uk Help with design of new or redesign of existing training is available by contacting phil@thepip.org