With today’s economy at its lowest point in years, companies are looking for ways to cut costs. As a result, training budgets are rapidly shrinking or being eliminated altogether. However, training has been proven a vital part of continued growth and forward movement for both the employee and the organization as a whole. In this world of constant cutbacks, how do you keep your training department programs justified and ensure return on investment? Using the steps below, you can meet the learning needs of employees, strengthen the overall work environment and improve the bottom line. Yes, even in today’s economy!

**STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING IS NEEDED**
Ideally, training should be provided before problems or accidents occur. The first step is to identify what’s needed for people to do their job in a safe and productive way. New recruits may need basic training where more experienced workers only need refresher training. To avoid unnecessary training, it is equally important to determine what kind of training is not needed. Second, some training is required by law. OSHA publishes Safety Training requirements [http://www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/dosh_publications/trainingreq.htm](http://www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH/dosh_publications/trainingreq.htm). Reviewing your injuries, near misses or cases of ill health will help you identify problems that could be solved by training. Finally, consult your own employees for their views. They usually know what they need to do their jobs better!

**STEP 2: IDENTIFY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**
Clearly stated goals and objectives will identify what you employees to do, to do better, or to stop doing. They don’t necessarily have to be written, but in order for the training to be successful, objectives should be thought out before the training begins. Such as, when should the training occur? Is it initial training or refresher? Will training include hands-on use of equipment? How much time will be required for training? How will training affect production? Will training be scheduled during work hours or using overtime? In addition, much study has been done on how adults learn. Training should be conducted using a variety of adult learning methods.

**STEP 3: CONDUCTING THE TRAINING**
Training conducted by professionals with knowledge and expertise in the given subject area is most successful. There are many different methods available to today. To the extent possible, the training should allow employees to participate in the training process and practice their skills or knowledge. To determine the method best for you, consider a few of the pro’s and con’s of common types of training. **See Table on Page 2.

**STEP 4: EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS**
Testing and evaluating is necessary to measure the success of training. Testing at the end of training helps determine the amount of learning achieved. Providing a student evaluation worksheet following the class will measure the comfort level and understanding of the training they received. It will also tell you if they feel the trainers are qualified. Also, employees should immediately use the skills they learned. Have supervisors observe new and transferred employees to determine if they are doing the job right and they are using the new skills. Remember, if employees don’t understand the information they learned in training, they will not use it. Finally, document, document, document! It might be...
a paperwork nightmare to keep tests and evaluations, but it sure is nice to know you have documentation if you are ever audited or challenged on a legal matter.

**STEP 5: IMPROVING THE PROGRAM**

If, after evaluation, it is clear that the training been ineffective it may be necessary to revise the training program. Language barriers are quite common today. Be sure you are training in the students’ primary language. Not only is this a moral issue but OSHA regulations require employers ensure every employee has been given the necessary information and training that will enable them to perform their job duties safely. In addition, you might consider periodic refresher training using a different method or facilitator. Asking questions of employees, other training peers and of those who conducted the training may be of some help in improving your program.

Remember, training doesn’t need to be expensive or last several days to be worthwhile. Most of the steps are simple and inexpensive. The payoff of a good training program can be enormous! It’s a dynamic way to improve employee safety and moral which directly affects the company’s bottom line.

For additional information you may contact Cari Elofson at (714) 245-9440 or via email at celofson@joshuacasey.com.

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<tr>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Pro’s</th>
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| On-the-job Training by Peers or Group Training by Management | - Questions are easily answered based on experience.  
- Trainees are productive with less lost time since training is on-the-job  
- Trainees hear the same thing from peers working in field  
- Usually, there is more training time since it is continuous | - Trainees learn shortcuts or habits that might be unsafe  
- There is less control over what they learn  
- Requires a good trainer to ensure information is communicated properly  
- If time is limited, trainees’ may be rushed and not get adequate training |
| Live Instructor Lead Training by a Outside Professional | - Trainees are motivated to learn because of personal attention by outside trainer  
- Deficiencies easily identified by professional and are corrected at the time of training  
- Training content is more controlled and objective  
- Interruptions are limited so trainees can focus on training | - Requires a good trainer. May be ill-prepared or unfamiliar with your organization  
- Could be more costly  
- May be difficult to coordinate with other departments  
- Sticking to the class schedule may be difficult |
| Electronic Instruction Video Based/ Computer Assisted | - Self paced and self directed  
- Good for annual or refreshed training  
- Virtual environment may be favorable to production  
- Can be cost effective | - Not good for all subjects  
- Student questions not answered. No explanations offered  
- May be difficult to ensure who is actually taking the training  
- No opportunity for demonstration |