



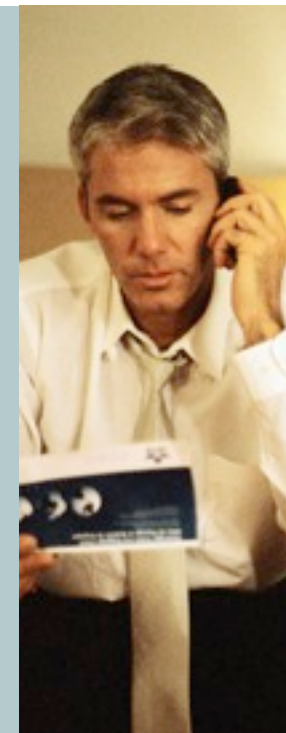
Should we stop training when times are hard?

How to deliver learning and development without a budget

Our facebook group online survey gives a clear message, those that have any training budget have had it axed in a fairly major way. If you haven't, count yourselves amongst the privileged minority. The bottom line is the bottom line, even though we all believe that training and development is still vital in a downturn, so what can you do that will deliver tangible learning experiences for your people, without breaking the bank?

1. Grab what's free!

With some thought it's surprising what you can do with very little budget at all. One of the favorite ideas we've seen recently has been the introduction of a colleague shadowing day. At ITV Peter Hallard the head of L&D has set up a scheme where volunteers across the organisation put themselves forward to be shadowed by a colleague for a whole day. With a little clever internal marketing Peter managed to get individuals involved from the boardroom down and quickly had a pool of 400 people willing to be followed by a colleague for a day. Within a few weeks of the launch there were 800 paired people involved in a shared learning experience. Using a play on their Friends Reunited website they named it Colleagues Reunited, and generated a real buzz around this innovative learning experience. Peter says it's difficult to quantify the benefits, but he's convinced it is the right thing to do if they are going to build a genuine learning culture within the business. We think there are many benefits of increasing internal knowledge about what others are doing and we take our hats off to Peter for developing such a great low cost, far reaching learning experience for the organisation.



2. Become creative in the way you look at training delivery

Other innovative approaches include exploring the use of virtual classroom workshops. Diageo one of our global clients is taking our 'Finance for non Financials' course divided up into three bite sized chunks and delivered via Adobe Connects virtual classroom product. This is a very cost effective facility that anyone can purchase online. It allows you to deliver a live event, complete with trainers on webcam, exercises on screen, group breakouts where you can group individuals together (wherever they are in the world) and then hold plenary' sessions with everyone contributing. It's much better than you might imagine! The course content needs a little tweaking, we think that delegate interaction needs to be every 3 or four minutes, but it's quite easy to create a really engaging short session that still delivers a learning experience that benefits the recipient. On top of that you can cut out the associated travel time and expense that is normally involved with traditional workshops.

As well as being carbon neutral delegates are often appreciative of the fact it provides a very efficient way of engaging a learning solution when trying to manage a very full diary.

3. Make your budget spread a little further

The introduction of very short training interventions has also proved highly successful at Warner Music where we have been delivering very targeted two hour workshops. Running up to three sessions a day (sometimes with different topics) delegates come along to experience a very tight, high energy workshop that concentrates on a narrow subject area, but delivers tangible, practical ideas that can be applied immediately. This approach can create quite a buzz, and allows you to involve a much larger group of recipients during a single day. It all helps to spread the budget further across your workforce, yet still allows you to deliver really effective solutions that meet the learning needs for the organisation.



Our recent facebook group survey indicated that:

- 60% were having to manage with less training budget than last year,
- 40% were facing budget reductions of over 10%,
- 60% said that they would seek to use more web based online virtual classroom training solutions.

Being creative in the way we produce training solutions shouldn't be saved for times like now, but clearly they do help bring the edge when trying to squeeze the best possible gain from tight budgets. Once you understand your training need, start thinking out of the box, be brave, and redefine value for your organisations learning and development challenges.