

Choosing a Corporate Training Provider

Corporate Training Defined

Just so that we're all starting at the same point, we'll begin with a definition. So what do we mean by Corporate Training?

DEFINITION:

Corporate Training involves planning and delivering customized training for business, government entities, or other organization, defined in a contractual agreement between the college and the client (Dougherty & Bakia, 2000).

What this usually means is that Corporate Training is

- Sponsored by the organisation
- Driven by the organisation's needs
- Designed to upgrade employee skills
- Customised to suit the organisation's needs
- Aimed at improving organisational performance

Why Commission Corporate Training Programmes?

When it comes to training staff in **basic skills** public training courses are usually the most cost effective option and work well. Corporate Training programmes are, however, the ideal solution if you need

- Something that's specific to your organization, or
- Have a number of staff with the same development need

Because they are designed to meet your specific requirements they are a cost-effective way of getting exactly the training you need, when you need it. They can be organized to meet your time frame.

Risks Involved in Selecting Trainers

When it comes to Corporate Training programmes you need two things

- The right trainer
- The right programme

But it's impossible to know everything there is to know about a trainer before you employ them. Spending too much time on trying to get perfect information on the trainer and their product before you make your decision is an expensive process – and it doesn't guarantee results. No matter how much excellent feedback you have on someone, you still won't know, for example, how they will perform in your specific corporate environment.

Some of the risks that you need to consider include

- The programme might not have the desired impact
- Managers may not support the anticipated changes that result from the course
- If the programme doesn't achieve its aims you can't replace the lost time and resources
- Trainer may not be a good fit for the organization

Some Questions to Ask About Your Vendor Selection Process to Help Manage the Risks

Does your company have a sound process in place to evaluate alternatives and make decisions during procurement of goods or services?

Is this process followed when you are selecting training vendors?

Do your staff have tight time limits when they are making decisions about corporate training courses?

When you are searching for training vendors what kind of approach do you use

- Highly structured, rigid, and complying strictly with company procurement policies and procedures?
- Not so structured, but there is some need to comply with corporate procurement policies and procedures?

- Mainly unstructured, with little need to follow corporate procurement policies and procedures?
- Completely unstructured – each section/division is responsible for their own search and procurement of training services?

How confident are you that you fully understand the market and the range and quality of trainers available?

Do you develop selection criteria for trainers and does your process allow you to find enough trainers in the market who meet your criteria?

Do you keep a record of your relationship with trainers, including your interactions with them and performance feedback, over time?

When you are negotiating with a trainer (either new or existing), do you have all the information you need to be able to negotiate with confidence?

Are you confident that the trainer has the necessary subject knowledge and skills? How do you check this (e.g. references, testimonials)?

What do they consider to be their speciality?

What are their strengths? Their weaknesses?

Do they have experience working with groups in similar situations to yours?

Will they customize the programme to meet your needs or will they deliver an ‘off-the-shelf’ programme?

Questions a Trainer or Training Provider is Likely to Ask You

Usually a trainer will want to speak with more than one person at your organization to gain a complete understanding of the issue you wish to address with the training. They may also want to see copies of your organization’s vision statement, and any policies, etc., relevant to the current issue. They will ask a number of questions, probably including

- What are the root causes of the issue you want the training programme to address
- What are you hoping to accomplish?
- What have you already tried, if anything?
- What is your goal for this intervention – what would success look like?
- What do you want to learn?

It is also important in discussions with the trainer to address the programme logistics.

- Do you have any dates in mind? (Top trainers are often booked sometime in advance so are unlikely to be available at short notice.)
- Where will it be held?
- What is the size/layout of the room? (Note: many trainers will have strong preferences for how the room is setup.)
- Who is responsible for copying and supplying course materials?
- If you are going to produce the physical materials (from the trainer's electronic files) what is your deadline for receiving the final files?
- What about meals/refreshments?
- Who will be covering the trainer's travel expenses? (This will directly affect the quote.)

Training Effectiveness

To make sure your training interventions are effective you need clear objectives. It's quite amazing how many people seem to miss this step. Companies come to training companies with vague statements like, 'We need a communications skills course', or 'We need leadership skills', without defining adequately what these mean. If you don't know what it is that you want, or if you haven't defined the issue that you are looking to improve, it makes it difficult

- To communicate it to the trainer, and
- To work out how successful it was when it's over

A good training organisation will listen carefully to your needs, produce a structure for the content of the training, and let you know what results you can expect. You need to be able to review the training and see if it met its objective. If not, you

- Check that objective – was it stated correctly, did it define what you really needed?
- Check the attitude of the staff who attended the training, and their managers – are they resisting any changes?
- Review the results with the trainer

Bibliography

Dougherty, K.J., Bakia, M. F. (2000), Community Colleges and Contract Training: Content, Origins, and Impact, Teachers College Record 102 (1), 197–243.

Why Choose Griffin Professional Business & Training Services?

Our faculty consists of leading international, professional trainers who are all highly qualified practitioners with real-world business experience.

Each of the trainers working with Griffin is selected on the basis of their past performance. Each has a proven track record offering both public and corporate training sessions.

All of our programmes are customized to meet your organization's specific needs so that the skills and knowledge gained by the participants is directly applicable in your workplace.

Our programmes are cost-effective and provide excellent value for money.

We continually evaluate their performance through direct feedback from participants at the conclusion of every programme. The confidential information we obtain from this process ensures extremely high standards, relevance of training methods and materials and ultimately achievement of your expected training outcomes.

We invite you to learn more about Griffin. To discuss up-coming corporate training needs or just to check us out to see how well we can work with your organisation, contact Dalice Trost today...

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