

# Challenging Business Leaders To Be Trainers

## *Positioning Training as a Management Development Opportunity – An Overview*

Every organization has a sphere of influence that identifies its added value to the organization. Internal training has suffered serious setbacks in recent years indicated by widespread departmental cut backs and outsourcing across all industries, of all sizes, in this country.

Senior management questions to training groups have typically centered on the time spent on the “activities” of staff development without the noted and defined links to the company’s strategies and goals. In addition, it is a fact that training cuts did not occur where the organization perceived value and where training units indicated the bottom line value that existed. That is how the game is played and won in successful organizations.

In organizations that see the contributed value of the training team, they see trainers as leaders who share the needed tools or techniques within the organization. These organizations encourage the training team to associate the results of the interventions loud and clear from the access of the highest levels of the company and prove the worth of training’s efforts.

Since line managers always appreciate a bottom-line approach but are reluctant to change the process of the approach, organizational leadership that want to encourage continuous improvement select quality trainers-as-leaders that are positive and proactive role models and historically, are proven business partners. In many cases, training positions within the knowledge-oriented organization becomes a revolving job in which growth and visibility are the obvious outcomes for the business-based individual.

Most of all, progressive businesses want training not to just *receive* recognition, they want training to *earn* it. With training departments staffed with individuals who know the true nature of the business and who get to know business area partners, it becomes a win-win opportunity. As learning organizations encourage their unit staff leaders to understand and participate in training, all of their action meetings and special projects will become raised to the level of its internal trainer expertise, its internal trainer relationships and most importantly, its internal trainer credibility.

Being perceived as the hands-on business advisor is an impossible role to play without hands-on business experience. Line managers know the paths to achieve business status in the organizations – they are tough roads and hardly ever directly positioned for the boardroom. However, many line managers do not understand or value training’s role. It is on the organization’s leadership watch to keep improving their companies’ performance through staff development. By including the practical values associated with re-directing the training role, organizations will achieve their goals through those individuals who are

familiar with the business and who include themselves in the real issues of the work through active participation in the company staff's ability to do the work.

Where this model is followed, trainers are already members of industry associations and are already reading industry newspapers and periodicals that highlight the industry's business because they come from line management. Knowledge organizations have training teams with inherent credibility due to the existing fact that they *are* the business. In addition, learning organizations' trainers are typically fully engaged in sharing the risk of success and failure on work projects, fully challenged as business managers/trainers, assuring the business lines that training *is* their team. Instead of being the *last* entity in a project, with this model, training owns early positioning on projects and ensures involvement all through.

Current business managers and current trainers should seek the importance of volunteering for job enlargement opportunities exchanging roles by being part of task forces that will stretch themselves as managers and as trainers. Both entities can learn the details of each other's tasks. In addition, these managers-as-trainers will become open to interpersonal relationships that will become credibility checks for the future and build a solid foundation as future company leadership.

In conclusion, organizations of all sizes need to merge existing management and training groups. When a company uses an external consulting firm, they are always looking for hands-on experience that raises the bar on what can be achieved quickly by utilizing the external source as a resource. Looking to improve internal management and training relationships will only be reached with the organization's targeted aim to transition training jobs into informed organizational players and thereby to reinforce the nature of continuous improvement through training.