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65 Case Study Highlights

Highlights of Effective Workplace Learning Practices in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

One-page Overviews of 65 SME Workplace Learning Case Studies from Around the World

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The Canadian Council on Learning

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This overview report highlights the findings of 65 in-depth case studies on exemplary workplace learning practices in small and medium-sized enterprises from around the world. It was prepared by The Conference Board of Canada, with contributions from: Douglas Watt, Alison Campbell, Kurtis Kitagawa, Natalie Brender, Barbara Fennessy, P. Derek Hughes, Michelle Thomson, and Linda Scott.

A full report with detailed case studies is available.

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Executive Summary

This report looks at the ways in which small and medium-sized businesses in Australia, Canada, China, England and Northern Ireland, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, and the United States implement and benefit from effective workplace programs – ones that improve the skills of employees, managers and owners, and ultimately improves the bottom-line of companies.

The series of one-page overviews shows that by making the most of what one has; by collaborating with external providers where appropriate; by valuing lifelong learning; and by being innovative, creative and tenacious – workplace learning in small and medium-sized enterprises can be very effective and pay great dividends.

The full-length case studies for each of the 65 one-page overviews are found in the full-report: *Effective Workplace Learning Practices In Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: A Compendium of 65 SME Workplace Learning Case Studies from Around the World*.

Australia

1. The City of Albany – 250 employees
2. Mad About Plants – 15 employees
3. Australian Vinyls – 110 employees
4. dal Gourmet Café and Catering – 42 employees
5. Therapy Focus – 110 employees
6. WA Freightlines Group of Companies – 145 employees
7. Eurobodalla Shire Council – 450 employees
8. Midpro Engineering – 17 employees

1. The City of Albany - Highlights

Sector: Municipal Government

Number of Employees: 250

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling the workforce to national competency standards
- Reducing reliance on expensive outside experts, outsourcing

Keys to Success:

- Commitment to being a Learning City
- Staff training is aligned with organizational objectives. The annual personal development review process encourages employees to be open about their aspirations and be actively involved in the identification of their own training needs
- Recognizing education, learning and training as key drivers of future prosperity
- Treating staff training as a strategic imperative and integrating it within the city's overall objectives and systems
- The City takes a coordinated approach to learning, replacing its former ad hoc treatment of learning
- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Training offered in house or through local colleges, universities or Registered Training Organizations (RTOs)
- Front line managers are required to complete a Certificate III in Business Management through TAFE
- Supervisors, coordinators and senior technical officers are required to complete a TAFE Certificate IV in Business Management
- All learning is funded by the city
- Promoting learning culture through its *Employer of Choice* web site
- Offers cadetships to help fill its skills shortages in technical areas such as engineering, building, planning and environmental health. The cadets are sponsored by the City to attend courses, where they study part-time. The remainder of the cadets' time is spent in the workplace where they are mentored by experienced staff (e.g., engineers, technical staff, and planners)

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Australian Institute of Management
- Registered Training Organizations (RTOs)
- Higher Education Contribution Scheme
- With support from other local public and private employers the City is working with Great Southern TAFE to establish an Associate Diploma of Engineering program

Outcomes:

- Reduced reliance on external expertise, outsourcing
- Increases staff retention, trust, communication
- Cost savings
- Enhanced productivity
- All new Outside Works staff members are required to undertake traineeships in Certificate III—Civil Construction, which involves on-the-job training and external assessments against national benchmarks
- Fifty-eight of the City's Outside Works staff members have completed their Certificate III in Rural Operations—a nationally recognized qualification

Awards Won:

- In 2005, the City of Albany was recognized as the Large Employer of the Year at the Western Australia Training Excellence Awards

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF (Levels 1–4) recognize skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards as agreed for those qualifications by the relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional group.

2. Mad About Plants—Highlights

Sector: Nursery, Horticulture, Retail

Number of Employees: 15

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Company bought from receivers in 1998
- Lack of skilled employees made it impossible to grow quality plants and run a nursery
- Upskilling is crucial to improving quality of stock and enhancing business prospects

Keys to Success:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Compulsory for all staff to work towards a Certificate III in Horticulture, an industry-recognized qualification
- Director received training to earn an Advanced Diploma of Agriculture
- Plant Sales Manager used training to acquire a Diploma of Horticulture
- Office Manager attained a Certificate III in Business Management
- Most training is based on national training packages and accredited courses
- Some training offered in house
- Team leaders are occasionally sent off site for job specific courses or work experience at other production nurseries
- Job rotation ensures cross training

Critical Partnerships:

- State and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- TAFE Queensland (Cairns Campus)
- Other TAFE-registered training organizations/providers

Outcomes:

- Sales are up
- Customer service improved
- Cost savings achieved
- Stock losses through pest and irrigation problems almost eradicated
- Reduced use of pesticides and chemicals
- Improved quality of stock
- Staff are continuously looking for ways to improve work practices and work environment
- Expansion is now possible
- Productivity up

Awards Won:

- In 2004, *Mad About Plants* won the Prime Minister's Small Business of the year at the Australian Training Awards

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Industry-recognized qualifications delivered by TAFE-registered training organizations/providers

3. Australian Vinyls—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 110

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling for improved safety and productivity

Keys to Success:

- Holistic approach to training
- Training is delivered to all staff
- Formal evaluation of training is carried out to ensure its effectiveness
- Training is evergreen
- Technical equipment training is developed and delivered in house
- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Theoretical technical training is provided off site by accredited training providers such as the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Accredited training providers such as the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE

Outcomes:

- Improved health and safety
- Reported injuries dropped from 29 per cent to 23 per cent
- Increased productivity
- Improved employee competencies
- Reduced incidents of contamination
- 75 per cent of company's operators completed majority of requirements for process manufacturing (Australian Qualifications Framework Level 3)
- Reduced number of customer complaints by 30 per cent
- Between 2001–02 and 2004–05 Australian Vinyls' total PVC output increased by 14 per cent

Awards Won:

- In 2006, Australian Vinyls was Employer of the Year (Runner-Up) at the Victorian Training Awards

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF (Levels 1–4) recognize skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards as agreed for those qualifications by the relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional group.

4. dal Gourmet Café and Catering—Highlights

Sector: Catering / Hospitality

Number of Employees: 42

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling for persons with special needs

Keys to Success:

- Customized learning from the simplest tasks all the way through to certification and better employment
- On-the-job training and mentoring
- Buddy system where more experienced workers help new staff learn how things are done
- Supervised and supported hands-on learning experiences
- Focus is on the individual and not on the organization
- Instilling good business practices to boost the bottom line
- Staff with special needs have option of taking accredited vocational in partnership The Gordon Institute towards Certificate Levels I, II and III in Hospitality and Certificate Level II in First Aid
- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems for some training
- Partnered with Victorian Department of Human Services Innovations Grant to write up its training model and make available to other organizations

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Employment placement group
- The Smart Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network funds transition program to prepare staff for transition to new employment
- The Gordon Institute, a local TAFE institution

Outcomes:

- High quality service and products
- Enhanced essential and employability skills
- 10 staff have gained other employment opportunities through dal's transitions program
- Over 10 staff members have gained part

Awards Won:

- In 2005, dal was an Employer of the Year finalist in the Victorian Training Awards
- In 2005 the quality of the dal training programs and the trainers who deliver them was awarded employer of the year by The Gordon Institute of TAFE

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF (Levels 1–4) recognize skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards as agreed for those qualifications by the relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional group.

5. Therapy Focus—Highlights

Sector: Therapy, Professional services

Number of Employees: 110

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Building the capacity of staff to provide quality service to public

Keys to Success:

- Implemented Lifelong Learning Framework, which links learning initiatives with performance management and recruitment activities
- Practitioners encouraged to determine their individual learning requirements
- Clinical Competency Framework provides detailed information about what constitutes a competent (minimum knowledge, skills, behaviours and learning outcomes of a competent practitioner) allowing staff to determine their strengths and areas for improvement
- Peer mentoring between practitioners
- Use of learning portfolios to track success of learning
- Modularized training linked to good practice available in multiple formats, including self-study packages, peer study groups, small group study with an Allied Health Officer, clinical forums, workshops
- Reflective learning used to analyze client feedback or issues arising from learning activities to help staff advance professionally
- Partnered with Allied Health Officer
- Partnered with local universities
- Evaluated costs and benefits of training

Critical Partnerships:

- Allied Health Officer
- Curtin University
- University of Western Australia
- Notre Dame University
- Edith Cowan University

Outcomes:

- Improved service delivery
- Improved employee competencies
- Increased job satisfaction
- Improved recruitment based on description of knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of a competent practitioner

Awards Won:

- In 2002 and again in 2004, the company won the Best Staff Training Award at the Belmont Business Enterprise Centre Awards

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training based on Family Needs Screening

6. WA Freightlines Group of Companies—Highlights

Sector: Transportation / Logistics

Number of Employees: 145

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling workforce
- Increasing efficiency and safety

Keys to Success:

- Training is an integral part of company's business model
- Company is constantly revising training programs to ensure relevance
- Investing in company's future by training apprentices
- Company provides training pathway for each employee
- Full time training manager to oversee delivery and assessment of training
- All learning opportunities linked to customized training pathways based on national competencies
- One-on-one tutoring and coaching given to employees experiencing difficulties with training units
- Partnered with registered training authority
- Training needs of individuals are determined through a consultative process involving employees, training manager and registered training authorities
- Occupational health and safety incidents are discussed during employee appraisals and reviews
- All employees are required to complete mandatory national Occupational Health and Safety training units through the Australian National Training Authority's Transport and Distribution Training Package
- In house training focusing on company specific work practices

Critical Partnerships:

- Australian National Training Authority
- Registered training authorities

Outcomes:

- Reduction in damaged freight
- Reduced customer complaints
- Increased productivity
- Staff follow safe work practices
- Reduction in accidents/near misses of 30 per cent

Awards Won:

- In 2006, the company was the winner of the Australian Training Awards—Western Australia Medium Employer of the Year award
- In the same year it was a finalist in the Australian Trucking Association's National Training Excellence Award

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Occupational Health and Safety training linked to mandatory national training units through the Australian National Training Authority's Transport and Distribution Training Package

7. Eurobadalla Shire Council—Highlights

Sector: Local government

Number of Employees: 450

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving operational performance
- Enhancing skills
- Dealing with skills shortages
- Upskilling mature workers

Keys to Success:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Building future capacity by offering traineeships and tertiary cadetships, which enable undergraduates to complete their tertiary studies at TAFE or university while gaining practical on-the-job experience
- Most training offered at the Council complies with National Competency standards, giving staff recognized skills and accredited learning
- To overcome the distance and isolated work site challenges the Council uses trainers and assessors from four separate TAFE campuses across the shire (Wollongon, Nowra, Moruya and Bega)
- When necessary, the Council employs private RTOs from Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Canberra and Victoria
- Most training conducted at Eurobadalla Shire Council is provided by external trainers working for Registered Training Organizations (RTOs), or trainers who are accredited through relevant industries (e.g., WorkCover)
- The Council provides in-house training to staff, who are subsequently qualified to train small groups in a number of learning activities (there are approximately 65 staff who are recognized as qualified trainers within the Council)
- The Council has twelve technical staff trained as workplace assessors, who conduct assessments for Occupational Health and Safety, Quality Assurance, and Certificate III programs in partnership with the Illawarra Institute of Technology
- Providing financial assistance and leave time for staff undertaking additional professional training at TAFE or university
- Delivering the programs in groups, one-on-one, in TAFE classrooms, at worksites (using toolbox meetings, where trainers go out to worksites (e.g., roadsides, coastlines, parks) to deliver training) and with employees or students coming from one or more divisions—fostering the cross-fertilization of ideas and knowledge transfer

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Illawarra Institute of Technology and registered training authorities
- Federal government's WELL program initiative to improve the literacy and communications skills of workers
- Youth Employment Training Scheme

Outcomes:

- Workforce more productive
- Increased retention, increased capacity for the future
- Staff are accepting and engaged in lifelong learning activities as they recognize its value and merit
- Over 130 employees have participated in Accredited Certificate Qualifications (e.g., Certificate III in Water Operations, Operational Works, Governance and Administration, Visitor Information, Business, Transport and Distribution)
- Approximately 69 per cent of all full time staff (and 93 per cent of all outdoor staff) who previously held no formal qualifications, have completed or are enrolled in an accredited training program

Awards Won:

- In 2005, Eurobadalla Shire Council was named the National Employer of the Year at the Australian Training Awards—recognized for its commitment to youth trainees and apprentices and for its accredited training program to existing staff

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF (Levels 1–4) recognize skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards as agreed for those qualifications by the relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional group.

8. Midpro Engineering—Highlights

Sector: Engineering

Number of Employees: 17

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Building capacity
- Overcoming shortages of skilled tradespeople by training apprentices
- Upskilling workers
- Focusing on Occupational Health and Safety

Keys to Success:

- Structured approach to on-the-job learning
- Apprenticeship training
- Each new apprentice works closely with, and is supervised by, a qualified tradesman at Midpro Engineering—5 Midpro tradespersons have specialized welding certificates, and 2 have their Certificate IV, from TAFE in workplace assessment and training
- Company's Managing Director is a qualified TAFE welding teacher
- Supervisors act as coaches for apprentices
- All apprentices attend the Parkes and Orange campuses of TAFE, Western Institute, NSW, for additional classroom learning and training activities
- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Multiskilling staff by using job rotation
- Training for now and the future
- Upskilling current workforce

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with state and territory Technical and Further Education (TAFE) systems
- Parkes and Orange campuses of TAFE, Western Institute, NSW, a Registered Training Organization with ISO 9001:2000 certification

Outcomes:

- Higher production rates
- Less scrap
- Fewer reworks
- Improved staff retention
- Increased employee self-esteem, confidence and awareness
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Fewer job-related accidents
- Improved communications among workers and between workers and supervisors

Awards Won:

- In 2006, Midpro Engineering was recognized in the NSW Training Awards as the Small Employer of the Year

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to Australian Qualifications Framework, a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFEs and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF (Levels 1–4) recognize skills and knowledge that meet nationally endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards as agreed for those qualifications by the relevant industry, enterprise, community or professional group.

Canada

1. La Ronge Motor Hotel – 65 employees
2. Minas Basin Pulp and Paper Company Limited – 162 employees
3. National Silicates – 93 employees
4. Royal Star Foods Ltd. – 400 employees
5. Stedfast Inc. – 100 employees
6. Elmsdale Lumber Corporation – 57 employees

1. La Ronge Motor Hotel - Highlights

Sector: Tourism and hospitality

Number of Employees: 65

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving work culture and attitudes
- Addressing the various skills requirements of the hotel
- Improve customer service levels

Keys to Success:

- Customized training for each employee that matches their learning needs with appropriate training programs and the needs of the organization
- Learning is offered through a variety of methods – classroom, video, tutoring, self-study – depending on the needs and circumstances of individuals
- Addresses the learning needs of Aboriginal workers

Critical Partnerships:

- Northlands College
- Saskatchewan Learning
- Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council and the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council See www.cthrc.ca
- Saskatchewan labour Force Development Board

Outcomes:

- Many employees are now nationally certified in hotel hospitality.
- Service delivery has improved, and the hotel is recognized as a full-service medium-sized hotel.
- An employer of choice, recognized by the town and individuals for caring about its staff

Awards Won:

- The Conference Board of Canada – Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy, Small Business Learning Awards, 2003.

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Linked to Tourism Human Resources Sector Council's national standards and certification program (Emerit and Ready-to-Work) See www.cthrc.ca/eng/page.aspx?_id=ready_to_work.htm

2. Minas Basin Pulp & Paper Limited - Highlights

Sector: Pulp and Paper, manufacturing

Number of Employees: 162

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Growth and expansion of product offerings necessitated the need for new skills training – especially essential skills training
- Address the changing technologies within the industry and to get employees up-to-speed
- Need to improve basic literacy and work skills of all employees (communication skills, math, reading, critical thinking and problem solving skills)

Keys to Success:

- Collaborating with government departments and agencies to get funding for training facilities and training instructors
- Matching training programs with the needs of the business
- Getting the support and buy-in of management and senior executives
- Having exceptional instructors
- On-site delivery of training so that it does not interfere with day-to-day activities and production

Critical Partnerships:

- Nova Scotia Department of Education
- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) funding

Outcomes:

- Improvements in machine efficiencies by 80 per cent
- Absenteeism at an all time low.
- More than 25 per cent of staff actively involved in training activities
- Decline in lost time accidents, improved safety rate.
- Improved employee retention rates.
- Employees have gained self-confidence, recognize the value that they bring to the company and perform more effectively in the workplace.
- Employees contribute more and are better able to trouble-shoot and solve problems

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

3. National Silicates - Highlights

Sector: Chemical manufacturing

Number of Employees: 93

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upgrade the skill level of plant operators
- Multiskill plant operators so that they are competent in all areas and on all machines within the plant operations
- Respond to changing technologies and legislation
- Enhance productivity and competitiveness of the company

Keys to Success:

- The Chemical Process Operators (CPO) program: consisting of a 6,000 hour in-house training program made up of 90 interactive CD-ROM modules and an extensive hands-on training practicum

Critical Partnerships:

- Province of Ontario
- Etobicoke Liquid Process Adjustment Committee

Outcomes:

- Increased basic literacy, numeracy, health and safety, computer and problem solving skills
- Employees are more productive and efficient and are now 'multi-skilled' – capable of functioning in all areas of the plant
- Employees have a "learn for life" attitude
- Skills learned are transferable to other chemical industry jobs – giving employees an opportunity for advancement
- Employees are able to make more decisions independently and are more productive
- Employees who graduate from the CPO program have higher wages and greater opportunities to succeed

Awards Won:

- Excellence in Workplace Literacy – Small Business Winner, 2002

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- The CPO program is approved by the Province of Ontario, and organized by the Etobicoke Liquid Process Adjustment Committee (ELPAC)

4. Royal Star Foods - Highlights

Sector: Fish processing and manufacturing

Number of Employees: 400

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Raising the literacy levels of employees to help them reach their full potential in their jobs
- Becoming familiar and productive on new technologies and processing equipment
- Ensuring that health and safety procedures and quality control processes are being followed

Keys to Success:

- Creating a basic foundation upon which learning and development becomes a natural part of an employee's daily activities
- Establishing a room dedicated to training – the fisherman's café – which has its own computer lab.
- Creating a volunteer workplace literacy project team to determine what learning is needed and wanted for the coming year
- Royal Star Foods works hard at seeking out and applying for program funding from national and provincial bodies – e.g., Human Resources and Social Development Canada, and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)
- The company celebrates the learning successes of its employees
- All learning is offered at no cost to employees
- All learning is offered to employees as well as their family members

Critical Partnerships:

- Workplace Education Prince Edward Island
- Funding through national and provincial

Outcomes:

- Employees are more confident in the work that they do which results in a more productive and skilled workforce
- The company is recognized as a 'learning organization'
- Improved communications and teamwork among employees and between employees and their managers
- Lower error rates, increased safety records, increased efficiencies, improved productivity
- Increased employee loyalty and respect for the company
- Opportunities for advancement

Awards Won:

- Excellence in Workplace Literacy, Medium Business Winner, 2002

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Learning is tied into GEDS – General Educational Development – an international high school equivalency testing program for adults

5. Stedfast Inc. - Highlights

Sector: Textile manufacturing

Number of Employees: 100

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- The demands of a changing marketplace
- The need for continued innovation, flexibility, and problem-solving skills among employees

Keys to Success:

- The company's skills and Learning Site – with its focus on on-the-job skills development initiatives; offered 24/7 to employees
- The use of the Textiles Human Resources Council's Textile Training Through Technology programs – industry recognized learning activities
- A good labour-management relationship through the establishment of a management/union committee that discusses the skills development needs of employees and achieves buy-in at all levels of the organization
- The commitment to empower employees through skills development and training in order to develop a culture of learning in the company
- The use of training to address the company's strategic business needs

Critical Partnerships:

- Textiles Human Resources Council See www.thrc-crhit.org/

Outcomes:

- Improved confidence in employees
- A more skilled and productive workforce
- A good working environment where employees and management are all working from the same page and

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training is tied into the Textiles Human Resources Council and its standards See www.thrc-crhit.org/

6. Elmsdale Lumber Corporation (ELCO) - Highlights

Sector: Wood manufacturing

Number of Employees: 57

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Staying competitive in a rapidly evolving lumber industry
- Changes in technology that have brought computers, other technologies and sophisticated equipment into the lumber mill.

Keys to Success:

- Recognizing the value of investing in the skills of its employees
- Making learning a part of the corporate culture at ELCO
- The development of industry-relevant in-house courses – co-developed by a learning team and instructors in cooperation with employees
- Learning is tied into the General Education Diploma (GED)
- Management support and enthusiasm in building a learning culture
- All job-related courses take place during working hours in a designated training space
- The company celebrates the learning achievements of its employees in an annual graduation ceremony attended by family and staff

Critical Partnerships:

- Nova Scotia Department of Education

Outcomes:

- Enhanced workplace performance of existing employees
- Employees are more confident in their work and in the teams that they are a part of
- ELCO remains at the cutting edge of the industry – with its knowledgeable and well-trained workforce
- Reduced sick time and absenteeism
- Improved safety record
- Increased productivity
- Greater initiative shown by employees

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Linked into the Nova Scotia Department of Education

China

1. Zhejiang NAMAG – 55 employees

1. Zhejiang NAMAG Equipment Manufacturing Limited—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 80–95 (55 permanent employees and 25 to 40 contract employees)

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Maintaining global competitiveness
- Commitment to quality
- Enhancing direct communication between customers and workers on the shop floor relating to custom work

Keys to Success:

- Management belief that workers should be familiar with all processes within the organization so they understand how their work contributes to the overall manufacturing process
- New employees cycle through all departments, working for one to three months in each area
- Quality training takes place at all levels, from operators and apprentices to professional engineers and managers
- Technical and professional employees from Whiting travel to Zhejiang to teach Zhejiang workers about specialized equipment and processes
- Zhejiang employees travel to Canada for training
- Senior managers deliver training on the work of their own departments (e.g., Purchasing, Quality Control), which helps build employees' confidence in company leadership
- Employees' performance assessed continuously
- Quarterly performance evaluations are used to identify training needs
- Annual bonuses are awarded based on overall performance, including new skills developed during the year
- Promoting from within

Critical Partnerships:

- Through a joint venture with Whiting Equipment Canada Inc. Zhejiang exchanges knowledge and gains access to North American technology and training

Outcomes:

- Employees understand their role in whole production process and feel a sense of pride in contributing to the company's success
- NAMAG has achieved a reputation for quality manufacturing
- Highly skilled workforce has developed NAMAG's capacity to serve export markets
- Exports have grown substantially
- NAMAG has attracted world class customers such as General Electric, BASF, Ingersoll Rand Road Machinery Co. Ltd., 3M Corporation and Nippon Steel
- Between 80 and 90 per cent of NAMAG's customers are internationally based
- Improved productivity

Awards Won:

- In 2005, the City of Albany was recognized as the Large Employer of the Year at the Western Australia Training Excellence Awards

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Zhejiang has achieved several quality assurance certifications, including ISO 9001, ASME "U" stamp, GB 150, 151, PED & CE, which are crucial to the company's global competitiveness and drive skills training in the company

England and Northern Ireland

1. Luminary Solutions – 36 employees
2. Bison Bede Limited – 111 employees
3. Express Parcels – 120 employees
4. The Streat Café – 100 employees
5. Oakwood Builders and Joinery Ltd. – 35 employees
6. Stanair Industrial Door Services Ltd. – 64 employees
7. Taylor's Fish – 13 employees

1. Luminary Solutions—Highlights

Sector(s): IT software services

Number of Employees: 36

Business Need(s) Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling engineers in a constantly changing IT industry where new technologies need to be adopted quickly
- Valuing and developing skills of employees to ensure employee retention
- Nurturing client base for repeat business and referrals
- Maximizing skill and knowledge transfer capacity of employees

Keys to Success:

- Creating standardized skills development program based on input from employees regarding the skills they need on the job
- Employees developed 60 training modules that can be tailored to the needs of individual employees to teach others in the future
- Supporting high growth
- Rotating training coordinator sourced from existing staff
- Strategic use of external training experts
- Boot camp for new employees
- Employees acting as peer instructors and training mentors
- Monthly workshops delivered by employees to their colleagues on new knowledge or improvements
- Weekend retreats to discuss latest developments in organization
- 360 assessment of training
- Post-mortem evaluations called “wash-ups” are conducted to help the organization formalize what it has learned during the project
- Measuring training effectiveness
 - Successful completion of projects requiring use of training modules tailored to upskill individual staff members
 - Reduced staff turnover, increased positive employee and client feedback, increased repeat business
 - Developing internal trainer capabilities with employees owning the materials and training delivery
 - Staff effectiveness in joining an ongoing project post training, reduced communications problems
 - Effective recording of staff actual, planned and required skills development history
 - ROI of training

Critical Partnership(s):

- West Yorkshire New Technology Institute
- Leeds Metropolitan University
- Learndirect Scotland See www.learndirectscotland.com/

Outcomes:

- Low staff turnover
- High employee engagement
- High client satisfaction—over 70 per cent of Luminary's sales are from returning customers and referrals
- 60 training modules created
- Four out of five recent graduates matured more quickly and are working effectively on customer project teams
- Four recent graduates have presented training at company retreats
- 15 employees have helped successfully complete customer projects using technology they did not know prior
- Most employees have helped fellow employees by being a training mentor
- Thousands of training history records created

Award(s) Won:

- Luminary was a winner of the National Training Awards (UK) in 2006 See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

2. Bison Bede Limited—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 111

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Changing marketing strategy to reach new clients and achieve higher profit margins
- Educating independent dealers to sell, deliver and maintain products

Keys to Success:

- In-house training program leading to company certification
- Hands-on learning for dealers who install products with the aid of a company expert
- On-site visits to inspect work being done by authorized dealers
- Requalification training for dealers who are not meeting standards
- In-house training facility
- Mobile training units go to dealers who cannot travel to in-house training facility

Critical Partnerships:

- With dealers

Outcomes:

- Increases sales
- Reduced installation time
- Fewer calls to help desk
- Market share increased
- All high-volume dealers certified within nine months of introduction of training program
- Reduced error rates
- Dealers identify and fix faults quickly on their own
- Knowledge and skill of dealers drive sales up
- Increased marketplace perception of Bison Bede as market leading manufacturer of high quality and reliable products, which also drives sales up
- Decreased expense of warranty claims

Awards Won:

- 2004 UK National Training Awards winner See: www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

3. Express Parcels—Highlights

Sector: Logistics

Number of Employees: 120

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Reducing high levels of staff turnover and absenteeism requiring use of temporary employment agencies, who were 35–40 per cent more expensive than regular employees, less productive and less motivated to work efficiently and caused more customers to file insurance claims for damaged or missing goods
- Sagging profitability on some delivery routes
- Controlling costs associated with insurance claims

Keys to Success:

- Giving middle managers the skills they need to do their jobs properly, i.e.,
 - Managing change
 - Problem solving
 - Team building
 - Communications
 - Self motivation
 - Stress reduction
 - Effective delegation
- Empowering middle managers to make operational and staffing changes to increase productivity, reduce costs and ensure a highly skilled security cleared is at the ready
- Partnered with Upper Bann Institute, a local training provider to tailor make a training program based on Upper Bann's Institute of Leadership & Management's *Introduction to Management* qualification

Critical Partnerships:

- Upper Bann Institute

Outcomes:

- Middle managers operate with less direction from senior management
- Lower staff turnover rates
- Fewer incidents of absenteeism
- Reduced costs from insurance claims

Awards Won:

- 2006 UK National Training Award winner See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/
- Awarded the Management and Leadership Network's award for best practice in training in an SME. See: www.delni.gov.uk/index/iip-nta/nta-new/2007-sponsors/management-and-leadership-network.htm

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

4. The Streat Café—Highlights

Sector: Hospitality, Coffee shop

Number of Employees: 100

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Franchising successful business while retaining control over product quality
- Upskilling via standardized training of each new employee on customer service, cash register operation, food and beverage preparation, cleaning and supervisory skills for those helping manage franchise
- Upskilling franchisees' on HR and managerial skills

Keys to Success:

- Importance of training is enforced by top management from beginning
- Standardizing business practices
- Setting out expectations for franchisees in operations manuals documenting training modules and competency benchmarks
- Developing modularized training with performance benchmarks against which learners are assessed
- Training delivered by dedicated team of seven franchise trainers through classroom training, demonstration of specific tasks, coaching during hands-on learning and learning assessment
- Establishing training centre
- Setting gross profit margin of 69 per cent
- Setting HR benchmarks, such as keeping staff turnover to no more than 30 per cent annual
- Monitoring franchisees via use of mystery shoppers
- Commitment to ongoing training support for franchisees even though most training occurs before a franchise opens

Critical Partnerships:

- Irish Franchising Association
- International Management Association for Training
- Chartered Institute of Personnel Development

Outcomes:

- Eight franchises have become successful, each meeting or exceeding the HR and financial goals set out for them in the operations manual

Awards Won:

- 2006 Winner of the UK National Training Award See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/
- Won prestigious training award from the Hotel & Catering International Management Association See www.hcima.org.uk/content/
- Won Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development Award for Excellence in People Development See www.cipd.co.uk/default.cipd
- Two franchises have won business excellence awards
- Recognition for Excellence in Skills and Learning at the Scottish Enterprise Awards See www.scottish-enterprise.com/sedotcom_home.htm?siblingtoggle=0

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- First Northern Irish company to gain full membership in the Irish Franchising Association

5. Oakwood Builders and Joinery Ltd.—Highlights

Sector: Construction

Number of Employees: 35

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling construction workforce to support company's movement into residential renovations
- Upskilling on energy efficient techniques and personal management skills (goal setting, time management, IT literacy, safety)
- Upskilling management to guide company through change and growth
- Implementing modern IT practices
- Helping immigrant workers with high levels of relevant skills but lacking recognized UK qualifications upgrade their language (ESL) skills and earn UK qualifications
- Improving ability to offer professional customer service

Keys to Success:

- Making training relevant to employees' duties
- Linking training program to broad organizational goals
- Making training all inclusive to ensure consistency of skills without singling out lower skilled employees for training
- Partnering with Construction Industry Training Board
- Partnering with Reading College as a training provider to conduct on-site assessments, develop training plans for each worker and help employees earn qualifications
- Use of management coaches to develop management team
- Use of professional facilitators to improve communication and build teamwork between management and staff

Critical Partnerships:

- Finance South East, a government funded program that provides support to business in the South East of England, has placed Oakwood and Green Carbon on a "fast-track mentoring system" that provides free expert advice to support rapid growth
- Construction Industry Training Board
- Management coaches
- Professional facilitators
- Reading College
- Local government, which offer education programs to improve basic English, literacy, numeracy and IT skills

Outcomes:

- Revenues jumped six-fold
- Effective IT technologies adopted by workers
- Immigrant workers integrated into workforce
- Robust and self-confident team of managers created
- Employees value a safe work environment
- High customer satisfaction
- Employed Oxfordshire Apprentice of the Year twice
- Spin-off company, Green Carbon, launched to build the most environmentally advanced homes in the UK

Awards Won:

- Nominated for Master Builder of the Year
- Received Henley Business Award for Customer and Staff Care
- Finalist for a business award in an environmental category
- 2004 UK National Training Award winner See: www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

6. Stanair Industrial Door Services Ltd—Highlights

Sector: Service Industry - door repair and maintenance

Number of Employees: 64

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling workforce to support company's expansion plans
- Managers needed skills necessary to run company locations effectively with reduced supervision from Managing Director
- Engineers needed skills to offer superior service to clients to encourage repeat sales
- Finance and administrative staff needed to be able to work with improved IT and financial systems

Keys to Success:

- Standardizing door installation and maintenance skills of Stanair employees
- Formalizing training for managers, engineers and finance and administrative staff
- Training started with Managing Director who took a six-month mini MBA dealing with growing an organization
- Hiring for attitude, training for skills
- External training providers train new engineers to national standards in welding
- Stanair developed its own standards and training curriculum where no national standards exist
- Reinvesting all profits generated by the company for three years back into training
- Tying business plan to employee development needs
- Being prepared to sacrifice short-term returns for long-term sustainable growth
- Establishing professional standards where no accepted standard existed

Critical Partnerships:

- Cranfield School of Management
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Further education colleges
- External training providers

Outcomes:

- Company has realized considerable growth
- Successfully opened three new locations, each run by a competent, self-sufficient manager
- Client base has grown from 500 to 3,000
- Improved communications
- Increased employee confidence and motivation on the job
- Increased employee cooperation on the job in day-to-day functions
- Increased productivity
- More flexible workforce, with many operatives holding NVQs in two or three different skills levels

Awards Won:

- *Investors in People* accreditation See www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/Pages/Home.aspx
- Recognized as a "Beacon Organization" by the UK Department of Trade and Industry See www.berr.gov.uk/
- In 2002, Stanair won a UK National Training Award see www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Investors in People* accreditation
- ISO 9002 certification

7. Taylor's Fish—Highlights

Sector: Hospitality, Fast food

Number of Employees: 13

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Renewing business based on changing consumer preferences
- Succession planning
- Converting traditional "chippy" into a modern restaurant with healthier food options alongside fish and chips
- Improving customer service skills of mature workforce
- Motivating workforce to get more involved in their jobs and develop excellent customer relationships
- Running shop with reduced management supervision
- Adhering to health and safety laws

Keys to Success:

- Training flexible to accommodate employees' work and home schedules
- Informal skill sharing sessions where an employee efficient at one task shows others how to do it
- Using informal skill sharing as building block for formal learning in food safety
- Engaging staff in hands-on learning
- Consulting with employees to get buy in for change
- Training and assessment centre is accredited by the Construction Industry Training Board and delivers National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)
- Partnering with local continuing education colleges to increase employees' food handling knowledge and skills
- Relevant training accessible free of charge through local Chamber of Commerce

Critical Partnerships:

- Local continuing education colleges
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- National seafood industry association
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

Outcomes:

- Revenues more than doubled
- Profit margin has jumped
- Staff meet health and safety standards
- Increased consumer confidence
- Employees more confident in their abilities
- Staff more motivated; and employees are more engaged in learning
- One employee has pursued leadership and management training; two staff have pursued formal apprenticeships in "Quick Serve"
- Three staff have pursued computer training at local college; and one staff member has attained a National Vocational Qualification in customer service

Awards Won:

- In 2005, Taylor's Fish won a UK National Training Award, see: www.nationaltrainingawards.com/. In 2007 the company was asked to sign the "Learning Pledge", a commitment by employers to invest in the future of their employees, see: www.learnirectscotland.com/. Taylor's won a "Heartbeat Award" for healthy items on menu

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Each employee received a food hygiene certificate
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) system See: www.qca.org.uk/qca_6640.aspx
- NVQs are work-related, competence-based qualifications based on UK national occupations standards. NVQs cover current best practice, ability to adapt to future requirements and the knowledge and understanding that underpin performance
- NVQs are achieved through training and assessment. Candidates produce evidence of demonstrated performance, which are signed off by assessors

India

1. Sanghi Industries Ltd. – 395 employees
2. Ace Designers Limited – 200 employees
3. Graphite India Limited – 415 employees
4. Jay Bharat Maruti Ltd. – 461 employees

1. Sanghi Industries Ltd.—Highlights

Sector: Cement producer

Number of Employees: 395

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Total company commitment to customer satisfaction
- Upskilling workforce to ensure they can use state-of-the-art technologies and adhere to quality and delivery schedules

Keys to Success:

- Philosophy of embracing change, which runs through all corporate activities, including training and development
- Focus on customer satisfaction and listening to customers to help customers be more successful in their own businesses
- Alignment of all internal decision including equipment purchases, processes and employee skills development with customer satisfaction
- Training relevant and effective for individuals and for the well being of the organization

Critical Partnerships:

- India Brand Equity Foundation, a public-private partnership between the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry whose primary objective is to build positive economic perceptions of India globally

Outcomes:

- Minimized waste
- Accidents and fire hazards avoided
- Energy conserved
- Customers extremely satisfied
- Increased flexibility to respond to rapidly changing customer needs
- Efficient distribution network, based on long-term relationships secured
- Quality products delivered on time at competitive prices

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

2. Ace Designers Limited—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 200

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Raise quality standards to meet and maintain ISO certification criteria
- Upskilling workforce to support introduction of state-of-the-art technology
- Being able to retool quickly to produce custom products

Keys to Success:

- Management support for training to build core competencies of workforce
- Focusing on producing quality results through training to ensure workers perform tasks correctly the “first time” as very little time is spent on post-production inspection to catch errors
- Ensuring that operators find their equipment easy to use and are supported when they encounter problems in their job tasks
- Operators need training to follow standard procedures

Critical Partnerships:

- India Brand Equity Foundation, a public–private partnership between the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry whose primary objective is to build positive economic perceptions of India globally

Outcomes:

- Better information sharing
- More accurate inventory control
- Improved on-time delivery schedule
- More competitive pricing based on most current inventory and costing models available
- Planning has improved; seamless coordination between departments allows customer requirements and design changes to be implemented between production and assembly functions without jeopardizing manufacturing schedules
- Efficiencies in inventory management have allowed manufacturing inventory to be reduced by 20 per cent
- Accurate data for manufacturing decisions has made for improvements in online work order status monitoring and machine utilization

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- ISO 9001 certification

3. Graphite India Limited—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 415

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Market shifts cased the company to change its focus to specialty products using state-of-the-art technology
- Upskilling workforce to support operation of new technology

Keys to Success:

- Management support for training to create a more flexible, adaptable and innovative workforce
- Training in diversity acceptance and cultural well being to build a healthy team spirit in the workplace
- Commitment to keeping employee development ahead of market shifts

Critical Partnerships:

- India Brand Equity Foundation, a public–private partnership between the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry whose primary objective is to build positive economic perceptions of India globally

Outcomes:

- Enhanced capacity to manufacture effectively with a low cost structure
- Developed broader product base
- Delivered products in a more timely fashion
- Built presence in more global markets
- Improved cross-cultural collaboration among workers
- Healthy team spirit developed
- Improved cost effectiveness

Awards Won:

- In 2004, Graphite India Limited was chosen as one of Forbes Global's "Best Under a Billion" companies

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

4. Jay Bharat Maruti Ltd.—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 461

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling to support adoption of world class technological systems to meet world class standards
- Deepening capacity of workforce to operate processes and meet and surpass world class standards of excellence
- Increasing flexibility and innovative capacity of workforce to respond rapidly to changing market conditions

Keys to Success:

- Management support for building the capacity of the organization to compete globally
- “Focus Weeks” support training on specific topics for all employees
- Company celebrations promote an energetic, enthusiastic workforce
- Hiring for attitude, training for skills
- Regular management committee meetings and management review meetings enable employees to interact directly with top management
- Employee competencies are regularly assessed
- Appropriate training and development programs are designed to accommodate individual employees’ learning needs in the areas of technology, management, leadership, culture and soft skills

Critical Partnerships:

- India Brand Equity Foundation, a public–private partnership between the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry whose primary objective is to build positive economic perceptions of India globally
- Confederation of Indian Industry, a not-for-profit, industry led and industry managed organization that works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the growth of industry in India

Outcomes:

- Increased professionalism of employee base
- Increased capacity and flexibility of workforce to respond rapidly to changing market conditions
- Improved safety
- Enhanced commitment to quality
- More enthusiastic workforce

Awards Won:

- In 2005 and 2006, the company was selected to receive a certificate for Significant Achievement in the Confederation of Indian Industry and Export–Import Bank of India (CII-EXIM) Bank Awards for Excellence
- In 2004 the company won the Award for Business Excellence in the category of “Strong Commitment to Excel”

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

Ireland

1. Ballybay Credit Union – 6 employees
2. Halifax Insurance Ireland – 330 employees
3. Hochtief Facility Management Ireland – 215 employees
4. RecruitIreland.com – 15 employees
5. The Glen Gallery – 4 employees
6. Thomson Financial Ireland Ltd. – 80 employees
7. 2020 Strategies – 6 employees
8. Alternative Cater Hire – 25 employees
9. AVA Systems Limited – 9 employees
10. ICI Dulux Paints Ireland – 137 employees
11. Ardkeen Quality Food Store – 130 employees

1. Ballybay Credit Union Limited—Highlights

Sector: Financial Services

Number of Employees: 6

Business Need(s) Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving the credit union's products and quality of service to its members
- Enlarging customer base
- Improving employee self-confidence
- Promoting continuous learning in a knowledge-intensive business
- Delivering on new business plan
- Ensuring company meets compliance and governance standards for the financial industry established by legislation in 2000

Keys to Success:

- One-on-one between manager and each employee to identify their need for further knowledge
- Regular informal "job chats"
- Open-forum team meetings that any staff member can call when they perceive a need for group discussion
- Annual off-site training day for all staff and 11 volunteer Directors
- Structured formal training on financial industry and governance requirements for the Credit Union's volunteer directors

Critical Partnerships:

- Four area credit unions who agreed to work jointly on business plans—which none of them had, but which they needed to earn *Excellence Through People* certification
- Local technical business college to recommend a lecturer who could facilitate workshops to develop business plans
- Irish League of Credit Unions
- Red Cross
- SkillsNET Ltd, a state-funded industry training network See www.skillsnet.com
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/

Outcomes:

- Improved customer care
- Half of the staff have gained Red Cross certification in First Aid
- Volunteer Directors have been trained on the financial industry and governance before such training is mandatory
- Interest rates for loans dropped to reflect better repayment behaviours of members (supported by employee training)
- 5per cent Education, Training and Personal Development and community loan rate established to support community development and improved member skills and knowledge, presumably leading to making members more credit worthy or better credit risks
- Enlarged customer base
- Higher profile in rural area
- Compliance with recently introduced Irish legislation requiring employees of financial institutions to have minimum standards of financial training

Awards Won:

- In 2006, Ballybay Credit Union earned *Excellence Through People* accreditation

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm
- Red Cross certification in First Aid
- Irish legislation requiring employees of financial institutions to have minimum standards of financial training

2. Halifax Insurance Ireland—Highlights

Sector: Financial Services

Number of Employees: 330

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling to become better at customer service

Keys to Success:

- Support of CEO and senior management team
- Dedicated training and development staff
- Classroom based, utilizing e-learning
- Employees encouraged and supported to develop their skills beyond their current job role

Critical Partnerships:

- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/
- Irish Institute of Training & Development See www.iitd.ie/display_full.asp?ObjectID=1061&recordid=35
- SkillsNET Ltd, a state-funded industry training network See www.skillsnet.com

Outcomes:

- Higher rate of internal promotions / transfers
- Highly skilled workforce capable of meeting fast-changing job requirements
- Highest company-wide employee satisfaction ratings for Training and Development

Awards Won:

- 2007 Finalist for the Irish Institute of Training & Development/FÁS National Training Award
- 2004 50 Best Companies to Work for in Ireland (overall winner in the 250–500 employees category)
- *Excellence Through People* certification

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

3. Hochtief Facility Management Ireland—Highlights

Sector: Facilities Management, IT Services

Number of Employees: 215

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Need to multiskill staff
- Reduce turnover rates
- Provide essential IT training to support service delivery

Keys to Success:

- Company sponsored Educational Assistance Program paying for 50–100 per cent of the cost of educational courses depending on relevance to business and / or individual employee's job
- Cross-training
- Management support
- Sometimes training is done on clients' job sites

Critical Partnerships:

- Clients, who are regarded as partners in the training process
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/
- Irish Institute of Training & Development See www.iitd.ie/display_full.asp?ObjectID=1061&recordid=35

Outcomes:

- Reduced turnover
- Multiskilled workforce
- Improved employee self-confidence

Awards Won:

- 2006 Irish Institute of Training & Development/FÁS National Training Award
- *Excellence Through People* certification

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

4. RecruitIreland.com—Highlights

Sector: HR Services, Sales and Marketing

Number of Employees: 15

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Technical training
- Upskilling to meet expanding client needs
- Enhancing team culture, work ethic

Keys to Success:

- Use of outside facilitators to conduct sessions on core company values
- Maintaining broad vision of training beyond classroom courses
- Peer training on technical skills
- Sales and marketing training delivered by outside experts, supplemented by one-on-one internal follow up and team meetings
- Training experiences are shared and discussed among the 13 subsidiary companies held by the parent company, TCH

Critical Partnerships:

- External trainers selected through face-to-face meetings with Sales Manager and reference checks
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/
- Irish Institute of Training & Development See www.iitd.ie/display_full.asp?ObjectID=1061&recordid=35

Outcomes:

- Reduced turnover rates
- Improved skills
- Improved employee self-confidence

Awards Won:

- 2004–2006 *Excellence Through People* accreditation

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

5. Training at The Glen Gallery—Highlights

Sector: Sales and Marketing

Number of Employees: 4

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving employee understanding of the industry and the role they play in it.
- Improving customer service.

Keys to Success:

- One-on-one coaching.
- Partnering with Local County Development Office to take advantage of nearby training opportunities.
- Accountability for applying learning on the job through performance reviews.

Critical Partnerships:

- Local County Development Office—for nearby training opportunities.
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority, see www.fas.ie/en/.

Outcomes:

- Improved knowledge and understanding of business and industry.
- Enhanced compliance with manufacturing and in-store processes.

Awards Won:

- *Excellence Through People* accreditation.

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management. See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

6. Thomson Financial Ireland Ltd.—Highlights

Sector: Financial Services

Number of Employees: 80

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Need to compete in a knowledge-intensive environment
- Providing language and financial literacy training for foreign-born workers
- Enhancing IT systems skills

Keys to Success:

- Management support
- Training needs are assessed and reviewed by managers
- Training content is developed in house through parent company
- External courses are sourced through parent company
- Training is delivered via e-learning, job sharing and in-house manuals
- Training is assessed by employers and reviewed by managers and training instructor
- Quality audits done by Quality Control Team
- Feedback from Client Services representatives who work directly with firm's customers

Critical Partnerships:

- Thomson University run by parent company Thomson Financial
- European Computer Driving Licence Foundation, which is the global governing body for the European Computer Driving License computer skills certification program See www.ecdl.com/publisher/index.jsp
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/
- Irish Institute of Training & Development See www.iitd.ie/display_full.asp?ObjectID=1061&recordid=35

Outcomes:

- Increased customer satisfaction
- Increased employee productivity
- Improved employee self-confidence
- All employees earn their European Computer Driving License

Awards Won:

- Thomson Financial Ireland won a 2007 Irish Institute of Training & Development National Training Award in the 51–250 employee category

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm
- European Computer Driving Licence Foundation, which is the global governing body for the European Computer Driving License computer skills certification program See www.ecdl.com/publisher/index.jsp

7. 2020 Strategies—Highlights

Sector: Internet, web site IT services

Number of Employees: 6

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling rapidly assembled staff
- Launching new website builder SitesToGo product in 2002 just after the dot com crash and at a time when web site prices in Ireland were at their highest
- Helping clients break through jargon and take control of their own web site content
- Upskilling employees in the fast-moving field of e-commerce
- Remaining competitive
- Annual customer survey drives training agenda

Keys to Success:

- Company focuses on customer needs, not technology
- Employees dedicate 5 per cent of their working time to training and development
- Use of individual mentoring as well as formal training
- All employees have a training assessment as part of their annual performance appraisal
- Employee evaluations include an assessment of the impact of training on business
- Cross training to ensure that employers can cover each other with spikes in demand

Critical Partnerships:

- *Excellence Through People*

Outcomes:

- Flexible workforce with broad set of specialized skills
- Employees play an active role in developing functionality of software applying their training
- SitesToGo now powers more than 600 web sites

Awards Won:

- *Excellence Through People* accreditation

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

8. Alternative Cater Hire—Highlights

Sector: Catering and event equipment rental

Number of Employees: 25, including 15 full time and 10 part time, varying with seasonal demand

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling managers and staff the wake of rapid growth in business and hiring of new managers and staff
- Training staff for compliance with health and safety standards
- Ensuring staff have management skills to be promoted from within
- Building management capacity

Keys to Success:

- Management staff sent on courses to develop their management skills
- Individual employees are selected for training depending on their current skill levels and potential job roles
- Training linked to business needs
- Newly-trained staff members are accountable for putting their training into action by formulating updated job objectives and reporting outcomes
- Hiring for attitude, training for skills

Critical Partnerships:

- Privately run training centres used to deliver health and safety training
- Irish Small and Medium Enterprise (ISME) is relied on for course offerings for managers See <http://www.isme.ie/>

Outcomes:

- Decrease in insurance premiums as employees complete health and safety training
- Enhanced compliance with manufacturing and in-store processes
- Increased promotion from within
- Employees love receiving training

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Training linked to health and safety compliance

9. AVA Systems—Highlights

Sector: IT Services, Equipment Rental

Number of Employees: 9

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Three founding directions had no previous business ownership experience and needed management training
- Ensuring employees are well rounded and able to take ownership of company operations
- Ensuring employees who work offsite acquire a Safe Pass certifying they have training in building site safety

Keys to Success:

- One-on-one coaching
- Partnering with Local County Development Office to take advantage of nearby training opportunities
- Accountability for applying learning on the job through performance reviews

Critical Partnerships:

- External trainers
- Irish Management Institute (now Enterprise Ireland) See www.enterpriseireland.com
- Irish Business and Employers Confederation
- Sligo County Enterprise Board
- Irish Department of Trade and Enterprise; which offers heavily-subsidized courses (in areas such as customer care, sales training and publicity) for SMEs with under 10 employees
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/

Outcomes:

- More efficient company systems
- Employees more open to training opportunities and possibility of doing thing better
- Training makes AVA a draw to potential employees coming from larger organizations
- Employees able to perform a much broader range of tasks than they were originally hired to perform

Awards Won:

- *Excellence Through People* accreditation
- In 2004 AVA won the Irish Institute for Training and Development's National Training Award for the SME sector and won another award for Outstanding Achievement in 2005 See www.iitd.ie/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterpriseireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

10. ICI Dulux Paints Ireland—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing, Sales and Marketing, Logistics

Number of Employees: 167 (137 permanent full time and 30 temporary full time)

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Enhancing employee flexibility to accept new responsibilities and be promoted internally
- Improving employee skills to ensure competitiveness

Keys to Success:

- Identification of high performers
- Use of personal coaching
- Alignment of training with business plans
- Accountability for applying learning on the job through performance reviews

Critical Partnerships:

- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/
- Irish Institute of Training & Development See www.iitd.ie/display_full.asp?ObjectID=1061&recordid=35
- SkillsNET Ltd, a state-funded industry training network See www.skillsnet.com

Outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Multiskilled workforce
- Improved employee self-confidence

Awards Won:

- 2006 Irish Institute of Training & Development/FÁS National Training Award
- 2007 Platinum-Level *Excellence Through People* accreditation

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterprise-ireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

11. Ardkeen Quality Food Store—Highlights

Sector: Retail specialty foods

Number of Employees: 130

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving employee understanding of local market and specialty foods
- Upskilling in food handling skills (bakery, salads, prepared meals), wine knowledge
- Improving customer service skills

Keys to Success:

- In-house training coordinator
- External consultants brought in for specialized skills such as wine knowledge
- Managers trained through external courses with an external HR consultant
- 18–24 month training plan identifying key people and training needs across different categories of employees
- Employees meet annually with managers (sometimes more often) to identify their individual training needs
- Small-group, in-house courses on such topics as food handling, merchandizing
- Peer training
- Employees self-assess training on a document, which requires their managers' sign off
- Identifying desired changes managers will try to make in their departments before taking training
- Annual Customer Care Program takes a day for all employees to focus on a specific area of customer care

Critical Partnerships:

- External consultants
- CREST Skillnet (a government-funded training network for independent retailers) See www.crestireland.com/
- FÁS, the Irish National Training and Employment Authority See www.fas.ie/en/

Outcomes:

- Improved employee morale
- Lower turnover rate among full-time staff
- Better customer relations
- Enhanced knowledge of local markets, specialty items, food handling
- Employees welcome cross training

Awards Won:

- *Excellence Through People* accreditation

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- *Excellence Through People*, Ireland's national standard for human resource management See www.enterpriseireland.com/Grow/People/ETP.htm

New Zealand

1. DDB New Zealand Limited – 250 employees
2. HortResearch – 500 employees
3. Pinepac – 150 employees
4. Outward Bound New Zealand – 55 employees
5. Coll Electrical Limited – 60 employees
6. Marley New Zealand Limited – 220 employees

1. DDB New Zealand Limited—Highlights

Sector: Marketing and Communications

Number of Employees: 250

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Enhancing productivity releasing creativity in people

Keys to Success:

- *Devolving* the responsibility of learning away from the corporate HR function and into the hands of managers and employees
- Internally-led training modules facilitated in house by DDB NZ experts
- Lunch and learn seminars
- Tailored training programs provided by external providers
- DDBU international courses that give employees opportunities to learn from and share with DDB colleagues from around the world
- DDB NZ employees who attend international courses are required to share their learning and experiences with co-workers

Critical Partnerships:

- External training providers
- Communication Agencies Association of New Zealand See www.caanz.co.nz/v2/about.asp
- DDB University—a corporate university

Outcomes:

- Reduced staff turnover
- Improved job satisfaction
- Increased productivity

Awards Won:

- In 2005, DDB was recognized as one of the 20 best places to work in New Zealand

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

2. HortResearch—Highlights

Sector: Agricultural Research

Number of Employees: 500

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Highly qualified subject experts need to improve their management and leadership skills

Keys to Success:

- Mapped out core competencies, developed learning modules
- Training builds on strengths of individuals
- Full support from management and HR team
- Feedforward coaching, which places emphasis on what a person needs to do in the future to develop, as opposed to feedback, which reviews what a person has already done

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Enhanced productivity
- Improved staff morale
- Improved leadership skills

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

3. Pinepac—Highlights

Sector: Forestry, manufacturing

Number of Employees: 150

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Highly qualified subject experts need to improve their management and leadership skills

Keys to Success:

- On-site Workbase tutors using Workbase learning courses and exams
- Partnership with Workbase
- Using company documents as basis for contextualized language training
- One-on-one training to overcome the stigma associated with poor literacy
- Feedforward coaching, which places emphasis on what a person needs to do in the future to develop, as opposed to feedback, which reviews what a person has already done
- Government funding
- Classroom-based tutoring and e-learning
- Training customized to needs of individual learners

Critical Partnerships:

- Workbase See www.workbase.org.nz

• **Outcomes:**

- Improved staff retention
- Reduced accidents
- Improved communications

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

4. Outward Bound New Zealand—Highlights

Sector: Tourism

Number of Employees: 55

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving communication between head office and operating divisions

Keys to Success:

- Training on core Outward Bound NZ competencies (e.g., leadership skills, communication skills, teamwork skills) is developed and delivered in house
- Additional, more advanced training, training is available from external sources
- New recruits observe an experienced instructor deliver a complete course and, where necessary, new recruits receive appropriate competency training
- New instructors are paired with an experienced instructor when they deliver courses for the first time
- Peer mentoring occurs on the job
- Once new instructors have delivered their first course, they receive a full performance evaluation and receive further training as appropriate
- After four months of peer mentoring and training new instructors are deemed to be full-fledged instructors
- All instructors have a competency manual and training checklist that must be completed and signed off by the training manager
- Mentoring and coaching for all instructors takes place every month
- A 360 feedback model is used to assess the performance of all operational staff and managers on service delivery
- Each year, Outward Bound hosts an international staff symposium with employees from 47 Outward Bound Schools in 42 countries

Critical Partnerships:

- Outward Bound Schools in 42 countries

Outcomes:

- Increased productivity
- Staff better equipped to address challenges or obstacles
- Improved decision making

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

5. Coll Electrical Limited—Highlights

Sector: Engineering

Number of Employees: 60

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Owner needed to delegate control and maintain quality as company expanded
- Improving management practices

Keys to Success:

- Partnership with Electro Technology Industry Training Organization and Investors in People to set good levels of practice and maximize full potential of workers
- Clear alignment between training and bottom line results
- Establishing clear pathways and training opportunities
- Compensation linked to performance
- Training linked to job requirements

Critical Partnerships:

- Electro Technology Industry Training Organization
- Investors in People

Outcomes:

- Coll Electrical tripled in size, tripled its profits and tripled its staff retention rates
- Improved health and safety
- Increased productivity
- Reduction in wastage
- Improved quality

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Investors in People

6. Marley New Zealand Limited—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 220

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Inaccuracies in day-to-day documentation and operations
- Improving customer satisfaction and productivity levels

Keys to Success:

- On-site Workbase tutors using Workbase learning courses and exams
- Partnership with Plastics and Materials Processing Industry Training Organization and Workbase
- Linking pay to skill levels, which encourages employees to complete standardized training

Critical Partnerships:

- Plastics and Materials Processing Industry Training Organization See www.pampito.org.nz
- Workbase See www.workbase.org.nz

Outcomes:

- Reduced error rates
- Improved inventory control
- Improved communications

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Plastics and Materials Processing Industry Training Organization learning framework based on national industry standards
- Employees gain opportunity to obtain progressively higher levels of industry certification (e.g., plastics processing technology certification, creative logistics certification, occupational health and safety certification)

Norway

1. DDB Reklamebyrå Oslo – 84 employees
2. Klæburuten AS – 80 employees
3. Mo Industrittransport AS – 135 employees
4. Sør-Norge Aluminium AS – 390 employees
5. Auranor Luftfordeling AS – 120 employees
6. Bramiljøs Eidskog Næringssservice KF – 45 employees

1. DDB Reklamebyrå Oslo—Highlights

Sector: Advertising, Mass communication

Number of Employees: 84

Business Needs Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Strengthening company's competitiveness in the market and the value of its services
- Upskilling senior employees to enhance their theoretical knowledge of culture studies, language, semiotics and communication to boost their creativity and be able to create and express ideas in new ways
- Creating shared understanding among employees with different education and experience
- Adopting "golden wheel" philosophy that solid finances allow investment in competencies, which in turn improves finances

Keys to Success:

- Partnering with Institute of Cultural Studies at the University of Oslo to develop a professional curriculum
- Varying training intensity based on amount of time at individual employee's disposal
- Focusing not on individual heroes but on professionalism of whole organization
- Establishing relevance of training to daily professional life before partnering with university
- Using learning to challenge employee perspectives rather than to convey success stories that tend to entrench old ways of thinking and doing
- Making workplace more egalitarian by offering training not just to senior creative staff responsible for brand strategy and communication but to all employees who have creative input in the company
- In-house company training through an internal coach brings practical relevance to theoretical training from the University, and focuses on just-in-time skills development for specific projects.
- Partnered with Department of Humanities at the University of Oslo and with Theology Department at the University of Oslo to explore ways to make their advertising more ethical
- Treating training as a long-term endeavour
- Evaluation is ongoing and includes internal evaluations and neutral third party course evaluations

Critical Partnership(s):

- Institute of Cultural Studies at the University of Oslo
- Department of Humanities, University of Oslo
- Theology Department, University of Oslo

Outcomes:

- Increased employee and company commitment to continuous competency development
- Enhanced capacity of company to deliver creative and quality advertising
- Better consumer response to ethical messages based on respect for consumer
- Improved outcomes for advertising clients
- More value created for clients
- Lowest employee turnover among Norway's advertising agencies

Awards Won:

- In 2001, ranked #1 Agency of the Year by Campaign and Norsk Gallup
- From 2002 to 2004 ranked #2 Agency of the year by Campaign and Norsk Gallup
- From 2001 to 2003, ranked #1 in industry's Gold Pencil competition for creative innovation in advertising
- Voted the most attractive place to work in the advertising field several times since the introduction of training program
- In 2005, the company was a finalist for the Vox Prize—a nationally recognized government learning award—for effective workplace training in Norway See: www.vox.no

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- External training counts for two credits at the Institute of Cultural Studies at the University of Oslo towards the University's Bachelor's degree program in culture and communication

2. Klæburuten AS—Highlights

Sector: Public transportation

Number of Employees: 110 (80 full time and 30 part time)

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving customer service
- Ensuring drivers are fully competent in safety training, first aid responsiveness and crisis management
- Providing computer skills training and English language tutoring
- Developing core competencies of employees to increase business and improve financial performance

Keys to Success:

- Partnered with the local government (Sør-Trøndelag County) and the transport worker union to establish a competency development program
- Staff recorded daily tasks and took note of what they did well and what they had problems with
- Identified organizational competency priorities: new sales, new products and services and meeting state regulations
- Built competency training program based on full knowledge of what employees do or need to do in their jobs and suitable interventions to develop needed skills
- Employees decide which training courses they feel are required to perform their jobs effectively
- Training matches needs of individuals and organization
- Project group made up of management, employees, union representatives and local government officials created to manage and monitor day-to-day operations of competency development program
- Employees trained to certification standards
- Use of hands-on simulations, classroom-based courses and on-the-road training
- Training consists of a blend of practical exercises, group work and individual learning
- Government funding for adult education
- Some courses run outside work hours, and it is expected that workers will contribute some of their time without pay

Critical Partnerships:

- Local government (Sør-Trøndelag County)
- Mid-Norwegian transport worker union
- External training providers (e.g., al Guard, rescue teams)

Outcomes:

- All employees have participated in safety, first aid, disaster, crisis management training
- 40 drivers (half the drivers) have earned their driver's certification
- 20 employees have completed a computer course
- 10 employees have participated in English as a Second Language (ESL) training
- customer service levels improved
- Customer satisfaction levels increased
- Employee self-confidence increased
- Lifelong learning culture established

Awards Won:

- In 2006, the company was awarded the Vox Prize—a nationally recognized government learning award—for effective workplace training in Norway

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Driver certification

3. Mo Industritransport AS—Highlights

Sector: Transportation and logistics

Number of Employees: 135

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Giving employees insights into their customers' logistical chains to enable them to provide superior services
- Developing employees understanding of the industry so they know where they add value
- Upskilling to improve literacy skills as a base for job-specific training
- Having workers achieve certification in Materials Administration
- Providing logistics training

Keys to Success:

- Partnered with Norsk Industris (see below) who offer correspondence course leading to certification in Materials Administration
- Enhancing employees' reading and writing skills to ensure successful completion of correspondence coursework leading to certification in Materials Administration
- Offering 20 hours of practical reading and writing exercises
- 16 hour logistics course to enhance employees' knowledge and understanding of the services they provide and better appreciate the needs of their customers
- Logistics course is delivered by company's main clients, and consists of lectures that focus on their specific logistics systems—this enables employees to hear from their most important stakeholders
- Information sessions to encourage participate in certification program are hosted by representatives from training office of Norsk Industris
- Training programs are voluntary
- Training is funded entirely by company
- Achieving certification is tied to a pay raise

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with Norsk Industris (the Federation of Norwegian Industries)
- Main clients, who deliver logistics training

Outcomes:

- 100 employees have required practical experience to earn certification in Materials Administration
- 48 employees have participated in certification program
- Employees better understand the importance and value they offer to customers
- Employee morale, confidence and self-esteem has increased
- Employees appreciate investment company makes in them and demonstrate their commitment to the company
- Credibility and professionalism of company is enhanced through certification of employees
- More successful recruitment and retention of high quality employees
- Improved literacy skills
- Increased employee engagement in process of learning
- Employees empowered to promote change within company
- Company has skills and knowledge to succeed in the future

Awards Won:

- In 2006, the company was a finalist for the Vox Prize—a nationally recognized government learning award—for effective workplace training in Norway

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Industry logistics training
- Employee certification in Materials Administration

4. Sør-Norge Aluminium AS—Highlights

Sector: Aluminum production

Number of Employees: 390

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Increasing the level of teamwork among employees
- Improving workplace literacy
- Improving workplace safety

Keys to Success:

- Management support
- Support of local chemical workers' union Working Environment Committee
- Partnerships (see Critical Partnerships below)
- Company is an approved educational institute in 9 subjects
- Employees complete test upon enrollment in specialized training institute to gauge their overall competency levels and tailor training to each individual
- Safety training that focuses on employees' *attitudes* as well as knowledge and capabilities is the cornerstone of company training program
- The reading and writing course reinforces safety training
- Employees participate in cross-disciplinary process training
- Recognized apprenticeship training ensures future capacity
- Creation of work environment where acceptance of all people and their abilities is a priority

Critical Partnerships:

- Worker groups
- Bergen University
- Workers' Educational Association—an international body concerned with labour education
- Collaborated with other aluminum companies to develop specialized training institute for specialist operators

Outcomes:

- Decrease in work-related accidents
- Increase in confidence of employees
- Improved communication and teamwork among employees
- Increased openness among employees who do not hide their difficulty with reading and writing
- 50 operators have participated in cross-disciplinary metallurgical process training

Awards Won:

- Finalist for the 2006 Vox prize, a nationally recognized government learning award for effective workplace training in Norway

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Upon completion of training courses, employees receive certification from the Workers' Educational Association

5. Auranor Luftfordeling AS—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 120

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Multiskilling employees to increase capacity of company to move employees around to areas/machines needed to fulfill orders more quickly and efficiently
- Linking training plan with corporate goals and objectives
- Reducing absenteeism and incidence of repetitive strain injuries

Keys to Success:

- Job rotation gives employees a greater understanding of the variety of tasks that other workers perform and how each individual position contributes to the production process
- Employees motivated to participate in training that qualifies them for industry-recognized certification and offers them a pay raise
- Formal certification program for all workers and apprentices
- Each of 12 work groups led by a supervisor or advisor has its own specific training plan
- Partner with local/community learning institutions for theoretical education on metal product manufacturing
- Training completed during work hours in collaboration with employees' immediate supervisors
- Looking at training not from a corporate or even a personal perspective but from a work unit perspective

Critical Partnerships:

- Local/community learning institutions for theoretical education on metal product manufacturing

Outcomes:

- Flexible, adaptable, multiskilled workforce
- Increased capacity to fill orders more quickly
- Flexibility to schedule production based on number of pending orders and deadlines for deliverables
- Production continues smoothly even with unforeseen increases in demand or decreases in supply of labour
- Reduced absenteeism
- Enhanced productivity
- Reduced incidence of repetitive work-related stress injuries
- Improved morale
- Business growth
- Every production worker at Auranor (80) has successfully completed at least one certificate (e.g., metal product manufacturing, industrial mechanics)
- Many workers have completed two or more certificates

Awards Won:

- In 2006, the company was a finalist for the Vox Prize—a nationally recognized government learning award—for effective workplace training in Norway

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Industry-recognized certification in metal product manufacturing, industrial mechanics, terminal workers and transportation

6. Bramiljø, Eidskog Næringservice KF—Highlights

Sector: Healthcare

Number of Employees: 45

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Many new employees join the company with poorly developed skills and little experience of knowledge about their jobs
- Business is always adapting and developing, requiring new skill sets
- Upskilling is crucial to improving attractiveness of company's services to public and private customers

Keys to Success:

- Partnered with Hedmark University College (see below)
- Willingness to invest in all employees—competitors provide limited amounts of basic training to their lowest skilled employees
- Company developed a series of training activities that target specific skill sets and daily work experiences of individual workers regardless of years of service or function
- Selection for training is based on individual employees' wishes, abilities and experiences
- Training aligned with needs of organization
- Open communication between management and employees facilitates discussion of training opportunities that are mutually beneficial to employee and organization
- Use of study groups, seminars, mentoring
- When workers participate in external seminars they return to the workplace and pass on their knowledge to other employees

Critical Partnerships:

- Partnered with Hedmark University College to receive trade diploma in the maintenance field

Outcomes:

- Culture of learning and skills development reinforced
- Increase in client satisfaction
- Workforce take responsibility for the work and services the company offers
- Employees more engaged and have more rewarding careers
- Quality of services improved
- More successful recruitment and retention of both genders
- Reduced absenteeism rates
- Decreased repetitive strain injuries due to greater variety of work tasks that employees take on
- 9 employees (20 per cent of staff) have obtained trade diplomas

Awards Won:

- In 2005, the company was awarded the Vox Prize—a nationally recognized government learning award—for effective workplace training in Norway

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Partnered with Hedmark University College to receive trade diploma in the maintenance field in 1998
- 9 employees have obtained their trade diplomas

Scotland

1. Greco UK Limited – 40 employees
2. CairnGorm Mountain – 80 employees
3. The Point Hotel – 89 employees
4. Remploy Stirling – 55 employees
5. Solas Scotland – 60 employees
6. The Buccleuch Arms Hotel – 24 employees

1. Gerco UK Limited—Highlights

Sector: Construction

Number of Employees: 40–50

Business Need(s) Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling construction workforce

Keys to Success:

- In-house training centre for Gerco's own employees and those of other companies
- Training and assessment centre is Construction Industry Training Board accredited and delivers the National Vocational Qualifications/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs/SVQs)
- Gerco's contract managers provide skills assessment expertise, which enables workers who already have relevant skills to gain NVQ/SVQ qualifications through on-site workplace assessment rather than through the traditional college-based skills training and assessment route
- Establishing an expectation of very high-level skills accreditation for all employees
- Employees and managers together complete Personal Development Plans describing what training each employee needs
- Skills training is done by a mentor (a colleague, supervisor or contract manager), with the supervisor identifying when the agreed-on training has been successfully completed

Critical Partnerships:

- Construction Industry Training Board, which assesses skills and accredits training centres
- National Vocational Qualifications/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs/SVQs)
- UK Fire Industry
- Scottish Enterprise

Outcomes:

- 25per cent reduction in remedial work
- 25per cent increase in performance productivity
- 40per cent increase in skills flexibility, with many operatives holding NVQs in two or three different skills levels
- Using its on-site training process, Gerco has:
 - Achieved NVQ's in Passive Fire Protection for all PFP operatives; developed in-house NVQ level 3 in Passive Fire Protection and Accredited Contract Managers with NVQ; achieved NVQ's for substantial numbers of Dry Liners and Ceiling Fixers; and achieved a flexible workforce with many operatives having NVQ's in two and three skills
 - A workforce that is almost 100per cent Construction Skills Certification Scheme-carded and 80per cent accredited with NVQs
- Improved employee loyalty and satisfaction as evidenced by lower employee turnover
- Increased self-confidence and motivation among employees who now hold a nationally-recognized skills accreditation
- A company work ethic that now predominantly regards NVQs and employee development in a positive light rather than as useless and onerous requirements

Awards Won:

- Recognition for Excellence in Skills and Learning at the Scottish Enterprise Awards See www.scottish-enterprise.com/
- *Investors in People* accreditation See www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/Pages/Home.aspx
- A 2005 UK Fire Industry Installer of the Year Award See www.gerco.co.uk/passive_fire_protection.htm

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Construction Industry Training Board, which assesses skills and accredits training centres
- Construction Skills Certification Scheme See www.cscs.uk.com/RunScript.asp?p=ASP\pq0.asp
- *Investors in People* accreditation
- National Vocational Qualifications/Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs/SVQs) system See www.qca.org.uk/qca_6640.aspx; see also www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/CCC_FirstPage.jsp
- Prestigious third-party accreditation through FIRAS (the fire industry national body), awarded on the basis of company practices and skills/formal qualifications held by employees See www.firas-database.co.uk/

2. CairnGorm Mountain Limited—Highlights

Sector: Tourism

Number of Employees: 80

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling workers in response to change in core business
- Being more responsive to customer feedback
- Investing in a culture of learning in anticipation of future business change

Keys to Success:

- Creating a workplace culture of trying to help employees develop themselves
- Training begins with a half-day induction for new employees run by the CEO, who explains the company mission, gives a “big picture” view of operations and how people fit into them
- Weekly 30–60 minute toolbox talk to share training on various topics
- Once or twice a year the business closes for a full day of off-site training for managers
- Training coordinator is responsible for identifying skills training needs and arranges for in-house or external courses
- Managers are trained through mentoring and courses
- Training is evaluated prior to training, immediately after delivery and six months later
- Managers are held responsible for ensuring training shows tangible benefits in employees’ work
- Each week the CEO leads a “magic circle” in which all staff gather together to share key information; this gets everyone to contribute
- There are regular “goldfish bowl” sessions in which all employees gather and take turns sitting at the executive table to pose questions and comments to senior management

Critical Partnerships:

- CairnGorm National Park Authority

Outcomes:

- CairnGorm Mountain has become an accredited training centre offering courses to others
- Increased employee skills in first aid, hygiene and driving

Awards Won:

- CairnGorm Mountain has won a 2006 Business Excellence Award
- In 2005, the company won a National Training Award See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- UK National Training Award See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

3. The Point Hotel—Highlights

Sector: Hospitality

Number of Employees: 89

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Migrant workers from EU needing ESL training
- Record of poor customer service
- Upskilling staff and management

Keys to Success:

- Management training
- Cost sharing 50/50 employees/company
- Customized training with appraisal system
- 2 days of training per employee per year
- Partnership with local English-Speaking Union and Scottish Enterprise
- Training not only for jobs currently held but also for others they may choose in the future

Critical Partnerships:

- Local English-Speaking Union
- Scottish Enterprise
- IT training is subsidized by the €200 per person/per year Individual Learning Account program run by the national government

Outcomes:

- Increased staff retention
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Increased productivity

Awards Won:

- Won a service award for exceptional hospitality within 6 months of implementing training

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Return on Investment analysis with help of Scottish Enterprise

4. Remploy Stirling—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing, Employment services

Number of Employees: 55

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling for persons with disabilities
- Technical and health and safety skills for manufacturing
- Literacy and numeracy
- Computer skills

Keys to Success:

- Partnership with Community Learning and Development Service and Stirling Council
- Courses sourced through Leandirect Scotland and supplied by local tutors or colleges
- Personal development plan for each worker
- E-learning
- Paid time off for learning
- Employee feedback welcomed to improve learning

Critical Partnerships:

- Community Learning and Development Service
- Stirling Council
- Leandirect Scotland
- Local tutors, colleges

Outcomes:

- Safer workplace
- Increased skills
- Improved employee self-confidence

Awards Won:

- In 2004, Remploy Stirling won a UK National Training Award

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- UK National Training Award See www.nationaltrainingawards.com/

5. Solas Scotland—Highlights

Sector: Construction

Number of Employees: 60

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling older/mature workers with new skills
- Providing opportunities for younger employees to gain recognized credentials

Keys to Success:

- Partnership with Scottish Executive and New Deal
- The New Deal provides unemployed Britons with subsidized employment, work experience with employers, training linked to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) standards and help with essential skills
- Employers compensated for training through New Deal program
- Classroom-based training and on-the-job training with a qualified colleague/mentor

Critical Partnerships:

- Scottish Executive
- New Deal See www.delni.gov.uk/index/successthroughskills/skills-and-training-programmes-2/newdeal.htm

Outcomes:

- Increased employee productivity
- Hard-to-employee workers now gainfully employed

Awards Won:

- None

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) system See www.qca.org.uk/qca_6640.aspx
- NVQs are work-related, competence-based qualifications based on UK national occupations standards. NVQs cover current best practice, ability to adapt to future requirements and the knowledge and understanding that underpin performance
- NVQs are achieved through training and assessment. Candidates produce evidence of demonstrated performance, which are signed off by assessors

6. The Buccleuch Arms Hotel—Highlights

Sector: Hospitality

Number of Employees: 24

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- New manager wanted to increase emphasis on food and service among staff to differentiate hotel in market and build staff loyalty

Keys to Success:

- Inculcating a learning culture from the ground up to give employees faith in management's commitment to their long-term development
- Learning and development focuses on individual employees' aspirations, making employees excellent at specific functions and providing guests with a distinctively excellent experience throughout their stay
- Management solicits personal development needs from staff
- Much skills training is done by department heads and fellow employees
- Hiring focuses on applicant's willingness to study and be training

Critical Partnerships:

- Outside experts are brought in for wine education
- Staff are sent on industry courses for bartending
- Learndirect Scotland www.learndirectscotland.com/—individuals over 18 and living in Scotland could get up to £200 towards the cost of learning new skills with an individual learning account
- Scottish Enterprise

Outcomes:

- Sales increased by 105per cent due to improved food and service
- Hotel is fully staffed with a wait list of employee applicants
- Hotel has national reputation for service and food
- 5 members of staff have completed outside courses, which prompted them to buy their own home computers

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

United States

1. Army Management Staff College – 92 employees
2. Badger Mining Corporation – 177 employees
3. Triage Consulting Group – 229 employees
4. Holder Construction Company – 359 employees
5. Nevada Federal Credit Union – 308 employees
6. Lincoln Industries – 479 employees
7. Michigan State University Federal Credit Union – 331 employees
8. U.S. Engine Valve – 325 employees
9. Northwire Inc. – 122 employees
10. Bunkhouse Leather – 3 employees

1. Army Management Staff College—Highlights

Sector: Education

Number of Employees: 92

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Training army civilians as leaders to support military operations
- Developing management skills

Keys to Success:

- Feedback from managers and supervisors
- Combination of institutional training, operational (on-the-job) experience and self-development
- Use of blended learning, including classroom-based formal learning, e-learning and hosted online discussion groups for students

Critical Partnerships:

- Articulation agreements and formal collaboration with 5 universities
- Students can receive college credits from participating universities for their work at the Army Management Staff College

Outcomes:

- Increased leadership capacity in armed forces
- More educated civilian workforce
- Improved employee self-confidence

Awards Won:

- In 2003, ranked #14 in the ASTD BEST Awards See www.astd.org

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Articulation agreements with five universities

2. Badger Mining Corporation—Highlights

Sector: Mining

Number of Employees: 177

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- To remain competitive as a small company among giants while maintaining high quality standards

Keys to Success:

- Training begins as soon as an employee joins the company
- Linkage of employee development with succession planning
- 20per cent of annual budget goes to training (10 times the norm)
- New employees mentored in the company's values and standards

Critical Partnerships:

- With own staff, who participate in company decision making

Outcomes:

- Improved effectiveness of self-directed work teams who identify, evaluate and develop most profitable opportunities
- Quality standards maintained in a highly competitive environment
- Employees bring forth ideas and contribute to decision making in the company

Awards Won:

- For two years in a row, voted #1 Small Company to Work for in America in the Society for Human Resource Management's annual competition See www.shrm.org

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- ISO Certified

3. Triage Consulting Group—Highlights

Sector: Healthcare consulting

Number of Employees: 229

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Ensuring staff have specialized skill sets needed to work in a high performance, high-value-added environment
- Timely and relevant training is essential in a company that helps hospitals review underpayment and recover revenues and provide guidance relating to process improvement for managed care

Keys to Success:

- Employee involvement in the design and content of training to ensure maximum relevance
- Organization supports ongoing training, continuous feedback and a focus on work/life balance
- Over course of their first year, employees complete 15 training modules led by in-house and external experts
- Every six weeks, employees receive training in core business and health care related skills to help them grow in their careers—each employee receives an average of 238 hours of training annually
- Company Career Development Squad tracks on a monthly basis how individual employees are progressing
- Tracking Manager checks in formally with each employee every six months to monitor career progression and evaluate job performance
- Training is tailor made to meet needs of different employee categories, including Associates, Managers and Principals
- Employees receive formal classroom training as well as extensive onsite training at client locations
- New recruits assigned to experienced senior employees who act as their mentors during recruits' first 21 months with the organization

Critical Partnerships:

- With client firms in the managed healthcare industry whose sites and processes are used for Triage employee training

Outcomes:

- Increased promotion from within
- High performing entry level employees can manage their own projects and a direct report after 21 months of employment with the company
- Improved customer service—Triage has recovered over \$800 million for over 220 hospitals since 1994

Awards Won:

- In 2007, voted #6 Small Company to Work for In America in the Society of Human Resource Management's annual competition See www.shrm.org

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

4. Holder Construction Company—Highlights

Sector: Construction

Number of Employees: 359

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Upskilling workforce on job knowledge and skills to ensure repeat business

Keys to Success:

- Cross-peer networks to enhance internal communications and ensure workers learn from each other
- Formal classes, e-learning, on-the-job/hands-on learning, informal mentoring
- Most training developed in house

Critical Partnerships:

- None

Outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Repeat business

Awards Won:

- In 2007, voted #1 Medium Company to Work for in America in the Society for Human Resource Management's annual competition. See www.shrm.org

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

5. Nevada Federal Credit Union—Highlights

Sector: Financial Services

Number of Employees: 308

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Ensuring that employees are conversant with products and services, attentive to customer needs, committed to personal health and wellness and capable of making recommendations for improvements needed to improve business performance

Keys to Success:

- Supporting employee health and wellness and personal “financial fitness”
- Mentoring
- 30 incentive programs
- 60 training opportunities—each employee receives an average of 59 hours of training annually; the company allocates two per cent of its \$49 million annual budget to employee training
- 17 recognition programs
- Employee relations committee
- CEO chat room through which all employees from any of the organization’s 26 branches can ask questions

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Repeat business

Awards Won:

- In 2007, voted #6 Medium Company to Work for in America in the Society for Human Resource Management’s annual competition See www.shrm.org
- In 2006, the organization was awarded the Nevada State Psychological Association’s *Psychologically Healthy Workplace* Award for demonstrating commitment to excellence in all areas of psychological health and well being in the company and in the community See www.nevadapsychologists.org/
- Multiple-year winner of the Southern Nevada Human Resources Association’s *Best Place to Work* Awards See www.snhra.org/vegasbestplacetowork/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

6. Lincoln Industries—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 479

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- To improve performance of staff
- Maintenance of high quality
- Ensuring safe work environment

Keys to Success:

- Has its own Vision College for training and development
- Employees can sign up to be mentored by an executive
- Having a culture that is committed to the development of people
- Manager support for employee participation in training through Vision College
- 360-degree reviews
- Employee Roundtables allow employees at all levels to ask questions of the senior team

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Repeat business

Awards Won:

- In 2007, voted #11 Medium Company to Work for in America in the Society for Human Resource Management's annual competition
See www.shrm.org
- In 2004, the organization was awarded the Edgerton Quality Award for outstanding contributions to optical or photonic techniques See www.edgertonaward.com/
- Past recipient of the Nebraska Society of Human Resources Employer of the Year Award
See www.shrm.org/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

7. Michigan State University Federal Credit Union—Highlights

Sector: Financial Services

Number of Employees: 331

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Improving quality of financial services by investing in employee growth and development
- Building the skills and knowledge of employees

Keys to Success:

- Mentoring
- Five months of cross training for new hires in the Credit Union Associate program to give them a balanced appreciation for the work done at the Credit Union and pre-quality them for a wide variety of positions, e.g., in member services, cash operations, contact centre
- Intensive 20-month management development for seasoned employees, who are paired with mentors from each department
- Promoting from within

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Higher quality financial services to members
- Knowledgeable, versatile, highly skilled staff

Awards Won:

- In 2007, voted #20 Medium Company to Work for in America in the Society for Human Resource Management's annual competition See www.shrm.org
- Recently, the organization was named one of Principal Financial Group's 10 Best Companies for Financial Security, a national award presented annually to companies with outstanding benefits and employment practices See www.principal.com/about/news/2006/10best101606.htm

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

8. U.S. Engine Valve—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 325

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Maintaining a lean manufacturing environment with a focus on reducing waste and improving productivity
- Enhancing individual employee effectiveness in the workplace

Keys to Success:

- Developing with employee input standardized templates, measures, methods, procedures and processes for maximum effectiveness
- Training effectiveness is measured through the use of control groups
- Four to six weeks of on-the-job training for new production technicians
- On-the-job training supplemented by multimedia, interactive, self-paced blended e-learning
- Employees are encouraged to submit suggestions on how to solve plant performance issues and are then involved in problem analysis and solution design
- Supervisors and managers support need for skills upgrading and take part in training themselves
- Management is diligent in applying creativity and enthusiasm to design new training solutions based on employee and organizational need

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Higher quality financial services to members
- Knowledgeable, versatile, highly skilled staff

Awards Won:

- In 2006, voted #23 in the ASTD BEST Awards See www.asted.org
- For the 14th consecutive year, the organization has received the top supplier award from Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc. for superior quality intake and exhaust engine valves See www.toyota.com/about/news/

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- Toyota's Top Supplier awards are based on suppliers' performance against specific targets for quality and delivery. Receipt of an award from Toyota, a global automotive leader, confirms U.S. Engine Valve as a benchmark supplier in the industry

9. Northwire Inc.—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 122

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Continued growth in custom industrial and medical cable markets
- Demand for custom products in small volumes
- Upskilling to ensure that employees are service oriented and responsive to changing company priorities

Keys to Success:

- Consistent training of new employees through the Extrusion Technology Certificate (ETC) program offered in conjunction with Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College
- ETC program classes are given at Northwire and open to the public—successful completion of ETC does not guarantee employment at Northwire, but all ETC graduates to date have been hired
- Many instructors of the ETC certificate program are Northwire employees
- All ETC instructors are state certified
- Forklift operation, safety procedures and hazardous materials handling training is taught via blended learning, consisting of e-learning courses delivered to computers at every workstation and traditional methods
- Management focus on creating a cross-trained, flexible workforce

Critical Partnerships:

- Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College—graduates of Northwire Inc.'s Extrusion Technology Certificate can apply their certificate coursework towards Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College's Applied Engineering Associates degree
- Wisconsin Technical School System

Outcomes:

- Increased capacity of technicians to take on custom business while ensuring quality
- Enlarged talent pool
- Quality rates up
- Controllable scrap down
- Set-up times reduced
- Improved training efficiency—under the former training system, only one or two employees could be trained simultaneously. With ETC, eight to 10 students can be trained at one time
- Expedited trainee to operator skill level times (5 weeks with ETC, compared with 40 weeks under old training system)
- Fivefold increase in employee requests for career development

Awards Won:

- In 2004, voted #19 in the ASTD BEST Awards. See www.astd.org

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- All core class credits are transferable to other institutions in the Wisconsin Technical School System
- All instructors are state certified

10. Bunkhouse Leather—Highlights

Sector: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 3

Business Needs: Precipitating Training, Learning and Development:

- Building business capacity
- Improving productivity
- Building management and craft leatherworking skills

Keys to Success:

- View training as an investment
- Preserving high quality craftsmanship without slowing down production
- Piecework pay system encourages excellence and speed
- Apprenticeship-style one-on-one mentoring and job shadowing

Critical Partnerships:

- NA

Outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Increased capacity
- Quality assurance

Awards Won:

- NA

Linkage of Training to Quality Assurance / Industry Standards / National Certification:

- NA

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