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• Agile Training: Is The Benefit Worth The Cost?:

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• The Value Of Training:

- V. Lee Henson CST
- <http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

• What is an ADDIE Training Professional?

- V. Lee Henson CST
- <http://agiledad.blogspot.com>

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Agile Dad

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Agile Training: Is The Benefit Worth The Cost?

It was recently pointed out to me that with all of the changes in today's economy that many businesses are watching their expenditures much more carefully. A cost / benefit analysis is almost always needed to show the value in a proposition prior to spending closely regarded funds.

The question this leaves many Agile Executives with is where do we tighten the purse strings and how do we best save money in this uncertain period.

One item that often gets greatly diminished or erased from many budgets are dollars set aside for training opportunities. If this thought has even crossed your mind, let me be the first to warn you that the decision to do without training could be a grave mistake.

In fact, I would almost venture to prove that of all the items an organization can spend money on, training provides one of the greatest return on investment.

The best way to make a business case for training is to offer metrics on the value it provides to the organization. But, unfortunately, most IT organizations lack a comprehensive approach to measuring such value, according to Andrew Walker, a research director with Gartner Executive Programs, a division of Stamford, Conn.-based Gartner Inc.

"Very rarely do they look at whether they are getting value from these training programs," Walker said. "You can tell training is not valued if it keeps getting cut. It's the first point of cuts for most finance people because no one is able to do a good business case to keep it in there. That sends a message to people that you don't value training."

In a recent SearchSMB.com study, 69% of those IT managers polled claimed to not have enough money in their budgets for training.

Walker said employee retention becomes a problem for CIOs who struggle to keep a training budget.

"Those employees who go a long while without learning know they're getting stale," he said. "They start to feel that it may be time to move on. Then you start to lose your most valuable people."

Training helps you in various ways, from creating an enthusiastic work environment to increasing customer satisfaction.

Agile Dad

Value Of Training

Your Goals:

Creating Better Culture
Better Communication
Team Empowerment
Reducing Internal Conflict
Increased Productivity
Professionalism
Motivation
Increased Problem Solving

The Return On Your Investment:

Increased Productivity
Reduced Turnover
Reduced Waste
Increased Customer Satisfaction
Increased Accountability
Decreased Liability

Participants Receive:

Self Confidence
Better Working Environment
Improved Personal & Professional Skills
Satisfaction
Increased Loyalty
Enjoyment From Learning
Meaningful Experience
Culturally Team Fit Training
Training Where Application Extends Beyond The Classroom

Executives Receive:

More Frequent Interactions With The Emerging Product
Better Relationships With Working Teams
Increased Visibility At Every Level Of The Project
More Accurate Cost Analysis At Every Stage Of Development



Agile Training: Is The Benefit Worth The Cost? Continued

"In tight financial times, training is one of the most sure & sound investments. "

– V. Lee Henson CST

Many of these outcomes are tied together, so when you achieve one, oftentimes the others fall into place.

General accounting standards classify training as an expense. However, training is really an investment: an organization typically invests up-front to train its employees (in the form of enrollment fees, travel expenses and opportunity cost of the employee's time) and, in return, expects future returns (in the form of increased knowledge, skills and productivity). As with any other investment, if the returns outweigh the investment, training is a worthwhile endeavor.

Training is also an investment from the employee's perspective. Training increases skills and knowledge, which can lead to better pay or promotion. So who benefits most from the training investment: the employee with increased wages and/or promotion, or the employer with increased productivity?

Loewenstein and Spletzer researched this question and concluded, "the effect of an hour of training on productivity growth is about five times as large as the effect on wage growth." Therefore, employers "reap almost all the returns to company training" This may be oversimplifying because employees generally view training as either a gift from the employer or at least a sign of commitment on the part of the employee, which is important to job satisfaction.

In sum, both the employee and employer benefit from the training investment.

The big remaining question mark is when times are tough, how can I be assured that training will yield a positive return on investment? Many studies have proven that although training is an initial expense, the value-add to the recipient of the training is priceless. This ROI is truly hard to measure as the metrics are not just formulated from a list of survey results.

When calculated using sound methodology, training has been shown to provide significant return on investment: on the order of 5 to 200 percent. The problem is that methods used to quantify training ROI can often be suspect or even outright self-promotion. Furthermore, it is often very difficult to quantify the effects of training. For instance, one effect of training can be increased job satisfaction, which is difficult if not impossible to quantify.

"Training is a valuable commodity"

– V. Lee Henson CST

Intuitively we know this is important in retaining good employees; however it will not show up on a ROI calculation.

Training is a valuable commodity that, if viewed as an investment rather than an expense, can produce high returns. While it is true that training costs money and uses valuable employee time and resources, studies tend to show training provides a positive return on investment-sometimes in the neighborhood of several hundred percent.



Therefore, although training might seem like a luxury expense in tight financial times, it is, in fact, one of the most sure and sound investments available.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of the training and value gained does weigh heavily on selecting the correct trainer to convey the not only the message of the topic being covered, but also the message your organization is attempting to instill.

A really good trainer knows a lot more than just the topic they are presenting. They need to be aware of the needs of the class and

the mission for which they have been brought in to achieve. Often times this means doing a little research prior to bringing in just any trainer.

AgileDad prides itself in aligning with only the best trainers in the industry in order to provide you with a first class training experience each and every engagement.

Training is not a one size fits all solution. Training is an investment in your resources which assures you a positive return. Take advantage of the chance to enable your teams to work smarter not harder.

Recent AgileDad Testimonials:

"You did an exceptional job! I have attended many training classes and this is the first one where I came out going "wow - I want to be like him when I grow up". In other words - you made the class very enjoyable, brought the material home with your experience, and I walked out knowing a whole lot more than when I walked in."

"Our trainer Lee was top notch. He showed us exactly what we needed and helped us fix issues we were having in our organization quickly. He also suggested best practices which helped us prepare for our upcoming steering meeting."

AgileDad-Agile Mentor-Agile World

This Month's Agile Q&A

Q: What is an ADDIE Training Professional?

A: ADDIE is a process by which training courses can be designed, developed, and delivered. It is a recognized professional industry standard that promises meaningful training delivered in a way that is highly retained by class participants.

It is an incremental (Agile), approach to development and delivery of training materials. The documentation is typically just enough to convey the message. The delivery style is direct and concise.

This training model is most often customized to meet the needs of the specific organization that is requesting the training.



Analyze – Analyze the needs and business model of the client before entering the training design phase.

Design- Design the materials and course delivery to reach out to as many of the audience members as possible. Keep the training light and simple.

Develop- Develop meaningful materials. Try not to be so wordy and share real world experiences regarding the topic you are trying to convey.

Implement- Implement the training at the organization in a way that it can be re-used and referred to as a reference once you have left the facility.

Evaluate- Evaluate your performance and share the results with the training host. Grow and learn from this model. Inspect what you did correctly and adapt to be even better during your next engagement.

EYE ON IT Introducing DavisBase

As more people become aware of the AgileDad movement, my schedule tends to fill at a very rapid pace. As a result, I have partnered with DavisBase Coaching and Consulting.

I have personally worked with DavisBase President Steve Davis on a number of high profile engagements. I am 100% confident that he and his team will continue to uphold the values that AgileDad holds dear and promotes.

This creates an exciting opportunity for many of you to engage in world class training within a most reasonable timeframe. Steve himself is a Certified Scrum Practitioner and hires only qualified Certified ScrumMasters to deliver a wide range of class offerings that cover the entire Agile Methodology.

We look forward to hearing from you soon with regard to your next training or coaching engagement.

AgileDad Course Private Course Offerings:



The new partnership with DavisBase has created a pocket of openings on our calendar. We would like nothing more than to visit your organization and provide high quality Agile training, coaching, and consulting. Call or email soon as extended coaching engagements and weeklong training offerings tend to book quickly!

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