

# Draw up training annual report to show value of learning

Don't just throw money at employee training without tracking the usefulness of that training.

More of your peers are finding they need to promote and prove the worth of learning programs they run. So they're turning to the annual-report concept.

Compiling a training annual report can help demonstrate HR's worth when it comes to employee training and development. It can help break the pattern of slicing training budgets, which are often the first to suffer when companies tighten their belts.

Such reports also let you hold your company's training efforts to the same standard as other key business segments.

Annual training expenditures per employee are rising again after taking a big hit during the Great Recession.

The Association for Talent Development estimates that in 2016, employers spent \$1,273 per employee on direct learning activities, up from \$1,252 the year before. (In 2006, before the economy tanked, the average annual training and development spend per employee topped \$1,600.)

While employers are investing more in employee learning, those spending hikes are now being accompanied by better accounting of the training investments.

## The 4 steps

Here's how to form a basic outline for your organization's training-reporting efforts:

**1. Focus on major issues and goals** facing the company that have benefited through training. For instance, a retailer might point to stepped-up loss-prevention or lower turnover. A construction business could pinpoint fewer workplace accidents through safety training.

*Rule of thumb:* Don't get overwhelmed by including every single program; think more about what's important to your CEO. Highlight those areas with results.

**2. Provide a rundown of the training budget and objectives for the year** and how each succeeded, or failed. Give your training initiatives and outcomes a "score" based on these benchmarks.

**3. Offer a couple of new ways to keep learning cost-effective.** *Example:* If a group of employees opted for an e-learning class, mention the savings over an off-site, instructor-led course. Then suggest expansions of that resource.

**4. Last, include a conclusion of your past year's training performance** and give recommendations for next year. *Your goal:* Lay the groundwork for the continued support and success of your training programs.

**Tip:** Consider seeking out testimonials from employees or department managers who have witnessed training results firsthand, then include their statements in your report. Having people communicate such benefits will grab management's attention.

## **What to include in your report**

Semiconductor manufacturer Qualcomm includes these measures in its annual "learning and development report":

- Total training expenditures as a percentage of payroll
- Total training dollars per employee
- Percentage of employees trained, and employee participation
- Top training program enrollments
- Percentage of all training programs completed
- Courses completed by job function
- Enrollments by management employees
- Business results linked to learning and development programs.