

# 5 ways to ramp up employee training

Tap into the power of training and development by trying these five tips. They'll help you make the most of limited resources, and they're sure to improve employee skills.



- 1. Redefine training.** Expand your definition of training. Formal classroom lessons aren't the only—or best—way to train every employee. Quick, continuous learning opportunities can be just as effective. Teach employees what they need to learn when they need to know it through in-house and outside seminars, webinars, brown-bag discussions, one-on-one sessions and conferences.
- 2. Tap peer-to-peer expertise.** Embrace training via sharing. Your employees can learn as much from managers and colleagues as they can from a classroom trainer. Pair new hires with experienced staffers for mentoring and shadowing. That's powerful learning for both.
- 3. Socialize it.** Add a social media component to the training mix. Encourage teams to set up Facebook pages and Twitter accounts to share information, ideas, suggestions and advice about projects. Supply employees with smartphones so they can text each other and their bosses when they need immediate information.
- 4. Add coaches.** Supply employees with coaches to reinforce the lessons learned during more formal training and to spend one-on-one time honing skills and performance. Coaches-for-hire are available to bolster any business skill, from writing to etiquette to public speaking to supervising.
- 5. Up your training investment.** Spending on training and professional development soared by 9.5% to an average of \$800 per employee/learner in 2011, largely in response to the skills gap. If you cut training to save money during the recession, it's time to restore your program.