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It's that time of the year again.

Human Resources practitioners and Skills Development Facilitators are hunched over their laptops, pouring over Excel Spreadsheets, and, at times, weeping into their coffee. It's time for the submission of Annual Training Reports and Workplace Skills Plans. And time to get approval on these plans.

In a tough economic climate HR practitioners, SDFs etc. often need to justify and motivate the spend on training. In case you need some additional ammunition for your arsenal, here are three reasons that training and development are worth the investment.

1) Separate the wheat from the chaff

While meeting with a client a few weeks ago, I noted that their staff turnover was relatively low, and remarked on this. The organisation in question has not had a very strong training and development culture and I was amazed that they had managed to hold on to the staff without development. (but more on that later). The client (new to their position) then responded, "The problem is we keep the bad eggs and lose the superstars." This is music to the ears of anyone who is pro training and development. When you don't invest in training and development you run the risk of having a workforce full of people who are satisfied with the status quo. And, as [pointed out](#) by Catherine DeVrye, "We have always done it that way" are the seven most expensive words in business.

As business leaders we should be aiming to employ and retain people who want to **work for** the organisation, and not just people who want to **work at** the organisation (That is a post for another day). Training and development is a critical component in increasing performance of your employees. In addition to being able to guide them towards [improved performance](#), you also become aware of who doesn't have the goods to make it in a particular space; and careers can be guided accordingly.

Training and development allows you to gain further insight into the skill set of your people - and uncover some hidden talent and latent potential. This can be particularly important in terms of transformation.

2) Increased engagement

I genuinely believe that organisations who have a strong learning and development culture have a more engaged workforce. Research on [employee engagement](#) tells us that engagement equals increased productivity.

"Leaders should provide challenging and meaningful work with opportunities for career advancement...Not giving people the knowledge and tools to be successful is unethical and de-motivating; it is also likely to lead to stress, frustration, and, ultimately, lack of engagement."





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3) Competitive edge

If you want to have a sustainable and competitive advantage, then your people are your enduring advantage.

When it comes to training and development in the technical skill space this is a “no-brainer” but few organisations grasp the importance of this when it comes to IR skills and soft skills.

The concepts around [discipline](#) within the workplace have a direct impact on your bottom line. If your first line supervisors are not equipped to handle disciplinary issues as they emerge then you run the risk of losing productivity - simple time keeping is the most obvious example of this. Can your organisation stand to lose several hours of productivity and work every month?

What about [unscheduled absenteeism](#)? In 2014 Occupational Care South Africa (OCSA) and Statistics South Africa released research which indicates that the South African economy loses approximately R16bn per year as a result of absenteeism. Are you confident in the skill of your first line managers and all in leadership positions to handle this area confidently, decisively and quickly? And within the bounds of the law?

Soft skills such as [conflict management](#), leadership training, and emotional intelligence are as critical as technical and IR skills, even though they can be trickier to measure. But when we realise that [people leave leaders](#) rather than an organisation we begin to realise the importance of the human relationship and human capital development.

At Global Business Solutions we provide a diverse range of services aimed at **empowering businesses** to achieve their objectives through **strategic planning**. As a leading player in labour law, human resources and industrial relations I believe that Global is able to partner with any organisation to ensure that **every human capital need is met, managed and maximised**.

In order to build the best team, we need to [hire the best people](#), retain the best people and train and develop to get the best out of our people. A culture of learning means that you will attract people to your organisation who want to learn, grow and develop.

That is future thinking, now.

Regards

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