

# Training Your Employees...

## An Effective Way to Improve Your Business

I am always paying attention to how I am treated in the marketplace. In the last month, I have noticed a distinct lack of training among new employees. I am an understanding customer; courtesy and friendliness will make up for skills that need improvement. But there is a very big caveat. No matter how nice a person is, incompetence will overcome my willingness to be understanding.

**In today's tough economic climate, the last thing businesses can afford to do is to drive away customers. I know the economy is tight, but if employees lack skills it will drive away your customers and revenues you need now. Training also plays an important role in your employees' attitudes. Surveys show that training is the biggest factor that increases employee satisfaction. That can be very important in an environment where pay increases and other incentives may be restricted.**

With unemployment at 6.5%, you may be thinking with a better pool of applicants, re-hiring is your solution to a lack of employee knowledge. But most situations, I would suggest that it makes more sense to invest in current employees.

**When there was low unemployment, you may have hired talented people who had good basic skills, but were not familiar with the particulars of your industry. Now is an ideal time to be sure they are adequately trained to optimize your businesses effectiveness.**

In retail stores, I have noticed the changing demographics in the workplace that experts have been predicting. There are many new employees on both ends of the age spectrum. **Stephanie Klein** of the Boomer Group has built a business model on placing people with years of business acumen and experience. Often these people will need training to learn new technology and unfamiliar systems.

**Eric Chester, speaker at the Torch Award, talked about the "why generation". This group brings a lot of energy and technology skills. Yet, they lack basic training in business and business etiquette. If you want to keep both your current customer base and talented employee pool, look at ways to offer training.**

You might find affordable training through Mountain States Employers Council or many other local not-for-profits or consultants. Don't forget to schedule training time. Meet with individual employees to learn areas where they need more training. It never hurts to encourage employees to consider college classes that complement their career choices.

**When the labor market place improves, the best employees will be looking for opportunities that improve their skills and expertise. If business owners and managers have made no effort to offer that opportunity to these employees, they could easily find their businesses without the people they need to succeed and grow just when it seems everything is looking up.**

Jean Herman President and CEO

Comments to Jean at [jherman@denver.bbb.org](mailto:jherman@denver.bbb.org) <<mailto:jherman@denver.bbb.org>> or 303.996.3961.

Reprinted by permission 11/11/08 Denver Better Business Bureau <http://www.bbb.org>