

## 5 Myths of Training

The old tradition of “just send them to training” never worked and still doesn’t. The role of the training department is not always understood by the “management” people. Certain problems seem common to our industries in America, because we are all looking for the “quick-fix” to our problems. The training department many times is tasked to do things it really can’t, and should not be expected to perform. This leads to increased frustrations both in the training department and with the internal customer (management). Surfacing these issues for what they are can begin to minimize these problems. Here is a list of five things that the training department really can’t perform:

### 1 Training can’t fix hiring errors

Industry surveys have concluded that about 10% of new employees who go through new-hire training are hiring errors. It is unfair to blame the later performance of these folks on the training department. The training department is not to be held responsible for the screening portion of the hiring process. Screening must be done prior to hiring, not after. (Training costs too much to be used for this purpose.) Also, the training department can only provide management with input on classroom performance, but it is not training’s responsibility to determine if a person should be terminated from employment. That responsibility remains in the realm of responsibility and accountability of the hiring manager.

### 2 Training can’t fix non-training problems

Traditionally, people are sent to training as a solution to a problem that has its root cause based in: equipment problems; managerial issues; staffing levels; workload issues; and conflicting directives. This is a critical issue because employees come into the training wondering about training’s ability to correct the problem(s). Nothing changes their minds, and they leave even more cynical and untrusting of management’s ability to effectively address situations than before. The fallout of this is the manager tells the senior staff, “We sent them to training, but nothing changed.” The training department gets a bad reputation and is possibly not called upon when training really is the required, or correct intervention needed.

### 3 Training can’t make rude and surly people into happy and friendly people

All that training can do is communicate standards of service and job performance expectations. (I’m sure that we have all met people who communicate with all of the enthusiasm of a “toad.”) If your business requires caring and empathic people, don’t you think it would be easier to take the time and patience to screen for these qualities and characteristics when you go through the hiring phase? If you need “flamingoes” to work in your business, it is easier to hire “flamingoes” than to hire “toads.”

#### **4 Training can't make people learn faster**

Every seasoned trainer has experienced this: A manager requests a specific training course for their staff. The trainer creates the objectives, and develops the course that ends up taking five days to deliver. At the end of the process the manager says, "That's great, but I can't let these people go for five days. You must train them in three days." This now puts the trainer in a very awkward position. So, you train them for three days, send them back three-fifths trained and have the manager say to their peers, " We send them to training, but they still can't do the job. We have to place them with a senior person on the job to continue their learning process. "Better communications between managers, employees-to-be-trained, and trainers can eliminate problems and improve the outcome of the overall training experience.

#### **5 Training can't make people do on the job what they were taught in training**

The concept of getting people to meet the expectations of their jobs is something that managers wrestle with every day. Managers must make clear all job expectations, provide the necessary training and development time, and resources needed for the learning process to be effective for each person. After training it becomes the responsibility of the managers to achieve accountability from each person for the performance of their jobs.

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