Invest in employees with

Flexible

Home-based Studies

The consequences of rapid technological change include a need for higher education to become, and remain, employable in society. The idea of completing a college or university education that would sustain you for life is completely obsolete. To make matters worse, the cost of education has skyrocketed, and many degrees or diplomas do not necessarily lead to lucrative careers.

Investing in employees will benefit your business because a motivated workforce helps to run things more efficiently. Most employers recognize that need for onboarding new staff, but once that has been completed many may forget that training is an important benefit that pays dividends to the business. This guide introduces a cost-effective approach to offering education benefits to deliver general education that benefits your employees.

Why companies should invest in training

Training is essential for professional employees as well as for most tradespeople. As an employer, you can tap into that need by sponsoring training programs that encourage continuing education. Whereas onboarding is clearly recognized as a requirement to make sure employees know how to operate within the workplace, there is a bigger picture that often does not get the attention that it deserves. The good news is that training generally ends up as a benefit to the employer.

Unqualified employees can cost you much more than what your payroll shows: they can turn away dissatisfied customers and so undermine your profits. This is a basic risk analysis of what the impact of poor customer service might be: the potential losses are likely to far outpace the training costs. Many employers point out that their workforce is largely comprised of low-wage employees that are not academically inclined – what they forget is that this inclination works against them in terms of product knowledge and service standards that customers expect. You may not demand degrees for front-line workers, but that does not mean they cannot benefit from an education that prepares them for more professional customer service.

- Your investment in training employees makes them feel more valued and appreciated, which develops better team work that benefits your business and your customers;
- Your investment in their academic training sends a signal that you respect your employees as valued associates worthy of professional education and skills development;
- Your investment in employees will generate a reputation for your business as a great place to work, which makes it easier to find new applicants as well as reduce absenteeism;
- Your investment demonstrates support and respect for employees that typically creates the reciprocal loyalty and reduced turnover that reduces the ongoing cost of recruiting.

The bottom line is that your more knowledgeable employees are more reliable workers, enabled to provide superior customer service, which typically increases profits to more than compensate for a formal training policy. Educated and qualified employees are a great source for future management positions, and employees should find it easier to cover multiple positions to become well-rounded in how the business works. Qualified employees can work well with less supervision, important when they are expected to respond to customer enquiries in the moment.

Not all employees will necessarily partake of opportunities for learning with the same enthusiasm, but that is fine: not everyone can be managers. What is important is to make training available to all, even if you implement an eligibility scheme that rewards longer-term employees for loyalty:

- In the first 6 months you may provide basic skills and/or product training, such as workplace safety, customer service, and other basic prerequisite training. There may be an on-going need for this, with refresher courses,
- After 6 months on the job you might allow 1 academic- or 2 skills courses for the 1st year;
- After 12 months on the job you might allow 2 academic- or 3 skills courses for the 2nd year;
- After 24 months on the job you might allow 4 academic- or 5 skills courses/year thereafter.

Loyal employees can also develop supervisory skills by getting engaged in mentoring or coaching of new workers, or take on roles like safety supervisor, or whatever needs apply in your business. This is all part of personal growth that generates job satisfaction, and you can observe these employees in action to gauge their future potential in a leadership capacity.

Companies wanting to encourage on-going training for employees should use a carrot rather than using a stick to entice employees to attend a regular class. We do not want to evoke memories of classroom training: at a pace that worked for 30% of the class, while the other 70% were either having a hard time keeping, up or bored to tears because the pace was too slow. People feel exposed, they are hesitant to ask questions, for fear of being snickered at. Being self-conscious is not conducive to learning. The answer is not more theory, the answer is to offer practical experience that people can identify with. On-going employee training is an important investment to show you care about your employees, but it must be stimulating rather than a rehash of the same old stuff.

We designed a training model based on a "Readers' Digest" concept that provides the essentials of a subject. For students that are so inclined, they can pursue the details on-line or borrow a text-book from the local library. We focus on providing core knowledge that builds a framework for understanding an academic subject, and then adding examples (or Excel™ models) that students can use to explore the subject in greater detail. This strategy can significantly increase their attention span (that for an adult learner is about 10-15 minutes per topic). Playing with models is more interesting than looking at one graph after another trying to line up theory with the illustrations. Our guided course shows students examples that they can explore under their own steam to see the effect in Excel results.

There is no benefit to having the whole team in a single classroom unless you make it interactive, to engage people, and to share ideas or opinions, all the while minimizing the competitive aspects of discussions among peers trying to show off. The course may introduce new concepts, not to criticize what may be current practice, but to stimulate thinking about ways to improve if possible. The idea is to break out of a rut, unless that proves to be the most effective way to move forward, and not to change for the sake of change. If the process is well facilitated, then you gain the dual benefit of evaluating current practices, while employees employ new analytical tools to identify and document these same practices. Otherwise, people may feel they are not developing their skills as employees.

Make sure training is not seen as remediating bad performance of individuals. Mistakes aside, we should make a practice of reviewing each project to identify lessons learned: this is sharing both wins and losses, which may lead to inviting industry experts to share ideas about alternate ways for performing a specific task or process. Consider the different stages projects are in when you offer training: for some projects, that training may be just in time, for other projects it might be too late, or too premature. Our "on demand" training model is much more practical because people can prepare for upcoming work, and learn to do things in theory, before they practice on real work effort. If the subject matter is relevant to the work at hand, people pay much more attention to details. With the theory to support them, people are more likely to assist each other while using these concepts.

As a result, this blend of theory and relevant practice develops skills faster, as well as making that knowledge stick based on the actual experience of using it. People are stimulated at work and eager to repeat that process, reassured they will not be at risk of wholesale turnover due to technology changes to increase the workplace efficiency.

How to establish training for employees

Management should not simply withdraw and let education take its course: use education also for team building exercises. For example, you can have brief "scrum" meetings that convey what is on the "to-do" list for the day, as well as to be used for regular basic education along the lines of:

- What are the goals and objectives of the business, and how does each employee have a role to play in making the business achieve those goals and objectives? This is a topic you could use several times per year as employees are encouraged to put the answers in their own words so that they resonate more deeply.

- What is the business plan, how is the business performance tracking against the plan, and what do we need to do to solidify the future of the business? What does this mean for loyal employees that are coming along for the journey?

- Why is it important for the business to make money, and what are the consequences if we do not make enough money? Share operating results, and explain the impact of overhead, shrinkage, financing repayment, competition, and other concerns that could lead to default and bankruptcy if the business cannot be sufficiently profitable.

- Why management and employees are part of the business family – what is expected of each family member to operate as a more effective team, and how everyone's input is valuable in a continuous improvement drive.

- What do you know about the products and services that the business offers? At the least, employees should understand what customers may enquire about, and even if they do not have the expertise to answer, then to know who has that expertise and to make sure that a customer gets the answers they are looking for.

- What do we mean by "Customer Service" and how does that imply that everyone sells and cares about the customers?

How employees react to these sessions tells you a lot about their future intentions. Someone who is not interested in learning how to be a more effective employee likely does not have a great stake in their job. While it is unrealistic to expect everyone to be excited about participating, they should have an interest in learning what is important for the business to be successful. Give people time to acclimatize to this practice before you give up on them. In most cases the practice will introduce positive change as people recognize these sessions as a genuine interest in their well-being. These sessions are different from the mandated training that you will still have to implement:

- **Communications skills:** this is of importance not only because of the increasing diversity of the workforce, but also of the customers they interact with. Multiculturalism introduces a wide variety of languages and customs that a business must deal with. Technology provides tools like iPhone-based language translators, which can help you to be of service when your customer is struggling with English as a second language.

- **Computer skills:** are becoming a necessity for conducting administrative and office tasks, so employees must be trained in how to perform the required tasks using the systems and/or applications you have in place.

- **Customer service:** is critical to address the increased competition in the global marketplace, so it is important for employees to understand and meet the needs of customers. That does not mean everyone has to be an expert on everything, just that they can find the right help.

- **Diversity:** employees must develop sensitivity to how people have different perspectives and views, and to value diversity without attempting to make a value judgement with reference to the norms that these employees grew up with.

- **Ethics:** are subject to increasing expectations about corporate social responsibility, which in today's diverse workforce introduces a wide variety of values and morals to the workplace. Without judgement, and regardless of backgrounds, you can share what the desired ethics standards are for your business that everyone is expected to comply with.

- **First Aid:** any business must have sufficient people on hand to deal with emergencies that can become serious if no immediate help is available. First aid, CPR, fire safety, and other relevant knowledge like where to cut power in an emergency should be considered.

- **Food Handling**: if your business involves handling food in any way make sure that the people involved have been properly trained in food safety and handling, and monitor that standards are diligently followed, otherwise the business can be put at risk.

- **Human relations:** are increasingly stressed in a modern workplace, which can lead to basic misunderstandings that can turn into conflict. Train people to get along in the workplace at a professional level and explain that there is no demand to develop personal relationships.

- **Quality initiatives:** such as Total Quality Management, Quality Circles, benchmarking, etc., require basic training about quality concepts, guidelines and standards for quality, which can be learned from introducing basic 6-Sigma practices. You may want to engage an expert in quality management to help prepare guidelines for how your employees address quality.

- **Safety:** is critical when employees are working with heavy equipment, hazardous chemicals, perform repetitive activities, and other concerns such as practical advice to avoid assaults, for example. This training is available in Ontario on-line, and may also be freely available in other jurisdictions.

- **Sexual harassment:** training usually includes careful description of the organization's policies about sexual harassment, especially about what are inappropriate behaviors. Again, Ontario offers free on-line training programs that help you raise awareness of what is inappropriate.

Performance Evaluation

You can link the "soft" skills training listed above to performance standards, so that people ought to be aware of expectations that will appear on the evaluation. Some companies find that the list of "skills" may be daunting, and that newly hired employees that fail these training objectives during their first three months are a business loss. The core of the problem is insufficient scrutiny in the hiring process: weeding out non-compliant employees in the first 3 months can save the business a lot of headaches, so long as that probationary period is clearly documented. Also, if employees fail to observe clearly stated norms they can be warned, and legitimately shown the door if they persist in unacceptable behaviour.

Most employees will fall in the categories of "satisfactory" or "improving" that underscores that you are on the right track. It is important to segregate these normative skills from professional skills an employee requires to move up in the hierarchy. It is important to build depth of knowledge within the team for succession planning and to cover for vacations and absences, rather than to have many one-trick ponies that become paralyzed when one of the key players is unavailable.

Benefits from employee training

Many business owners focus on the cost of employee training because it is easier to quantify. Even though there are initial monetary costs, there is also a good return on investment in staff training.

- Today's younger workers want more than a paycheque and seek employment that allows them to learn new skills. With training programs, you are more likely to attract and keep good employees if you can offer development opportunities, which can become a strategic recruiting tool. Training pays great dividends in terms of team spirit and cooperation, and it is best when you implement a continuous training program to keep employees sharp.

- Training provides employees with job satisfaction. By encouraging employees to develop more rounded skill sets, you help them contribute to the company, but you also show an interest in their personal future. While they are developing their skills and knowledge they are more engaged and involved in working for your business' success, which pays dividends.

- Your business runs better with trained employees who know how to respond to customer inquiries, and how to use computer systems to provide information or make a sale. It adds flexibility and efficiency as you cross-train employees to be familiar with different roles in a business, such as competency in sales, customer service, administration, and operations, as it provides more flexibility in terms of staff scheduling or covering for employee absences., as they grow to identify with being a part of the team rather than having one specific role.

- While people are engaged in training that acts as a retention tool, and it instills loyalty and commitment from good workers (typically the ones that take you up on the offer of a more serious business education). These employees look for new challenges within the business, to partake of the opportunity to better themselves, and on-going training removes reasons for them to look at challenges elsewhere.

- Training through mentoring is also a great strategy for knowledge transfer, where the senior employee enables a junior employee to step into their role, so they themselves can pursue growth opportunities. If only few people know how to do things that leaves you wide open to problems when a key employee leaves the company.

- A continuous training program lets you respond quickly to changes in the industry, giving the business more agility to catch up and stay current with technology and/or regulations, each of which can change with alarming regularity. You do not want to be left behind. Make sure that every change initiative incorporates an opportunity for training the employees.

- You want to be a leader, not a follower, when it comes to change, and you want it done right. Make sure that your employees are completely up to speed with new technology or products and services that enable you to best your competition. Teach employees to be alert about new products or concepts customers ask about, to make sure you are not the last to know.

- When employees have been with the business for a while start offering advanced learning opportunities as part of a longer-term strategy for continuity in the workplace. By offering incentives to learn you not only retain employees, you also encourage them to upgrade the knowledge they bring to the workplace, which will benefit your business. You will groom a pool of talent that can grow into your next tier supervisors and managers that already have the knowledge of how the business operates.

- You will find your business growing in popularity with prospective employees who want to make use of such opportunities to get an education without having to pay for tuition.

The cost of turnover

Training is essential for employee retention. Some sources indicate that as many as 40% of all new employees leave their jobs within the first year, often citing a lack of skills training and development as the main reason for moving on and finding a job with better training opportunities. Replacing an employee is not cheap: the recruitment alone can cost an average of $3000, which does not account for the investment just to get through the initial training. That $3000 would be the cost of putting two employees through our business training program (or even more at a reduced corporate rate). While employees study, they stick around, and when they complete their studies they can become eligible for promotions, all actions that serve to increase employee retention.

The real cost of turnover is much higher: with fewer employees productivity is affected and sales can go into decline. Remaining employees are required to work extra hours, which does not improve morale. It takes time to recruit replacements, going through the screening and interviewing stages, and then to bring the new employee up to speed on what is expected. If this involves your time we can see that $3000 is just the tip of the iceberg (direct costs, not the indirect costs that are affected). Keep that in mind when you question your training budget: it takes a careful plan and as you train more employees the marginal cost of training each employee drops accordingly.

Think of the "hidden costs" of customers that are comfortable dealing with specific employees, so that their level of satisfaction with your business can suffer if those employees move on. In the long run that may be inevitable: you can only keep the best people around for so long, unless there are opportunities for advancement. Even the best employees can grow bored with the job and eager to see what other opportunities exist. That is not a failure on your part: be gracious about it and let them know the door is always open if they want to return (you may be surprised when they find the new position is no better, and potentially a less pleasant work environment).

To the employee there is an "opportunity cost" of not searching for new jobs, because they may gain a significant raise for a more senior job elsewhere. Accept this as a normal cost of business: a company may be on the lookout for candidates with the right experience.

Employees want a Business Education

When employees are educated to understand how the business world operates they become part of the business rather than to maintain an "us vs. them" stance. They develop a sense of dignity as they become more valuable to the business, and society, which increases their sense of self-worth. Education provides them the insight into their future potential with the company and you gain the benefits of reduced turnover as employees are motivated to stick with a job that provides them with that education. That in turn makes them more knowledgeable also about the work they do, which typically improves customer service, increases efficiency, and where applicable it increases safety.

Formal education can be expensive, but we created a delivery model that enables us to keep costs down and pass the savings on to our students. The average cost per course per student is $150 (or courses range in cost from $60 to $250). The total cost of business course certificates equivalent to a 2-year college diploma is less than $1,500. Because we do not formally operate as an accredited college (and thereby incur a lot of overhead cost) we issue completion certificates instead, which also allows the students to take courses when it is convenient, and in the order that they prefer to take subjects (even though we recommend a logical sequence for taking these courses).

Why invest in self-directed training

People learn in different ways: visual, auditory, or physical learning may be different preferences, but they can also be mixed to make the overall course more interesting. The "one size fits all" model is what made school such a turn-off for a large proportion of students: you do not want to retool all your employees to fit the same mould and use the lowest common denominator as your standard of performance. Instead, you allow peoples' different strengths to shine in different areas of project execution so that the overall performance outshines the sum of the individual contributions.

Why not look at training as an opportunity to challenge and stimulate employee thinking, so they become more prepared for doing the same critical thinking on their next project. What makes our courses so different is: we provide the tools to practice the concepts that are introduced. The decay of knowledge that is acquired (but not used) is such that in about a year up to 90% of the knowledge has been lost. Our sample tools are all implemented using Excel™-VBA, so people can revisit those tools at will, without the fear of tools expiring.

Make sure that training is relevant to upcoming work effort and explore the opportunity to use the training investment to establish a shared understanding, especially when new members join a team. Specifically consider the impact of contractors: not only do you need to work on having them blend in with your employees, you also want to transfer part of their experience and knowledge to help improve the way you do things. Training does not always have to be formal to be valuable, if used as a tool to create a common reference. The PMI PMBoK™ is an example in point: it is not as if all PMPs use the same methodology, they have the same vocabulary while they adapt the methodology to the needs of the project.

There are different ways to deliver training on demand, and adapted to the employee's schedule, but we selected using Excel™-VBA, in part because virtually everyone has access to Excel™, and in part because building prototypes or models in Excel™-VBA to work alongside a course presentation provides a seamless delivery process. Further, it does not hurt to use this combination to provide a practice opportunity for working with Excel, as well we become independent of the Internet and so facilitate employees studying wherever then can (even on public transit using a laptop). This is how most employees become conditioned to learn new concepts, and the learning engine supplements the course presentation with quizzes and a final exam to formalize the completion of the program.

Our model is a convenient trade-off because it can be interrupted at any time and resumed, and it is possible to repeat sections as required: employees can use small blocks of spare time to master a subject on their timetable, not when the course is offered during a fixed time-slot. On-demand and interruptible provides the maximum flexibility and convenience for students. It is practical even for them to engage in study while they find breaks in an otherwise busy schedule. They do not have to force themselves to find a convenient opportunity to complete an assignment while work piles up, they can attend to their work and interleave that with study opportunities.

The Excel™-VBA model does not force students to watch an endless video after video, which also provides the opportunity for review to make sure the material is properly understood. Because it uses Excel™-VBA there is no restriction for employees to download a course and run it off a USB Memory Stick to make it 100% portable even for use at home. Someone in need of more study time can discretely review sessions without feeling embarrassed by peers that grasp the material on their first go-around. Completing the course is based on a repeatable test, until a 75% pass-rate produces a certificate of completion that does not spell out how many attempts were made to get there.

Our courses are designed as training that can easily become part of a corporate training initiative. With our flexible format, training can be available to everyone based on individual time-tables, to avoid any conflict with work responsibilities. Employees can set their own targets to continually upgrade, and thus remain current in the skills needed on the job. Sometimes special training courses are required related to specific production equipment – this is often available from the equipment vendor. With greater diversity in workplace technology you cannot expect to have only one source for all the training. At an average cost of $150/course we made sure that an education would be in reach for anyone with determination and discipline to complete the equivalent of a college diploma.

How does our education model work?

We created www.excelinbusinemanagement.com for people interested in personal development, to qualify for new career opportunities, but who have neither the time to commit to a rigid diploma program at a college (and perhaps putting their job on hold for the duration) nor the desire to apply for financial aid to pay for college. That is no different for PMPs who must ration required educational credits across 3-year goals to meet credential renewal standards.

With experience in teaching individuals (who for various reasons had dropped out of the traditional education system by enrolling in a private college), I was bothered by how easily people accepted student loans (and went deeply into debt, without any guarantee that they would find suitable employment after graduation). It is impossible to guarantee employment, so the answer had to be a tailored approach to deliver education that would work for most students: a variation of on-line studies without forcing people into a time-box. I designed a delivery model that enables students to carry their course materials on a USB stick to maximize that potential for most students.
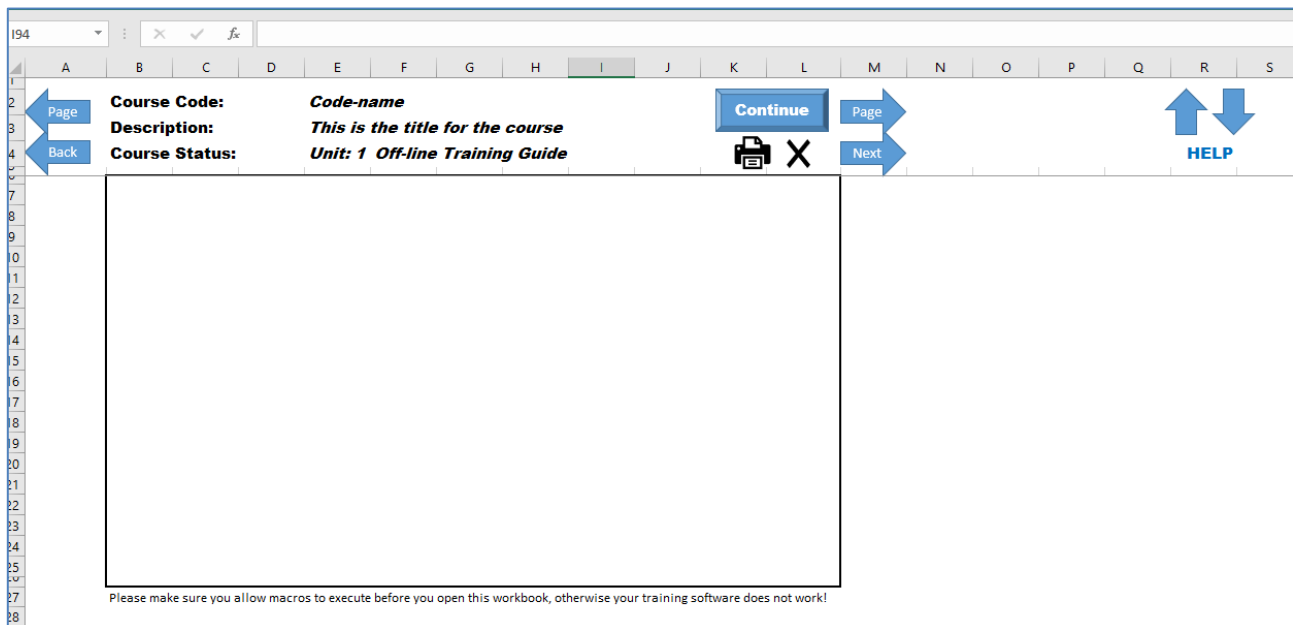
This Excel™-VBA macro technology simulates on-line studies but accommodates and adapts to the student's timetable. Each course includes a course notebook that offers a full digest of the subject matter, and the Excel™ engine replaces the teacher by stepping the student through a course script that includes questions, quizzes, and a final exam. The notebook provides references to more elaborate text books students can borrow from the library, another major savings for them. The software for this Excel™ workbook starts automatically when the student opens the workbook and allows Macro execution. Starting the workbook typically shows the following screen framework:

While not every student has access to an internet-connected computer at home, the use of Excel™ provides opportunities to study in the library or at other places that facilitate computer access – even at work during lunch. It is an easy vehicle to accommodate learning: for a small investment the student can acquire a basic notebook computer and study where opportunities present themselves, even in transit to and from work, as a small investment in potential career growth.

Training Programs:

Students earn completion certificates for every course in which they achieve a 75% pass rate on the exam. This is not too daunting if you consider that you can repeat the exam (which will not be identical) or even the course (at no extra cost) until you have achieved that goal. You can select the courses that are most relevant for your immediate career objectives and build a broader base of knowledge over time. This can be a real advantage for people aiming to be promoted, or to be qualified for new opportunities, and it works well for "just-in-time" training in a work place. Slowly but surely anyone can build a skills inventory and knowledge to remain competitive in the job market and not give up their day job while they are pursuing their dream. As their knowledge and skills become more advanced, the better students will be positioned for the constant change in how we will work in the future.

- Not all people are predisposed to the traditional education system with rigid programs and lectures, many conditions (such as autism) can turn that format into a barrier. By relieving the pressure, our flexible approach enables such students to master the subjects in their own way in their own time. What about an ESL student that depends on a dictionary to grasp the meaning of words? They can take their time to master the subject matter and hone their English at the same time, perhaps with the help of a coach or mentor.

- Prospective academic students (who may be reluctant to commit to a King's Ransom to enroll in any academic program they know little about) can benefit from a low-cost initiation to the subject matter by taking selected courses that help them to decide which (if any) programs are best suited to their personal interests. This is an important motivation to complete that study program and earn that diploma or degree.

Our courses can complement employer training programs, as continuing education adds value to a more capable workforce. There are many aspects to education that directly affect the workplace, such as the ability to understand instructions, to appreciate workplace safety, to be mentally agile to learn new tools that are introduced, and so on. Employers can subscribe to carry these Excel™-based courses on an intranet site for employees to use as an educational benefit. They can control which courses can be offered, so that learning matches the expectations of the employer for what employee self-improvement can be considered. However, self-study programs may not be ideal for all training opportunities, so we also offer two alternative programs for seminars and consulting:

Explore: www.excelinbusinessmanagement.com   **= our training website provides details on the courses listed below:**

- Please explore the training programs we have developed that we are currently transforming into self-study opportunities: the cost per course range from $60 to $250 depending on the nature and complexity of the course.
- For a successful course completion, students receive a certificate of completion, since we are not accredited to provide a formal diploma.

Career training:
- Professional Job Search Skills
- Career & Employment Strategy
- Professional Workplace Behavior
- Managing Workplace Downsizing
- Study, Planning & Budgeting Skills

Business Studies:
- Essential Business Skills
- Bookkeeping & Accounting
- Finance
- Economics Fundamentals
- Business Law
- Human Resources Management
- Business writing
- Marketing Plan
- Business Plan

Office Management:
- Business English & Proofreading
- Dictation & Keyboarding
- Data Management Skills
- Customer Relationship Management
- MS-Office Applications
- Marketing & Selling Skills
- Office Technology and Practices
- Project Management Assistant

Training Management:
- Teaching
- Coaching
- Mentoring
- Seminar & Workshop Organizing & Presenting

Project Management:
- Project Management Basics
- Basic Project Management
- Keep It Simple Scheduling
- SMART Message & Activity Tracking
- PEARL Project Evaluation & Reporting
- PRISM Project Reporting Milestones
- SCOPE Strategic Planning
- TaskMaster Project Management
- TaskMaster CCPM Client-Centric PM
- TaskMaster DRAPE Disaster Recovery
- UPBEAT Product-based Planning
- SPRITE Smart Projects Rapid Implementation Technique
- SCRUM Methodology
- FAME Financial Analysis Model
- PRICE Implement Cost Estimates
- REVEAL Requirements Elicitation
- SPARE Strategic Procurement
- SCIENCE Excel Simulation Engine
- SPORT Swimlanes Process OR Techniques
- GATES Generate Automated Tests
- TILT Timed Input & Logic Testing
- PROMPT Project Management Professional Training
- PMP Exam & PMBoK Training
- PMP Exam Training Bootcamp
- PMP Exam Testing Simulation

Seminars:
- Concepts and applications of project management for stakeholders.
- Concepts and usage of ad-hoc project management for business projects.
- Project Management Methodology & applicable Software (Excel - VBA)
- Overcoming "Five Dysfunctions of a Team" (New York Times Bestseller book)
- Managing PCI Compliance, with optional workshops to implement change.
- Concepts and strategies for manual testing and test automation (2 days).
- Managing and adapting to change
- Career planning & development
- Mentoring program seminars (3)
- Seminars & workshops overview
- Does your QA deliver stellar results?

Workshops related to the course materials are presented to encourage participation by the audience. We will not forget to have a bit of fun as well.

Seminars:

In addition to the self-study programs, we offer several seminar programs specifically designed to stimulate group dynamics as part of the learning experience. Not all group interaction imposes on individuals: we are keenly aware how to stimulate creative thinking within a group to deliver a different experience based on interaction. We understand the difference between academic subject training (where the students may have different learning preferences) and an informal group session that is more conducive to teach people how to develop group dynamics.

Unlike our course materials, seminars must be pre-booked by special arrangement: on request I can provide a catalog with summaries of the available seminars, as well as the costs for each seminar, that will be delivered at a facility provided by (or arranged by) the client. Seminars do not replace the self-study programs but provide an opportunity for positive reinforcement at a group level.

Consulting:

Not all knowledge can be transferred easily and packaged for broad dissemination, so in addition to training services we also offer consulting services for a more hands-on approach to problem solving.
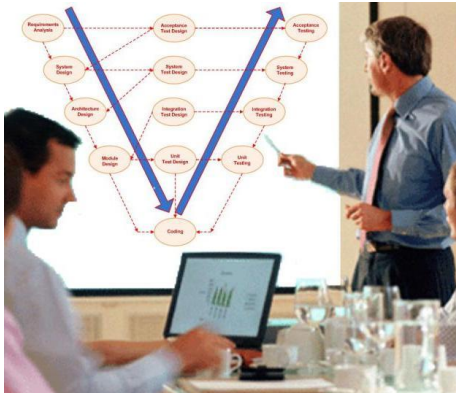
A major focus of what we do is project management related, such as establishing a PMO or coaching on complex projects. We developed a comprehensive program for companies that must become PCI compliant to process credit card payments, where we can guide clients through the preparation stages to be ready for a PCI audit. We have consulted on infrastructure and database upgrades for BCP/DR requirements and moving data center operations. Our approach may include a business requirements analysis and QA process depending on the skills you already have in your organization.

Our motto is "**We practice what we teach**" and consulting is how we live up to this tag line. We are flexible to consider part-time engagements if one- or two days/week works best for your projects, and we can transfer knowledge by making sure your staff are hands-on involved with the activities. We can tailor the engagement to best fit your needs: if you are interested in receiving a proposal for a potential engagement please reach out by Email: frits@pm4hire.com (our consulting site).

Our goal is to complete a project with your staff, and to guide them through the process based on several variant methodologies (whichever works best for the project). We also have courses that teach concepts and application of each approach, to provide a well-rounded learning opportunity. If you have PMPs on staff, for example, they need the equivalent of 60 PDU hours every 3 years to maintain their PMP status: our training programs meet those needs. PMI now insists that a portion of the studies must be focused on business subjects – this is accommodated by our course selection as summarized on the next page. Note that the training programs can be customized for your needs and that you can host those programs on your intranet for internal use under an annual license that is based on the anticipated volume of students.