

Request 'Time for Training' in 2010

by Philippa Nicholson, Director of Nicholson Solutions Computer Skills Training

As organisations complete annual employee appraisals it provides an opportunity not only to review successes and challenges but identify skills gaps and areas for improvement, and with that an action plan to really help employees develop within their role and contribute to the increased performance of the organisation.

A typical learner in the UK spent 16 hours in formal training in 2009 whilst spend fell by 4%. However, companies are taking a thoughtful, measured approach to training budgets and are using this time to transform themselves for greater efficiency.

In a new Government scheme, from 6th April 2010, employees will have the right to request time for training. The right will initially be phased in to organisations with 250 or more employees and then extended to all organisations from April 2011, enabling smaller businesses to plan for the implementation and impact on their businesses.

Training can be significantly important not only in the future development of an individual but can have a real impact on an individual's day to day operations within an organisation. Computer skills can be a common area overlooked yet often an area, even with a small amount of dedicated and specific training, which can result in increased user confidence, capability and productivity, effecting positive personal and organisational performance.

It is extremely important for companies to provide opportunities for training and development and this new right will provide the employee with a level of empowerment to gain new skills and training, which not only benefit themselves but the organisations they work for.

Individuals will be able to request time for training as long as they have been an employee of the organisation for more than 26 continuous weeks.

The training should lead to a qualification or help develop skills relevant to their job, workplace or business. The most important requirement is that the training will help improve business performance and individual effectiveness within it. Employers are not obliged to pay for the training requested however if the business benefits are realised they may agree to pick up the bill.

As employees gain new rights in requesting training opportunities the employers who are proactive in budgeting and planning for skills development will be best placed to see the benefits from this new initiative.



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