

Is Experience is the Best Teacher?

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In many cases, yes! We gain essential knowledge, skills and wisdom directly from “doing the job!”

As a seminar leader and instructor, I certainly see a place for concentrated learning off the job, as well, but on-the-job learning offers Employers tremendous benefits at little or no cost at all!

Surveys show us most Employees, especially younger ones, value learning and opportunities. While formal courses and workshops are valuable, on-the-job assignments are a time tested method to build practical knowledge and expertise. After all, apprenticeships have been around for almost 900 years so Employers appear to find some value in them. Also, many professions have specific experiential requirements before certifying or fully qualifying entrance to their ranks.

On-the-job learning is effective in turning rookies into contributors, the sooner the better!

Employers want employees to learn effectively and quickly, to build business success, but often,

- can't spare staff for off-the-job seminars or courses,
- have funding limitations,
- are not certain as to what specific training is best for impact on the job.

Many Employers are finding, however, that, as well as time on the job, in-house tasks, assignments or projects offer advantages, such as,

- learning while still in the workplace, and available if needed,
- a focus on practical, job related learning,
- needed tasks and projects get accomplished (saving Supervisory time),
- no cost, aside from time, as learning occurs on the job (e.g. tasks are addressed as time permits)
- Employee knowledge and expertise is developed

Managers don't have time for everything, but can build Employee confidence, expertise and performance by assigning needed tasks, such as,

- problem-solving projects, process improvements, cost reductions,
- liaison with clients or other Departments,
- local policy/practice updates, safety assignments, etc.

Valuable tasks can be accomplished, Employees broaden their knowledge and skills, operations run smoother, and, oh yes, training costs are minimized. Not bad!

Hint-Start with your top Employees, then as you progress, expand the practice to others, as feasible!

