

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT... THE INVESTMENT YOU'LL NEED TO MAKE



Businesses that have run literacy programmes have typically seen significant results and benefits. But most also caution the need to be aware of all the costs associated with running a programme. These include both financial and time costs.

As you work out the investment you'll need to make to help your employees meet their reading, maths and communication needs, here are some things to consider. Your ITO could help with information on specific issues for your industry and advice on your options.

Overall costs

Specific costs depend very much on the nature of your programme and how many employees are involved. And – if you're working with a training provider – what arrangements you negotiate with them.

Note: even if you use a provider you may be able to look after some programme development tasks internally. Or if you run the programme in-house you may decide it's more efficient to get a provider to carry out some activities, such as the needs analysis.

However you develop and deliver the training you will have a range of other costs – some of these will be time and others will be outlay for materials and so on.

Training provider costs

Your training provider should be able to break down costs to roughly equate with the main stages shown in the Skills Highway website:

- > **assess** – in-depth help with analysing organisational and individual needs
- > **implement** – developing a tailored programme and delivering it
- > **measure** – evaluating and reporting on the programme both during it and at the end
- > **improve** – refining the programme for future use.

EMPLOYERS TALK ABOUT THE INVESTMENT THEY NEEDED TO MAKE

WE ASKED FOR FEEDBACK ABOUT THE INVESTMENT EMPLOYERS NEEDED TO MAKE IN THEIR PROGRAMMES. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID.



My role involved deciding how the training model would run within our organisation – that's something all businesses need to take account of from the outset. This role takes time and a significant investment that's easy to underestimate.

~ RYMAN HEALTHCARE

As a firm, we don't have a team of in-house trainers, we don't really have a training department. Historically, we've tended to work mostly with an Industry Training Organisation to provide our more technical training. So, we really had to roll our sleeves up and spend a lot of time and effort involved in learning about workplace literacy training from scratch.

~ JUKEN NEW ZEALAND

Our aim now is to put about 30 people through the programme every year. It's a good rate, one that enables us to bear the cost of taking people away from the workplace. After 10 years, we'll suddenly find we've trained 300 people out of 1,000. We are looking at employing our own trainer, rather than going through consultants. It seems sensible. It'll mean we can keep the programme running a lot longer for less cost, in a more effective way.

~ FLETCHER CONSTRUCTION



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You might like to consider whether there are ways you can do some of this work yourself, for example by using in-house trainers.

Internal costs to tailor your programme

How many employees and hours will be involved in working with your trainer to make sure your programme is right? What resources will you need to provide? It's important to remember your business objectives – how you will identify them, agree them with your managers and measure whether you're achieving them.

Programme promotion costs

Getting your supervisors and managers on board is critical to your programme's success. You and your supervisors will need to spend time encouraging your employees to sign up to your programme. There may be some resource costs too, for example, to create posters, newsletters and flyers.

Employee release time

How much time can you afford for your employees to do the training during work time? Will there be cover so they can attend? Or do you accept a lost-productivity cost? There are also costs associated with rescheduling timetables, or adjusting business processes so your employees can attend training.

Government funding

The Government has some funding for workplace literacy training. Can you apply for it? Will your employees be eligible?

Logistical costs

You may already have a dedicated training room, but is it equipped for this type of training? And if you don't have a training room, where will training be held and will this incur an extra cost? There may also be costs associated with equipment, photocopying and other items.

Taking training to employees on location may be the best way to get the desired results. This also needs to be costed.

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We also found notifying tutors of absenteeism an issue at times – mostly because we operate around the clock. Working round the clock means we find out about absenteeism at odd times of the day or night. In turn, it meant we weren't able to give tutors enough time to reschedule or change their plans, so they would sometimes turn up to teach an empty or near empty class. Last year, we secured funding from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to cover a full time coordinator role for 12 months, which has helped us iron out a lot of these practical issues.

~ CANTERBURY SPINNERS



Time for evaluation and reporting

You'll need your training provider to deliver regular updates on progress and a full evaluation at the end of your programme. You should also factor in time to help the trainer refine the programme during its first run.

It's important that you factor in time to report on progress to your managers and supervisors to keep them committed. This is the time to raise concerns and gauge their ongoing support. There may also be costs or time involved in recording the results of the training in your training records, and evaluating your employees' skills before they start your programme.



For more information visit: www.skillshighway.govt.nz

