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IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

by Elaine Larkin

Attending one-off training events that are not part of a planned personal and career development process is likely to waste a company's money and its staff's time in the long term, according to a new training and management development consultancy.

Adrienne O'Hare, founder and managing director of To Be Training and Development, says Irish Businesses need to invest in ongoing training and ensuring employee satisfaction in order to remain competitive.

“Businesses must move beyond the idea of one-off training events towards embracing the process of lifelong learning that facilitates long-term behavioural change,” she says. In particular, companies seeking to improve their employees' softer skills such as communication, relationship building, self-awareness and conflict management, will benefit more and gain greater return on investment by applying an ongoing development approach to training.

She likens training for business to training for a marathon. **“If you are training for a marathon, you don't just go to the gym once and suddenly develop the capability to run the 26.2 miles. I look at training and development in the same way. What we do with our solution is focus on ensuring that there is a very clear and identifiable need and that this need is aligned closely to the business strategy.”** It is also important that the training solution has clear and measurable goals attached to it, she adds.

She notes that when people go on a training course they come back on a high, thinking they can implement new strategies, but then life gets in the way. **“If you don't use it you lose it,” she comments. “So it's really important to maintain and practise the skills and behaviours that you get from the programme in the long term so they become habits.”**

To Be Training and Development has developed a range of programmes to meet the needs of individual businesses from small start ups to multinationals, covering topics such as leadership, management development, personal effectiveness, sales effectiveness and customer services. It also offers personal coaching for improved performance in the workplace and human resources consulting services.

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