

**Article:**

Businesses that deal with tough economic conditions by cutting back on the 'softer' cost areas like staff development and training are likely to suffer badly in the long term, according to an Ashford training specialist.

Joy Cross, a director with HR+, believes training is more vital than ever when times get tough, and has warned that firms that cut back will take longer to return to the good times when condi-

## Finding out what staff need to know

tions improve.

"When rewarding good staff with a pay rise is difficult, continuing to show you value them by investing in their skills will pay real dividends and will encourage them to stay loyal and stick with you through the difficult times," she explained.

"It also makes sense to train your poorest performers, too. They aren't going

anywhere in the current jobs market, so your only option is to up their skills so that you can get more out of them.

"The other thing to remember is that if you have responded to the current economic situation by cutting back on staff, those that are left are probably doing more. If that is the case then you really need to make sure they are trained to do the new work that you are expecting them to do."

Joy believes that when the upturn comes, those companies that have continued to invest in training will have the necessary skills to respond quickly to new opportunities.

To help companies identify what training they need, HR+ has introduced a service called Skills Scan, which is designed to find out "what staff know, what they don't know and what they need to know," Joy explained.

HR+ also provides human resources advice and services in areas such as inductions, appraisals, complying with legislation and restructuring.



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