

The Value of Training for your business - by learndirect scotland for business

A total of 97% of companies in Scotland are small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and it is estimated that two-thirds of the Scottish workforce are employed by companies with fewer than 100 workers.

Yet it is small firms that are more vulnerable to the lack of a skilled workforce rather than larger companies who can offer greater salaries and better packages to attract highly skilled workers.

Training and skills are vital to small businesses and the wider Scottish economy, and a key driver of productivity.

Barriers to training

Training is the obvious answer to remaining competitive, but for many SMEs there are deep-seated barriers to formal training. Many are reluctant to get involved because the daily pressure of running a business means they don't have the time to stand back and take a strategic look at the company's long term training needs.

Small companies are also concerned about the costs and time involved in releasing employees for training.

The aim of learndirect scotland for business is to help such companies overcome these barriers by offering a range of free services to make it easier for them to embrace training, and by pointing them in the direction of courses that are available at a time, place and pace that suits them.

The one question learndirect scotland for business is repeatedly asked by hard-pressed companies is: 'Why should they train?'

This is due to the fact that many Scottish firms see training as a peripheral and often expensive

distraction from the day-to-day business of making money.

The answer is that training improves workers' performance, which makes businesses more productive – and therefore more competitive.

Unlike bigger companies with well-resourced personnel departments, smaller businesses don't have a training manager or department, so the whole issue of training can be pushed to one side.

But learndirect scotland for business stresses that firms can no longer afford to ignore staff training – it should be at the heart of every business.

The agency says that, in order to retain an edge over competitors, companies have to keep abreast of industry changes, technological advances and new legislation.

But what can we get out of training?

Training brings many benefits. Regular staff improvements keep employers up to speed with developments in the market, and enhance the competitiveness of a company.

Staff will feel more appreciated, so there will be an improvement in morale and job satisfaction. This in turn can produce a significant cost saving, particularly for small businesses where recruitment and training can be expensive.

Where it meets the needs of both staff and employers, training can also lead to a rise in the quality and flexibility of a company's services through improved work safety practices, better customer service and efficiency. ➤

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