

OPERATION SKILL-BUILDER:

**YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
WORKFORCE TRAINING IN 2023**



The key to getting through this downturn? Training your team! From upskilling to reskilling to cross-generational mentoring, here's how to prepare your workforce for the future. Outperform your competitors during tough times. And create happier, more loyal and more productive employees:

You can't always hire for the skills you need. But you can always train your teams – and reap increased retention and productivity in the process.

In this eBook, you'll learn:

- 🔍 How the current skills gap threatens businesses' ongoing success – on the brink of a recession.
- 🔍 Why skill building is your best chance for steady growth in a turbulent economy.
- 🔍 The vital link between training, recruitment, and retention.
- 🔍 How to choose the right evidence-based training options for your team.

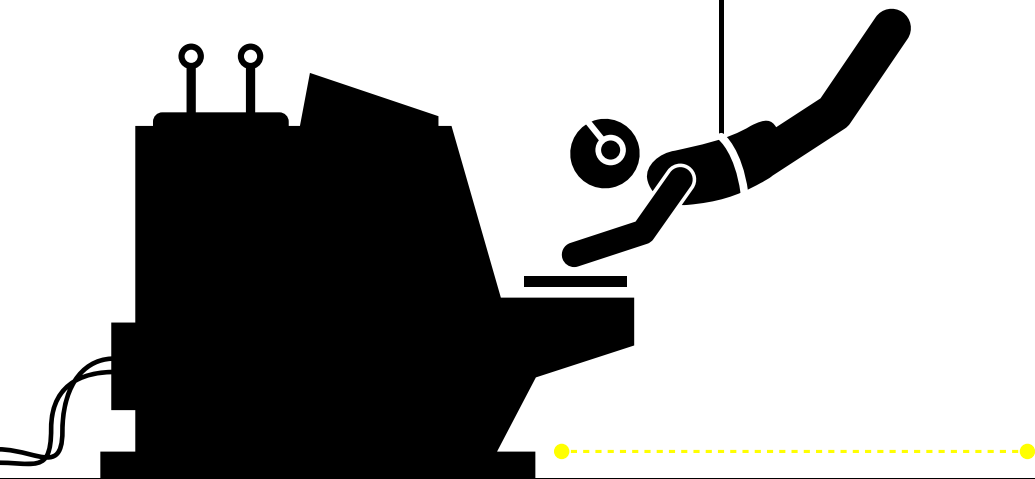


SKILL-GAP STATS

The numbers don't lie. The skills gap among North American workers is vast – and it may only continue to grow.

Consider:

- 🔍 **By 2029, over 20 percent of the U.S. population will be older than 65.** That's a lot of retirees – and not a lot of workers to take their place.
- 🔍 The rapid pace of technological advancement means that the **average worker's skill set becomes obsolete in just four years.** In high-tech fields like programming, the average skill turnover period is as little as 18 months.
- 🔍 With **unemployment levels hovering at or below 4 percent**, fewer people are looking for work – which means fewer opportunities for employers to hire for the skills they need.





WHAT'S AT STAKE?

In school, you may have focused on the “three Rs” – reading, writing, and arithmetic.

To train your teams, you'll need to focus on three new Rs:

Retention. Investing in skill building fosters loyalty, helping you keep the talent you have.

Recession. Building employees' skills gives companies the resilience to weather a recession or other economic uncertainties.

Recruiting. A commitment to employee learning helps you stand apart from competing employers – and attract better talent.

HOW SKILLS HELP COMPANIES WEATHER THE RECESSION

Why do employers need to focus on skill building – now more than ever? The top reasons employers embrace employee training include:

- 🔍 **Improving engagement and retention.** Economic uncertainty sets everyone on edge. Investing in skill building communicates that you're invested in your employees. You're a team, even when the economic forecast looks rough.
- 🔍 **Boosting customer satisfaction.** Customers notice when employees' exceptional skill sets translate into better service. Higher customer satisfaction, in turn, fosters customer loyalty – even when the economy gets rough.
- 🔍 **Attracting top talent.** Top candidates look for the qualities that distinguish one job opportunity and employer from another. A robust training program signals that your company wants to invest in candidates' careers and futures.





BETTER TRAINING = BETTER RETENTION

It happens time and again: **Employees feel they can't learn new skills or advance in their current role, so they look for a new job with a new employer.** They believe their only opportunities lie outside their current company, so they leave.

This problem resolves instantly when employees have constant skill building and growth opportunities with their existing employer. While some employees may leave for other reasons, those who leave to advance their learning suddenly have reasons to stay.

As employees stay, they improve engagement, boost productivity, and deepen institutional knowledge among their fellow workers. Retention has resounding benefits, and it begins with good training.

WINNING THE RACE FOR TALENT

Today's workers want their employers to support their skill building and career growth. Yet most express pessimism that employers actually offer the learning opportunities they want.

Currently:



The good news? Becoming an exception to the rule makes your company instantly stand out – and for all the right reasons.

DON'T OVERLOOK SOFT SKILLS TRAINING

Many employers' minds turn to technical skills when they plan skills training events. Yet training employees in "soft" or transferable skills offers benefits that can't be overlooked.

Key soft skills to include in employee training include:

-  Communication
-  Flexible thinking
-  Teamwork
-  Time management
-  Problem-solving

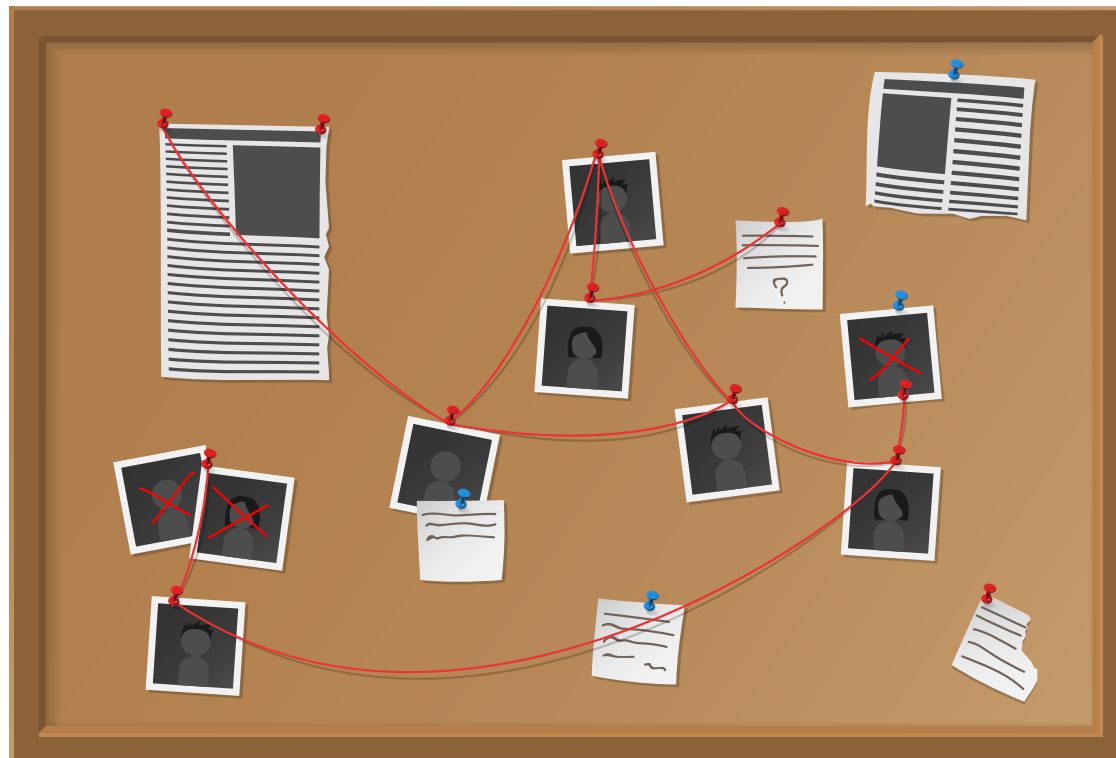
Soft skills apply to nearly every role in every company. This makes them instantly transferable. No matter how many times a worker changes roles or accepts a promotion, their soft skills prove useful – **and boost the company's bottom line.**



EVIDENCE-BASED TRAINING OPTIONS

What types of training work for teams? Today's training includes a range of evidence-based options, including:

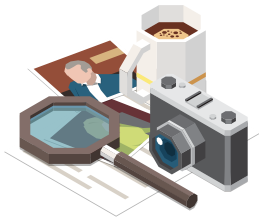
- 🔍 **Reskilling and upskilling.** These trainings focus on building or honing skills so that workers can add more value in their current role or prepare for a new role.
- 🔍 **Mentoring.** Mentoring allows both mentors and mentees to learn from one another. It informs mentees with valuable institutional knowledge, and it gives mentors a fresh perspective from which to innovate.
- 🔍 **Classroom learning.** Whether done in a traditional classroom setting or via a digital “classroom,” conventional learning can help workers grasp new material.



RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING



Reskilling teaches workers new skills for a new role. Reskilling allows workers to step into a new role without facing an onerous learning curve. A common example is the employee who takes management classes to prepare for a management role.



Upskilling teaches workers new skills or updates existing skills. Upskilling allows workers to keep pace with changing work methods or innovations. It can also boost productivity. For example, an employee may learn to use a new, cutting-edge software platform that allows their job to be done more efficiently.



CROSS- GENERATIONAL MENTORING

Cross-generational mentoring offers both mentor and mentee a chance to learn and grow. To build a strong cross-generational mentoring program:

- ❑ **Mix up your teams.** Include members of each generation on teams. Team members will share ideas and perspectives, resulting in better outcomes.
- ❑ **Foster points of contact.** Younger workers seek more feedback and more meaningful work, which older team members can provide. Older team members, in turn, sharpen their ability to explain, lead, and innovate.
- ❑ **Examine old patterns.** Unconscious biases about employees' age, generational cohort, or experience may appear as patterns in your past decisions. Consider what you've done to bring these unconscious habits into your conscious awareness.
- ❑ **Encourage reciprocity.** Mentor-mentee relationships shouldn't be one-sided. Encourage mentors to learn and mentees to teach.



LEARNING IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

In-classroom learning has long been the mainstay of education. Today, in-classroom learning remains an effective option – but it's not the only way your teams can benefit from collaboration with an instructor and classmates.

Remote learning also offers a way to guide workers through new material. Learning management platforms, online courses, and other digital content allows workers to absorb new information at their own pace. Paired with a mentoring program, these content options can be a powerful way for workers to learn new information, hone additional skills, and expand their understanding of the company and its operations.



CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRAINING FOR YOUR TEAM

With so many training options available, how do companies decide which opportunities to provide their teams?

When choosing among training options, keep the following questions in mind:

- Q Where are workers now, and where can they go?** Skill adjacencies highlight skills closely related to the skills your team already uses daily. Use skill adjacency information to boost your team's confidence through early learning success.
- Q Diversify your approach in training programs.** Some people learn well by sitting at a desk and taking notes; others need to get their hands dirty. The more ways you find to share information, the more likely it is you'll inspire every employee to pick up new skills.
- Q Recognize your employees' learning efforts.** Rewards like additional pay, more vacation time, or even a simple recognition help employees know that the company cares about their efforts.
- Q Make it easy to participate.** Flexible scheduling, in-person or remote options, and other accessibility features make it easy for employees to pick up new skills. The best programs make it hard for workers not to improve.



WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

Employee training programs offer tremendous value. Communicate them well, and they can boost your recruiting and retention efforts as well.

For help choosing and implementing your skills-building programs, talk to an experienced staffing agency. Your staffing partner can help you:



- 🔍 Access qualified and trained workers who are immediately productive.
- 🔍 Engage specialized experts who can train your team and close skills gaps.
- 🔍 Provide guidance on building the right training program to bolster your company's health in an uncertain economy.