

NJBIA

AT ISSUE *By Christopher Emigholz, Director of Education Policy*

Employee Training to Help Your Business Succeed

What is one of the most important things your business can do when the economy is down and your business is struggling? Invest in your employees! Make sure they get the training they need to improve their skills and knowledge. This will improve productivity, efficiency and innovation—and in the long run save your company time and money.

The booms and busts of the economic cycle and the high cost of doing business in New Jersey are a given. You can't control these larger circumstances. But investing in your workers' skills is within your control and can always help your company succeed.

As a general rule, not enough training occurs in New Jersey. For example, a recent survey of New Jersey manufacturers by the NJ Manufacturing Extension program found that more than one-third offered less than nine hours of training per year to their employees – 20 percent less than the national average.

Training is not always easy; it can be expensive, and even when it is free, it can be difficult to give employees time off from their regular work duties for any extended period of time. But successful companies always find a way to make time for employee training.

No doubt you feel frustration when you hire entry-level employees, just out of high school or college, who fail to demonstrate basic skills that you take for granted. Education reforms are necessary to solve this problem, and this is an important project on which NJBIA is working.

In the meantime, it's likely there are many loyal and hardworking employees in your organization who aren't working to their full potential because they lack certain skills.

To help your employees and your business succeed, there are many training and other workforce development resources that you can plug into right now.

The best example is the New Jersey Business & Industry Association's Basic Skills Training Program. Now in its third year, this program is open to all private-sector employers at no charge to their business!

Your employees can get training in basic computer operations (Windows operating system and Microsoft

Office applications like Word, Excel and Outlook); verbal and written communications, including customer-service communications; mathematics and measurement; and English as a Second Language.



>Don't miss this opportunity! **To get training for your employees at no charge to your company**, call Bob Rosa at 609-393-9009.

In the first six weeks of Basic Skills III (which got underway in July), 275 classes with a tuition value of \$418,000 were scheduled for businesses in nine counties. That's on top of the 10,250 employees that were trained at 800 companies in the program's first two years.

The third year of the program is supported by a \$1 million training grant from the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The training itself is provided by the NJ Community College Consortium either on your site or at one of dozens of county college locations across the state.

Don't miss this opportunity! To get training for your employees at no charge to your company, call the Consortium's Bob Rosa at 609-393-9009. You may call me directly at 609-393-7707, ext. 201, if you have any questions. You can also visit NJBIA's training resources Web site at www.njbja.org/resources/training. **NJB**