

Summit

10 ***WAYS TO***

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TEN WAYS TO MAKE YOUR MANAGEMENT TRAINING REALLY WORK FOR YOU

Choosing an external company to be your training partner can be a daunting task. How do you know who is the best fit for your organisation and its particular training needs? The purpose of providing leadership training is to deliver lasting value to your organisation long after the session or course is over, but it cannot be taken for granted that just any provider will be effective at optimising the long-term efficiency, productivity, and engagement of your teams. With that in mind, here are our top ten tips for choosing the right leadership training partner and ensuring your organisation receives maximum benefit from the partnership.

1. KNOW YOUR ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS.

Be clear on why you need the training now. What organisational pressures or goals are you facing and what contribution are you expecting from your training partner?

2. KNOW WHY YOU ARE OUTSOURCING YOUR TRAINING.

Make sure your organisation is clear about **WHY** you are looking to outsource. Do you need external expertise and skills? Is it a project deadline you can't achieve on your own? This clarity can help when determining which partner would best suit your specific needs.

3. UNDERSTAND THE RISKS.

The consequence of a poorly chosen PC repair service provider might only cost you a couple of computers and a few annoyed colleagues. But outsourcing leadership training means putting your organisation's standards and values in the hands of an external company. Be very careful of outsourcing your recruitment and development of managers to a company who can't demonstrate a consistent level of competence and client satisfaction.

4. THINK PAST THE CONSULTANT'S SALES PITCH.

Word of mouth referrals are almost always the safest way to select a leadership training partner. A recommendation from a trusted colleague, acquaintance, or advisor is far safer than simply seeing who appears on an internet search. But don't think this recommendation means you don't have to do your homework on the company yourself – you still have to ensure that the provider has the credentials to meet your organisation's requirements.

5. CLARIFY THE CONSISTENCY OF EXPERTISE LEVEL.

The bait-and-switch is one of the most annoying practices employed in the outsourcing sector. Providers show up to the sales meetings with senior personnel, but when the contract has been secured you never see them again - unless there is something else they can sell you. Establish early on exactly who will be allocated to your training and development programme. Ask about this person's expertise, track record, qualifications, and level of authority within their company. Don't take a CV or personal profile as a statement of fact. Dig deep and check client testimonials.

6. READ RELIABLE CLIENT TESTIMONIALS.

A long client list full of respected brands can look impressive. But to ensure your potential partner can actually deliver on their commitments, look for client testimonials. Real feedback from real people in a similar situation to you. If verifiable testimonials aren't available, perhaps you would be best not making such an appointment.

7. ENSURE YOUR GOALS ARE DELIVERABLE AND REALISTIC.

Beware of providers who promise you the world. Their intention may be genuine and well-intentioned but even the most impressive sales pitch will end in frustration (and possibly litigation) if agreed deliverables aren't achieved. Don't be so relaxed that any results, however small, are considered a success. But don't expect so much that even very positive changes are deemed to be failure.

8. ASK HOW THE PROVIDER WILL ASSIST WITH IN-SOURCING TRAINING.

You don't want to find yourself, in years to come, reliant on your external partner for all the training your organisation requires. Sometimes you will need specialist assistance better provided by another company, and often, with the right assistance, you can bring much of the training in-house. Asking this question will help you identify potential partners able to provide what you need to improve your organisation's self-reliance when it comes to leadership training. Once you have chosen the provider, include this transfer of training skills, knowledge, and expertise in your contract document.

9. GET THE CONTRACT RIGHT.

The contract is where all the assumptions about how the provider will work with you are made explicit. It is also the place where the provider's expectations of the client are also made explicit. Enter into negotiations with a genuine win-win relationship in mind. You want to achieve your outsourcing objective with your partner as smoothly and effectively as possible. The contract should ensure the provider and yourself are clear about your expectations of each other, allow an element of flexibility to change project timing and logistics, and guarantee that both parties feel they are contributing and receiving value for money.

10. USE HONESTY AS YOUR STANDARD IN ALL YOUR DEALINGS.

Appointing an external training partner can be tricky. You don't want to end up with an incompetent provider, so you are a little cagey to start with. The external training partner doesn't want you to 'steal' their intellectual property, so they give it to you one small piece at a time. This is counter productive. Start your initial discussion with a clear commitment to honest dialogue and transparency throughout, and it will be easier to identify whether a provider is or is not the right one for your company.

Could Summit be the right partner for your organisation? Take a look at our management training courses to get a taste of what we can offer.

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