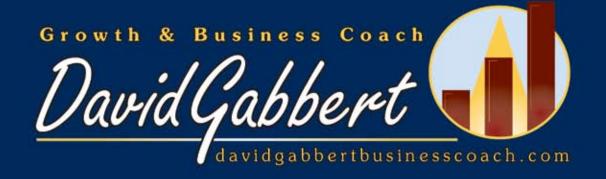# LIFETIME, INTERACTIVE BUSINESS GUIDE
A TEN-BOOK SERIES ON TOP BUSINESS FUNCTIONS

WIN @ BIZ®

Train For Productivity

KNOW WHAT THE WINNERS DO!

Growth & Business Coach

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WIN AT BIZ®

TRAIN FOR PRODUCTIVITY

A TEN E-BOOK SERIES

AUTHOR DAVID GABBERT

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TRAINING FOR PRODUCTIVITY

Introduction

Are your employees trained for productivity? What does training for productivity mean?

Training for productivity means that an employee represents the culture of the company with every action and spoken word. He or she delivers the goods, services, and/or workmanship that the company and customers expect. He or she transfers the correct information to customers and provides the desired level of customer service; performs the work expected so management can do its job; is valuable to the company; and benefits the bottom line. Productive employees are generally happier employees who value their job and are more likely to stay with the company, reducing costly and unproductive turnover.

A well-trained employee does not just happen. Detailed, written training programs are one of the business processes that run your company. This e-book will help you develop them, so that they set the stage for a new hire's education in the company. The training process guarantees that every employee in a given position is trained the same way every time, creating consistency in both quality and productivity.

If you have managers who do the training, they must be trained in how to use the training programs you develop, and carry out their work with encouraging language. The goal of every successful training program is to build success in small steps. Every time a new hire receives recognition and encouragement for his or her new accomplishments, confidence and self-esteem will grow. Increasing a new employee's confidence and self-esteem creates an environment where he or she can do great things.

This e-book is structured around a series of steps—Educate Me, Tell Me, Show Me, Watch Me, Encourage Me, and Empower Me. They will become the core of your training program, and will lead to successful outcomes for every new hire.

Educate Me, Part 1: Defining Outcomes and Expectations

Before training a new employee in the functions of his or her position, it is important to accomplish two objectives. The first is to communicate information about the position's expectations and outcomes (i.e., the products of the job). Second, how these outcomes affect the company's financial health. How can an employee possibly understand his or her financial relevance and importance to the company without this basic education?

Give your training program a test. Ask your existing employees to explain to you the desired outcomes of their labor and how their actions affect the company's bottom line. You might be surprised how many companies fail to convey this fundamentally important information in their training program.

Therefore, the first part of your written training program should include a specific, written explanation of what is expected of the new hire. As Buckingham and Coffman

explain in *First, Break All The Rules,* when you communicate expectations, you must define the outcomes that are expected—not the steps of the job. To effectively train for productivity, the employee must be required to be productive when you are not present. Productivity training requires communicating that the employee is responsible to deliver the desired outcomes. These outcomes must be specifically defined.

For example, there may be specific production outcomes, specific customer service outcomes, a specific image outcome, specific community service outcomes, or specific sales outcomes. It is always more effective if outcomes can be expressed in some form of a quantitative number.

A complete understanding of the various outcomes expected for a given position is the first step to developing a company culture. For example, a person on a manufacturing line must understand that the outcome for which he or she is responsible is to produce 975 widgets of a specific quality standard every eight-hour shift. A sales person's outcome may be to close $100,000 of new business every month. A window washer's outcome may be to complete $500 of billable work in a ten-hour shift, presenting a professional personal image by always driving a freshly washed vehicle, wearing crisp, clean uniforms, and not receiving any customer complaints concerning workmanship.

Educate Me, Part 2: Defining How Actions Affect the Bottom Line

The second part of your written training program needs to explain how the employee and his or her position fit into the big picture. The new employee cannot possibly understand how his or her actions affect the bottom line unless their job is explained using numbers. I encourage you to read the book, *Great Game of Business*, by Jack Stack. The book argues that in order to expect bottom line productivity, you have to educate employees on the products and services the company offers, how the products or services are sold, and what the customer expects. They need to know what types of actions disappoint the customers. You must teach what events, actions, and outcomes need to take place to increase your customer base, retain customers, and grow the company's bottom line.

Many times, an employee's actions can affect the expenses of a company, the productive use of a capital investment, or the improvement of an asset or liability. Everyone needs to understand how these actions affect your financial accounts and what effect the actions have on the bottom line. The production person who is responsible for producing 975 quality widgets in an eight-hour day needs to understand what is lost if he only produces 900 widgets. He also needs to understand what the financial effect is if the widgets he produces are of substandard quality and how poor quality increases production costs and loses customers.

Whenever possible, these training exercises need to be expressed in terms of dollars. Use charts, graphs, and numbers to explain and teach these points. Once the employee understands your business and key factors in its bottom line, as well as how the defined outcomes of his or her position play into its big-picture performance goals, you

are on the road toward a well-trained, productive workforce.

When you build an employee's knowledge in this manner, you are building your company. Educated employees who understand how their positions contribute to the financial health of the company will value their jobs, be more responsible, and understand how their paycheck is created. To expect people to be winners, you must define for them what it means to be a winner in the game of business.

Win at Biz Scorecard

- **Does your training program clearly communicate the responsibility of a new hire's position regarding delivering specific outcomes?**
- **Are new hires educated on how their actions affect the company's financial goals?**

Tell Me: Explain the Steps of the Job

Once the employee understands the outcome responsibilities and how his or her position affects the company's overall profit performance, it is time to move on to the next step—verbal explanation of their day-to-day job.

Any demonstration of the steps of their job will be much more effective if it is preceded by a thorough, step-by-step explanation. So, this second step of the training involves explaining the aspects and steps of the job, including the tools involved, how the tools are used, how the job should be completed, and how the customer benefits from the job being done properly. Provide a specific timetable to achieve the production outcomes.

Your goal is to develop a comprehensive mental understanding of the steps of the position before moving on to the "learn by doing" process.

Win at Biz Scorecard

Communicate the steps of the job verbally before doing a demonstration.

Show Me: Demonstrate the Steps of the Job

A demonstration paints an accurate picture in the employee's mind of what their new job entails. To demonstrate the job effectively, the person doing the training needs to break the job down into pieces and demonstrate each one carefully. The step-by-step demonstration needs to be accompanied by an explanation of WHY each step of the job is being done a certain way.

Let's use a simple example of demonstrating to a new hire the steps of receiving ten pieces of merchandise from an incoming freight company.

1. Count the number of cartons to make sure the number matches the bill of lading and the freight bill. Why? If you sign the freight bill without counting the number of cartons and you discover the shipment is short one item at a later date, the company will be liable for paying for all ten items. The company's profit will be reduced by the cost of the lost item.

2. Check every carton for damage and inspect the merchandise in any damaged cartons. Any uncovered damage must be recorded on the freight bill and signed by the driver. Why? If the freight bill is signed without noting any damage, the company will not be able to make a claim against the freight company to recover the replacement or repair cost of the damaged merchandise. Again, the profit of the company will be reduced by the cost of the repair of the damaged merchandise.

3. Complete the receiving paperwork properly. Why? If the receiving paperwork is not completed accurately, the inventory controller will enter the inventory wrong and a chain of costly events will result. One of the costly events will be the dissatisfaction of a customer who was told the item she was purchasing was in stock when in fact it was not.

From this simple example one can see that the "why" is critical to good training. The demonstration is useless if the employee does not understand the importance of each step. This rationale needs to be expressed in terms of the effect on company performance.

To increase the employee's retention of the training information, it is always more effective if your explanations can also be accompanied by a good story. I recall one supervisor of a home delivery service who wanted to make a point to the new hires—the rule was to always shut the gates to any fenced-in portion of the yard during a delivery. The supervisor told the trainees about one customer who came home and let her dog out into the fenced backyard, as she did every night when she came home from work. An employee had left the gate open, and the dog took off running through the open gate. Unfortunately, the dog was hit by a car and killed. The simple action of a careless employee created tremendous expense and emotional anxiety for both the customer and the company. An effective story is a great teacher, and improves retention.

To complete an effective and complete demonstration, it is important for the employees to see what the job looks like when it is done. This is the same principle as building a puzzle: Knowing what it's supposed to look like when it is done helps a lot. Whether the job is giving a manicure, cleaning a pool, doing data entry of new sales, using proprietary software to prepare a corporate tax return, or conducting appropriate bedside manners with a patient, seeing the finished job done properly makes a lasting impression.

For an effective demonstration, explain the "why" behind each step, including how inappropriate actions affect the company. Drive the point home with a story and show the new hire what the completed job looks like.

Watch Me: Observe, Encourage, and Correct

Now it is time for the trainee to actually do the job. Doing is the best learning method. Likewise, it's the best measurement of retention, and the trainer needs to observe the employee putting their new education into practice.

It is important during this stage of the training to encourage the employee with positive reinforcement, and provide constructive feedback for actions that need to be improved. As Dale Carnegie teaches, it is always best to start out with a drop of honey and a word of kindness. In a training situation, it is important to always precede a corrective comment with a compliment on what the employee is doing correctly.

A common mistake might be to say, "I told you how to set the tables up for Sunday brunch yesterday! Why are you setting them up like this? It's all wrong!" Negative language will only put the employee on the defensive and create negative feelings about his performance, his job, and his supervisor. Put more positively, the remark may sound like this: "Todd, I want to compliment you on how conscientious you are about setting up the tables. I really appreciate your effort. I know we did not spend much time looking at the brunch floor plan; I was in a hurry and did not devote the time to review it with you properly. Let's take a moment now to review it." After the review, which should include an explanation as to why the brunch floor plan is laid out the way it is, you might then say, "Todd, I am confident you will do a great job and that the dining room for brunch will be both functional and inviting to our guests."

Dale Carnegie has some excellent suggestions on how to go about making corrective comments while observing the work of an employee. It is always important to use kind, motivational language so comments are received positively and that the information will be retained. Another effective strategy is to have the trainer give examples of his own mistakes in a similar situation as an introduction to conveying corrective comments.

Once you have completed the reinforcing corrective communication, it is important to demonstrate the best way to perform the desired action. Remember, a demonstration is always more effective than a thousand words of description. Always relate how the actions will affect the outcome for which the employee is responsible—and always remember that much praise and encouragement is important at this step of the training.

Let's look at a corrective language example in a training situation of someone recently trained to fertilize a lawn. "Nick, you are really doing a great job of fertilizing. Your spacing is good and your pace is perfect. I would like to show you a better way to do the turn. I made the same error when I first started because I thought I could save time

if I made a continuous turn without stopping. Notice as I am approaching the turn I shut off the spreader while I am still walking. Once I have positioned myself to go back in the other direction I do not turn the spreader back on until I am walking again. This turning procedure does not allow the fertilizer to come out of the spreader while you slow down your pace in the turn, which would drop too much fertilizer on the lawn and possibly burn the grass. Obviously, a burnt lawn in the turning area will create a cancellation, negatively affect our growth rate, and create some negative word-of-mouth advertising. I have confidence you can do this correctly. Go ahead and try a couple of turns. Keep up the good work."

Win at Biz Scorecard

Effective training includes observing the new hire doing the steps properly. Always use encouraging language and demonstrate the corrective actions.

Encourage Me: Building Success and Self-Esteem

Think of training as a three-part task: it transfers knowledge, verifies retention, and encourages the employee. These three parts should happen together all the time, but often managers neglect the third step. Your overriding goal is to develop confidence and self-esteem. During this step it is important to let the employee practice on his or her own, without management supervision. The employee should use this time to focus on delivering outcomes. That is why the previous steps become so important, as they are the groundwork for your entire training program.

During this step the trainer should periodically verify the employee's outcomes, and at those times, give encouraging corrective recommendations until the outcomes are acceptable.

At this point in the training it is still important to point out successes. Each time a trainee accomplishes a small goal, he or she experiences success; every successful experience is a motivator to build future performance. Note aloud when things are done correctly. Recognition of success makes the trainee want to improve and tap into his or her full potential.

Also, praise the trainee every time you see improvement; personalized encouragement provides the energy to continue when he or she makes mistakes. Always remember the overriding goal is to build confidence and self-esteem.

Win at Biz Scorecard

You must continue to verify outcomes, deliver encouragement and point out successes.

Empower Me: Give the Employee the Freedom of Creative Choice

Once the new hire has mastered the training, it becomes important for management to focus on just the outcomes—not the steps.

Employees are in a good position to find new, productive ways to do their jobs, since they do them every day. Empower your employees by letting them use personal creativity to discover their own best way to deliver outcomes. Encourage them to improve their process; it is this freedom of choice that develops happy, productive employees.

To build a positive atmosphere of employee empowerment, management must maintain open communication. Without the freedom of communication between management, supervisors, and subordinates concerning new goals, problems, and changes, employees won't have an opportunity to express their ideas and solutions. Nothing nullifies empowerment faster than losing one's freedom to express ideas and solutions.

Successful managers also understand that maintaining productivity over a long period of time requires not only the rewards of empowerment, but also continued coaching and the implementation of a well-thought-out motivational plan. Book 7 of the Win at Biz series, *Motivate Your Employees*, will provide the means to develop these valuable skills.

Win at Biz Scorecard

Once the new hire has completed training, remember to focus your management on the outcomes and empower the employee to use independent thinking to improve the steps of the job.

Win at Biz Checklist

✔ **Have you developed a written training program for each position that can be utilized as a business process by your personnel managers to develop consistency of quality and production for each new hire?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Do you train for responsibility of outcomes?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Does the employee understand what the company does for business, what the company must accomplish in order to be profitable and how the outcomes required for his or her position affects the company's bottom line?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Are the steps of the job and the proper use of the tools used to perform the job properly explained?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Are the steps of the job demonstrated as the "proven best way?" Does the employee understand why each step is done that way?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Has the employee witnessed the proper completion of the job as well as the required outcomes?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Does the trainer utilize language that is encouraging and constructive when knowledge is being transferred during the training process?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Have you verified that the trainee can complete the tasks and deliver the required outcomes?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Once the training is completed do your supervisors empower the employees by letting them find their own best way to deliver the outcomes?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

✔ **Does the trainer understand the core of the training program is centered around building successful steps, confidence, and self-esteem?**   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

About the Author
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Entrepreneur, business mentor and growth coach, David Gabbert helps business professionals, business owners, new startups, and students learn how to win at business. Self employed for forty-seven years, founder and owner of four million-dollar-plus businesses, and author of ten Win at Biz® business books, Dave offers free business articles about a variety of proven business strategies which compose the basic building blocks of starting and operating a successful business.

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