

Training Employees is Investing in the Future

OK ... we've all pretty much heard about investing in the future by educating our kids, buying property and playing the stock market. How about investing in your employees? I've heard, over the years, comments by several business owners that they will never invest in their employees and I always have to ask them why. I pretty much get the same reply: They'll be gone tomorrow. Maybe you should ask yourself, "Why are my employees only staying a short time?" There could be several answers to this question, but you can narrow it down. One of the aspects that shows employees that you value them is investing in "them" and their training as a part of that.

How much time and money do you spend on training new people due to employee turnover? Turnover costs can be astronomical in a year. Each new employee must be trained, and it takes time before they are working up to speed. If you spend time and money on a person and do a little investing in them, they might just stay on with you longer. Believe me, they can see and feel it ... and word travels! I don't believe you have to offer a gold mine, but offering a few benefits or incentives does help retain people. They, in turn, provide more and higher quality output.

I used to work for a manufacturing company that had every kind of benefit you could imagine, and the best thing was ... **nobody quit**. The company's initial investment in every person they hired paid off big time. The only time someone quit was if they moved on in life.

Yes, training overall costs big bucks, but spend the time and money on the same person and they will pay you back in turnover cost savings regardless of their position. I've even heard of some employees coming up with good ideas to save the company money. So if you will embrace some advanced training opportunities you can see the reward by not having to train new

employees in the most basic aspects of your business.

TYPES OF TRAINING

What types of training are we thinking of? How about attending classes/seminars on spotting problems? All eyes are the same; they just have to be taught what to look for and they don't need to know what the problem is, just that there is a problem. Most seminars you can even send multiple people and get a bigger

benefit than sending one at a time. Some operations reward their employees for spotting problems early allowing the best options for changes and minimizing losses.

Having everyone trained properly also can give you a "Team," which in turn works together instead of mass chaos. Improperly trained employees can also cost a company more money in that a job might have to be repeated. In most cases, waste is factored in the bid or job, but why always factor in turnover when you can do something about that?

If you train them well and supply some benefits, they stay longer. Then you might get a better handle on overall cost for your company.

Cross training might even be a big benefit to you. I've seen this first hand in a machine shop I worked at early on when I first started in the machining industry. The supervisor thought it was a big waste of time and money to cross train. Well, here came a job one time and the employee who knew the job well was out for a week. Nobody could step in, and that job was dead in the water for a week. Can you afford to do this?

Other types of training to consider employ outside resources. These experts can come in and give key employees hands-on training on pest identification, choosing the best control strategies and, of course, safe handling of all products in your operation. It is also a great way to get buy-in on a new procedure. Nobody wants to make work more complicated and if they do not understand why something is being done, they cannot see any reason to follow protocols.

You cannot be the sole source of advanced knowledge in your operation. Allowing your employees access to advanced training will make the entire operation work more smoothly. I have run into quite a few operations over the years that concentrate their knowledge and problem-solving abilities at the top. Inevitably, this ends up slowing things down as answers must wait for the right person to see and solve the problem. Give everyone in your operation a chance to be a team player and spot and solve problems quickly and efficiently. Your investment will pay off in more ways than you can predict! [gpn](#)

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Chase Agricultural Consulting, LLC was formed in 2011 by Ann (A.R.) Chase and Mike Zemke. Ann has more than 35 years experience in research, diagnostics and practical consulting in plant pathology. She has been retired from the University of Florida since 1994 but remains on staff as a Professor Emeritus. Mike holds an Associate of Applied Science in manufacturing drafting and started his education in horticulture when he and Ann were married in 1995. He specializes in communications of all sorts within the industry.