

Great Trainers are Hard to Come By!

By Ruth Bayley

The Skills Shortage

For training organisations, the skills shortages are a double whammy.

- First, the smarter employers are fighting the skills shortage by training up their existing staff to perform a more diverse and complex range of duties. So right now there is more demand than ever for training.
- Second, training companies find it just as hard as other employers to find excellent staff who both: know how to facilitate learning; and have a practical understanding of their subject matter built over several years in the workplace.

But can't anyone be a trainer?

Absolutely not! To provide quality service to its clients, a training organisation simply must have top-notch people to deliver.

So what does it take to be a great trainer?

It's not just a matter of having the "gift of the gab". A great trainer is, more than anything, a facilitator of learning. They need to balance a range of issues (at the same time) to meet the learning needs of every individual in a group or in some cases an organisation.

Great trainers must be able to do the following with gusto:

- Work with managers to identify individual and organisational learning needs,
- Prepare tailored training strategies and programmes,
- Research, design and develop individual and group training modules
- Manage group dynamics to deliver training
- Communicate proficiently with a diverse range of people
- Facilitate transfer of practical skills to the learning environment
- Plan assessments, develop tools and assess individual competence

The best trainers combine these skills with a practical understanding of their area of specialist expertise to offer real-world examples that help participants apply new knowledge in the workplace.

A Training Career is Very Rewarding

For people fortunate enough to possess these skills and, more importantly, the experience to apply them, a private sector career in training can be exceptionally rewarding. Many fantastic trainers – who have honed their skills in public sector jobs – have gone on to

reap great rewards, both financial and personal, working as consultants in the private sector. Training facilitators work with results-focused clients, assist participants to improve their knowledge and grow people's confidence to return to their workplace and make a difference.

Another great aspect of working in the private sector is the powerful combination of financial rewards and flexible working arrangements. An experienced contractor training facilitator with good technical knowledge will readily attract a daily consulting fee of between \$1,000 and \$1,500. This allows great flexibility with working hours to fit in with family, social and personal development needs.

A case study

"Vicki" is a great example of the benefits of making this transition.

After studying at university and working for several years in the APS in the procurement area of a large agency, "Vicki" felt ready for a change. Although her technical work was challenging and enjoyable, she realised that the part she liked the most was helping her internal clients to navigate the complexity of the procurement process to obtain great results for their work areas.

After attending a technical training program, a lightbulb went on in her head. "I could do this!". She contacted the company to inquire about opportunities as a trainer. She ended up taking 6 months leave to try it out for a while. She never went back! "It's the best job I ever had!" "Vicki" says. "I get to choose the jobs I do and the clients I work with and I can plan my schedule around my personal commitments. My husband's happy, my kids see more of me, I have time for myself and my bank balance is healthy!"

Work for Bayley and Associates

If you have skills (or even an interest) in training and a strong technical background, and are looking for a new and rewarding career option, why not consider working in vocational education. Bayley and Associates currently has vacancies for staff and contractors across a range of specialist and general training areas.

Phone our office for an appointment (02) 6282 5660 or email your resume to info@bayleyteam.com.au. We'd love to hear from you.

Ruth Bayley is Director of Bayley and Associates – a local Registered Training Organisation.