

## Selecting a Better Way



So you've identified training as a solution to a performance gap. Before you book the classroom and schedule the session, consider alternative training-based solutions that take less time and fewer resources.

### Coaching

One of the most supportive ways to help employees close performance gaps is through one-on-one coaching discussions that focus on performance improvement. Coaching also has the added benefits of recognition, relationship building and goal setting.

### Feedback

Feedback can take the form of statistical reports on performance, audio or video taping reviews and client comments. It can be anything that gives an employee an indicator of how he or she is doing and ways to improve performance.

### Self-Study

Many skills can be self-taught. Employees may simply need dedicated time and resources to bridge their performance gap. This can be done through company manuals, intranet sites or one of the many on-line learning opportunities easily accessible through the Internet.

### Observation

Some skills can be learned or improved by observing ideal performance. This is especially true for soft skills such as sales, customer service and presentation skills. Be sure to identify those people who possess the skills you wish to model then provide opportunities for others to observe.

### Peer Mentoring

Sometimes what an employee needs is someone who can answer questions and address concerns. A more experienced co-worker can often provide the ongoing support and feedback that an employee needs. This is especially true for new employees but may also apply when a job changes or becomes more complex.

In the end, a combination of these initiatives ensures that all employees get the support, feedback and coaching they need to excel. When combined with training, these activities help to reduce classroom time, shorten the learning curve and improve retention of newly learned skills and information.