

## Monica Wofford International: Where corporate training achieves bottom-line results

It's a conundrum facing companies throughout the United States. In the boardroom, employee training programs are an imperative that may not be questioned. In the office, employees and managers struggle to find time for training courses that they plan to sleep, work or daydream through.

Why? Because most corporate training is standardized. Focused on goals like saving time, getting organized or just getting along, corporate training offers little to address the personal needs of each individual employee.

Working as a trainer and public speaker, Monica Wofford saw first-hand how poor training options impacted companies and their employees.

“Companies across the United States are spending \$50 billion a year on cookie-cutter training that is produced by someone who may or may not have real-world work experience and may or may not be an effective trainer,” Wofford said. “For a week, team members are given rah-rah motivational speeches. But days later, they have not made any real change.

“Put simply, that kind of training has no staying power, because it does not address the individual employee's specific needs,” she added.

Enter Monica Wofford International, which transforms corporate training into a problem-solving tool that creates measurable return-on-investment for companies, while enhancing the careers and lives of employees. Unlike typical generic training programs, corporate training from Monica Wofford International incorporates research, scientific data and pre-training testing of the employees involved. Based on these results, the company designs curricula tailored to create real, positive change. This concrete approach helps companies ensure employees and leaders are in the right jobs, where they can develop their talents to benefit both themselves and their companies.

### **Starting with the individual**

When Wofford first launched her training career more than 17 years ago, she immediately noticed a disturbing trend. Employees lived up to their labels.

“Employees decide what they are. They might think they are strong or weak leaders, high or low performers, loyal or disloyal,” she said. “But rarely are their perceptions in line with reality.”

What's more, Wofford noticed that the majority of employees and managers are in jobs that do not fit their strengths and weaknesses.

“From inside the corporation it might be hard to see. But a good trainer who comes in and meets the team can immediately spot the problem employees,” Wofford said. “This is backed by research, which shows that more than half of employees are in jobs that do not match their personalities and interests. Imagine the huge negative impact this has on productivity.”

Based on these observations, Wofford decided that a strong scientifically based testing component should be a part of every corporate training program. In 2006, Wofford transformed her public speaking and training company, PresentersPlus, into Monica Wofford International, which provides comprehensive corporate training.

“At Monica Wofford International, training isn’t about employees and leaders simply choosing courses from a catalog,” she said. “Instead, we take an in-depth look at employees and managers to determine the team’s strengths and weaknesses. Training is then based on this specific information.”

### **Beginning at the end**

Monica Wofford International works with human resources directors and managers to identify trouble areas at their company. Specific goals are then set for the training process. These can include a wide range of measurable values, such as employee turnover, morale, sales performance or emotional intelligence.

“Why train for training’s sake?” Wofford asked. “Instead, we encourage clients to base their training on the realities of the workplace.”

The company then tests employees and managers using scientifically based instruments. These multi-dimensional tools reveal employees’ natural strengths, drive for achievement, weaknesses, perceived and actual behaviors, coping patterns, ideal job roles and more.

“With detailed testing, we can get more than a simple personality profile,” Wofford said. “We can actually determine how people behave under stress. Even more revealing, we can show who is performing at the top, in the middle and at the bottom. And we can show how each individual perceived they are performing. The difference between these two scores is the key to future success – or failure.”

Based on these specific test results, Monica Wofford International creates a one-of-a-kind, research-based training curriculum designed to address the specific learning needs of the group. Training attendees learn about the skills and practices directly relevant to them. They understand what current skills and behaviors are stumbling blocks to their careers, and then develop new behaviors to ensure better performance in the future.

“More than anything else, we work to develop the emotional intelligence of employees,” Wofford said. “This is simply awareness about one’s own level of emotional maturity. Once employees understand how they operate under stress, and how they operate when dealing with

people who are different from them. After all, if you are not aware of how you behave, you cannot change.”

After training ends, Monica Wofford International provides tools to continuously reinforce the new behaviors and skills learned during the training process. These include informative books, practical application guides, CDs, DVDs and even board games.

What really sets this kind of training program apart from other options in the marketplace? Wofford says it is all about results. For example, Monica Wofford International has helped its client companies decrease turnover, increase sales and improve morale.

“Training shouldn’t be about making people feel good. It must create positive, measurable results,” Wofford said. “With the right targeted training, companies can actually achieve immediate return-on-investment. And employees strengthen their careers.”

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