Flexibility the key for training and education in the new economy

THE CURRENT economic uncertainty has led employers to rethink their strategy and options when it comes to meeting the growing professional development needs of their people.

According to Linda Parker, General Manager of Education and Training at leading business and management training provider, SAI Global, the current economic crisis and the prospect of some shaky times ahead have caused many businesses to rethink their strategies and options.

“On the one hand there is no doubt that continued training and education is the key to staying ahead in a rapidly changing business environment,” says Linda Parker. “That’s an undeniable and growing trend.

“However at the same time with major revisions of profit and other forecasting occurring due to the broader economic outlook, human resourcing is, like everything else, now subject to significant review. So the issue of the cost and effectiveness of the type of training an organisation chooses has come under renewed scrutiny.”

Linda says that it’s also likely that with hiring freezes hitting many industries, the ability to train existing employees to fill roles that may otherwise have been recruited externally will become an increasing feature of the human resources environment.

In-house and public training – horses for courses

Eve Golik is another training and education professional. She heads up SAI Global’s In-house Training division, and has first-hand experience of the way global economic trends are changing her clients’ needs.

“We are seeing increased awareness and closer attention to the cost and other features of different training delivery options,” she says. “There are distinct benefits to both types.”

According to Eve, those benefits can be broadly summarised as follows.

In-house options:
• convenience – you choose where and when the course runs, making it easier for scheduling and managing workflows;
• consistency – dealing directly with a single facilitator ensures consistency of message, so you know all participants have gone over the same ground and also gained considerable team building experience;
• customisation – the ability to highlight procedures and policies that are most relevant and practically appropriate to your industry and business
• cost effectiveness – very significant cost benefits apply, generally after attendance three or more participants from your organisation.

Public training:
• cost effective – in cases where only one or two participants need attend
• scaleable – ideal for organisations which need expert implementation and maintenance of systems but are small businesses or with limits on training budget allocation;
• constant – SAI Global courses run monthly and offer regular opportunities for new or individual staff members to upgrade their skills and deliver corresponding benefit to your business.
• offers networking opportunities – participants work with colleagues from other industries and organisations and can exchange ideas and experiences for the benefit of all concerned.

SAI Global offers both public and in-house training options, Australia-wide, with over 90 courses spanning standards and management systems, compliance, risk and ethics courses in business process improvement such as Six Sigma and Business Excellence.

You can access SAI Global’s latest Training Calendar for January to June 2009 at www.saiglobal.com/training; or call SAI Global on 1300 727 444 to find out more about the many in-house options or to discuss your company’s training needs.