

San Francisco Travel Enhances Work Climate with Learn IT! Training

Implementing Learn IT! leadership training significantly boosts employees' positive perceptions of their employment benefits

"I have complete confidence in the Learn IT! trainers – I know they will deliver consistently high-quality training and that I can trust them to always do what they promise."

– Paul Frentsos, Chief Operating Officer, San Francisco Travel

Business Benefits Realized

- Builds leadership competencies for all San Francisco Travel's mid- and upper-level managers.
- Significantly improved employee's positive view of San Francisco Travel's employee training program, as reflected in organization-wide work climate survey scores.
- Receives consistently positive feedback from program participants.
- Raises employee morale and organizational pride through an investment in employees' career growth.

Making an Impact

Every employee at San Francisco Travel has a big job to do – bring visitors to the San Francisco Bay Area. That's because a lot depends on their success: tourists spend more than \$24 million each day in the city and support more than 74,000 jobs, making it one of the city's most important industries. That's why when Paul Frentsos took the reins as the non-profit's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer in 2010, he knew putting employees first would be one of his key goals.

"I came from a hospitality company that built an incredible company culture with the philosophy that if you take care of your employees, they will take care of your customers," says Frentsos. "To achieve that type of culture you really have to invest in training and take excellent care of your employees."

Investing in Employees

During his first year on the job, Frentsos conducted a 60-question work climate survey. He was disappointed to see that employees considered training one of their employer's biggest weaknesses – and set out to turn around that perception.

"I had taken classes with Learn IT! in the past and had been incredibly impressed with the quality of their coursework and the expertise of their trainers," says Frentsos. "I began working with them to put together a leadership development series for our upper and middle managers."

Frentsos worked closely with Learn IT! to identify his manager's training needs and select classes that would be most beneficial. Courses selected for the San Francisco Travel leadership training series included Motivating Others, Developing Management Styles, Leading Through Change, Critical Thinking and more. To ensure that the new training

Organization

San Francisco Travel

Industry

Tourism & Hospitality

Organization Information

- Non-profit organization with a \$26 million annual operating budget funded by both private and public sector support.
- Markets San Francisco and the Bay Area as the premier destination for conventions, meetings, events and leisure travel.
- Partners with more than 1,500 Bay Area businesses, forming one of the world's largest convention and visitors bureau partnership bases.

Solution

Learn IT! Leadership Training Series

program would make an impact throughout the organization, Frentsos implemented a training requirement for all the company's managers. "We made it part of their annual performance goal to attend at least two of the four-hour leadership classes," he says.

Changing Perceptions

Two years after beginning the Learn iT! Leadership Training Series, San Francisco Travel employees have recognized the difference. "On our most recent work climate survey, employees now rank training among our organization's top three strengths – that's incredibly significant," says Frentsos.

In addition, while only two courses per year are required to meet each employee's performance goals, many managers have seen so much benefit from the courses that they have attended many more than the two-class minimum. "Even the initial naysayers were completely engaged in these classes," says Frentsos. "At this point nearly 100-percent of our organization has attended a Learn iT! training."

Ultimately, Frentsos believes that the investing in leadership training for his employees will benefit his organization's customers and, as a result, the San Francisco economy. "Our employees are thrilled we are making an investment in them. It gives them a sense of pride that we believe in our staff and what they are here to do."