

# MAKING YOUR CASE

Irish Times Training  
Business Case Guide



**IRISH TIMES  
TRAINING**



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# YOUR BUSINESS CASE GUIDE

By now you'll have done some research and you've found a course you want to attend – great! But how will you fund the course? We're delighted to tell you that this is a question we are here to answer.

This guide has been specially designed to help you create an effective business case that can be presented to your line manager or HR department to request the support you need as you embark on your chosen programme with Irish Times Training. Presenting a professional and persuasive case, highlighting the potential benefits and positive impact of your chosen programme, can be the difference between securing support or not.

The Irish Times Training course you have chosen is the next step in your personal and professional development, so it's a really important step you're taking. Our programmes are designed to help you to further your career, build new skills and knowledge so you can progress personally and professionally.

Seeking sponsorship or funding from your organisation for your chosen programme can seem quite daunting, but we know from experience that many past participants have successfully secured funding and support from their organisations, whether employed in large multi-national organisations, SMEs, or public sector bodies.



# YOUR BUSINESS CASE GUIDE

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## **Support is a two-way street.**

Your organisation needs to know why they should invest their resources in the programme and the value it can bring to the overall company. This guide will help you present a case for how and why your chosen programme will benefit your employer and help to meet their business challenges.

With the organisation's help, you can help the business - **a win-win situation.**

While we cannot guarantee the outcome you're looking for, in the following pages you will find the best framework on which to build a strong business case. Remember the adage – always be prepared! It's true and, along with perseverance, that preparation will help you to make the best possible presentation.

There is no “magic formula” that will guarantee support - but we hope the following provides you with a useful framework to build a robust business case upon. A significant proportion of previous participants have successfully negotiated funding contributions from their employers. There is no guaranteed success, but thorough preparation and perseverance has paid dividends for our sponsored participants. We hope that this document will help you to achieve the same success.

We're here to help; we can also reach out to your organisation directly on your behalf to let them know the benefits of your chosen programme. Don't hesitate to contact a member of the team on: [courses@irishtimes.com](mailto:courses@irishtimes.com) or 01 472 7101.

**Best of Luck!**

# WHY CHOOSE IRISH TIMES TRAINING

## EXPERIENCE

For more than four decades, thousands of individuals and organisations have trusted us with their professional development and educational needs. As part of The Irish Times Media Group, we work with a broad range of people, organisations, and industries to deliver the highest quality business and management training available. We have worked with junior, middle and senior executives from across business, government, large corporations, and SMEs, and have an excellent reputation with an unrivalled repeat business record.

## EXPERTISE

Our objective is to ensure that you leave with the knowledge, skills & confidence to progress in your career and continue to grow your potential. We know that professional development never stops, so our courses are constantly updated to reflect the latest business developments, and designed to give you the skills you need for the way you work today. We do this by working with our panel of industry-expert trainers to regularly update course content, ensuring that you are getting real-time insight into what is happening in industry. Our trainers are industry experts who bring insights from their own personal experience. Using the latest research, relevant case studies and practical know-how, they give you the tools you need to succeed.

## ACCREDITED LEARNING

Our long-standing strategic relationships with Ulster University and Boston College, allow us to benchmark our training and processes on an international platform. Through our partnership with Ulster University, we deliver Management & Leadership programmes, including our MSc Executive Leadership and Mini MBA programmes. Since establishing this partnership in 2000, hundreds of business leaders have taken part and benefited from these programmes. Our programmes are intensive and challenging, focusing on applying knowledge in real-time, and modules are built around participants' own organisations and experiences. In addition to providing university-accredited courses, we provide a number of QQI and CPD accredited courses.

**Your decision to participate in an Irish Times Training programme demonstrates your commitment to both personal and professional development, as well as the value that you continue to bring to your organisation's performance and growth.**

# MAKING YOUR CASE

Why should your organisation sponsor you on your chosen Irish Times Training programme?

1

## YOUR DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Here's a forthright concept; your employer should develop you as a manager. Successful organisations don't rely on just one person to take charge; they require strong leadership teams and management skills at every level of the organisation. Irish Times Training provides programmes for all organisation levels, from newly appointed managers to senior managers and directors. Career progression requires development and investment.

Career progression which includes leading a project, team, department or company takes courage, emotional intelligence, knowledge, and skill. As you progress in your career into a management role, you will need a deeper level of general business knowledge and an understanding of how the organisation operates strategically within its sector.

Irish Times Training's Management & Leadership programmes are designed to provide you with the crucial skills and knowledge for your next step. Participants are introduced to management practice and theories, as well as practical tools and frameworks that they can implement within their teams immediately. Our programmes encourage you to address your own management challenges and develop actionable plans for further improvement.



## 2

### INVESTMENT IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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High performing organisations recognise the critical importance of developing strong leadership skills for organisational success. It is the key to unlocking employee potential across the business, and the catalyst for organisations to secure and maintain their competitive edge, creating and capturing value for themselves and their clients.

Our strategic partnership with Ulster University and Boston College means that our university-accredited programmes give you the expert support you need in order to meet your challenges in the everyday world of business.

Designed for directors and those in senior management positions, our university-accredited programmes provide you with the knowledge to put academic theory into practical application. Delivered by Ulster University academic experts and industry thought-leaders, participants are encouraged to challenge their thinking, to explore new insights and develop their understanding of leading edge business thinking and techniques.

By developing your personal effectiveness, strategic problem-solving, and decision-making skills, you will increase your ability to effectively lead and develop your team using your own knowledge, capabilities and experience.

## 3

### RETAINING TOP TALENT BENEFITS YOUR ORGANISATION

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The current trend towards the 'Great Resignation' has become an increasing concern for businesses. Across all sectors, including voluntary and cultural organisations, retaining top talent is a key priority – and a serious challenge. Investing in staff's learning & development helps them feel valued and demonstrates your commitment to their professional development and career progression within the organisation. A statistic illustrating this can be found in the 2018 LinkedIn Learning report which found that "94% of employees say that they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development".

Continuous learning and development while being in employment arms you with the skills, knowledge and confidence to progress in your career, and to drive your organisation forward, preparing you for the future.

From experience, we know that companies which invest in their staff have a higher talent retention rate; the return on investment in education comes right back to the business.

# 4

## INVESTING RESOURCES & SEEING A RETURN

Your development helps to contribute to your organisation investing valuable resources in the right places and leads them to see a return on their investment.

Making time for training while juggling a busy, demanding work and personal schedule can be challenging. We know that your and your organisation's time is highly valuable – and limited – so our programmes are purposefully designed to fit around your schedule and workload. Each of our programmes, whether accredited or non-accredited, combine expert theory with tried-and-tested practical frameworks to provide you with skills and knowledge that can be implemented immediately thus having an instant, positive impact on you and your organisation.

Taking part in an ITT programme not only means exposure to the very best of Subject Matter Experts but also provides opportunity to expand your network and meet other ambitious, goal-oriented individuals. You will be encouraged to enrich your learning experience by participating in interactive discussions, break-out groups, and Q&A sessions, sharing your perspective, and learning from the experience of others.

Studies have also demonstrated that it is more cost-effective to upskill internally than to recruit new talent. Internal talent development allows organisations to focus on retaining and developing their top talent instead of investing in recruitment efforts to close their skills gap.





# 5

## HELPING YOUR ORGANISATION TO ADDRESS SKILL GAPS AND BECOME FUTURE READY

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The pace of business development can be hectic, and skill gaps appear across all departments in organisations. Addressing and closing those skills gaps helps to support your organisation and ensure that staff have the skills which are necessary to protect the organisation into the future.

Professional development is the key to keeping your skills sharp and progressing your career. Our courses are designed and taught by industry experts and working professionals, who share their expertise and real-life experience to help you develop your skills and tackle your organisation's issues.

Irish Times Training deliver impactful programmes that add real, measurable value to staff and their organisations. Feedback from our programmes is consistently excellent, and we are renowned for providing participants with a unique combination of theoretical knowledge and practical frameworks that allow the skills to be implemented immediately.

Investing in and developing the skills of your employees and teams is no longer a 'nice to have' – it's an essential for successful business growth and high performance. A 2020 McKinsey article urged companies to prioritise training and development when preparing for the future of the organisation, to upskill employees and develop a more resilient company.

# 6

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IS KEY

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Employee engagement and creating an environment where employees feel a sense of pride, purpose or achievement in their role is vital for a positive working environment. Professional development can provide great motivation to staff; giving people the opportunity for training and development allows employees the chance to progress in their career and highlights the opportunities for growth within their own organisation. Developing new practical business skills or completing a university-accredited programme can boost employee engagement, self-confidence and create a sense of accomplishment.

# AND FINALLY...

We are all familiar with the feeling that we are 'fighting fires' daily in the workplace. Taking time out to stop and pause, to consider the skills that can help to improve how we work gives us the space to think strategically and consider innovative solutions to everyday problems.

One of the biggest advantages for participants taking part in Irish Times Training programmes is the opportunity to engage with fellow participants from a variety of different organisations and industries, who offer a wide breadth of perspectives, solutions, and countless years of experience. Being open to innovative ideas and ways of thinking can significantly increase motivation levels – and that is just one of the many benefits you will find when you commit to your personal and professional development.



# WHERE TO BEGIN

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We know first-hand that participating in an Irish Times Training programme has a lasting, positive impact on you and your organisation, but how can you communicate these benefits to your organisation?

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**Highlight** the impact, value and benefits of your chosen programme to your organisation and/or the individuals making the decision to sponsor you.

2

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**Explain** how the learnings or new skills will be directly implemented within your team, department or organisation – and the impact of these on your and your team's performance.

3

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**Demonstrate** your personal commitment to your chosen programme; before, during and after.

# CONSTRUCTING YOUR CASE

**Come prepared!** If there is already a process in your organisation for applying for funding or sponsorship, ensure you are aware of the process, who you should speak to in advance, and the information you might need to provide.

## What should you consider when making your case?

- **The audience;** who will be making the decision? This could be a range of individuals including your HR manager, L&D manager, line manager, or managing director.
- **The information;** what detail will you need to provide to help them make a decision? Are your audience already familiar with the programme or with Irish Times Training?
- **The outcome;** how can you successfully make your business case to result in a positive outcome? Focus on the impact that the programme will have on both yourself and the organisation.

**Prepare your business case as you would a report or proposal – this is your opportunity to demonstrate your ambition and interest in participating in your chosen programme.**



# STRUCTURING YOUR BUSINESS CASE

Before you start, make sure you have all the details of the course and any supporting material (from your own research on the topic) to hand, - and keep it updated, so you can make a compelling case.

Your document does not have to be overly long, but it should be focused and filled with an argument that you can back up with practical reasons for the company to give you the support you need.

<b>Summary</b>	Briefly outline the programme you want to take part in, including some of the business topics covered in the course content. Feel free to consult the course description on <a href="http://irishtimestraining.com">irishtimestraining.com</a> , and use that information in your document.
<b>The Business Needs</b>	Outline some of the knowledge gaps in your company - relating to the course you want to participate in - and how your upskilling will fill these, benefiting the company.
<b>Your Development Needs</b>	Outline how you will benefit from the course or programme in your own professional development.
<b>Commitment</b>	Establish the case that your commitment to professional development is also a commitment to the company's development and business growth. You should also bear in mind that your employer will want to know that you are prepared to persevere with your studies, especially if the programme extends to weeks or months of study, along with your work.
<b>Costs</b>	Outline the cost of the course and the time you will require to complete it. This is especially important for longer programmes which might require requests for study leave.
<b>Offer to Discuss</b>	The aim of your proposal is to get the attention of your line manager or HR department, and they will want to discuss more with you. Be open and available to this discussion - the best person to speak on your behalf is you!

# WISHING YOU THE BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

As always, our team are here to help should you have any additional questions on your programme of choice or the application process.

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