

# The Benefits of Continued Training



 **Dekker, Ltd.**



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A primary factor for success within any organization is continued training in tools, processes, and procedures. It is a fact that organizations that continue to invest in the proficiency of their staff in the tools and the application of their business systems enjoy a perpetually healthy system over time, lower attrition rates, and ultimately more return on their investments. One organization, Mellon Financial in Pittsburgh, PA, designed a training process for their IT Department that reduced the attrition rate from 20% to 10% within 3 years. (Worthen, 2001, para. 5)

Organizations often make significant investments in the initial implementation of systems and then rely on tribal knowledge and on-the-job training to educate new staff. Regardless of the maturity of the team, this approach causes a breakdown in the understanding of the business systems. This leads to decreased efficiency, less utilization of the system's full capabilities, and a lower profit margin.

Continued training is critical for maintaining the investment an organization has made in the development and deployment of any system. Institutionalizing a continued education program will enable an organization to improve their project management practice resulting in better project execution and increased profits. One study (Bassi & McMurrerin, 2001) indicated that a portfolio of cross-industry firms that spent an above average amount of money on training would

have returned an average of 45% annually more than the S&P 500 Index in recent years. (para. 1)

Today, many organizations must ensure at least a minimum level of competency for their staff. Application certification is one measurement often utilized to determine if an individual has the requisite knowledge for a given position. Additionally, certification signifies a degree of proficiency in a certain area. Certification also yields a return on investments in both human resources and business systems. Gene Salois (2003) of Chief Learning Officer points out that an “interesting study commissioned by one of the most respected companies in computing found that every dollar invested in technology certification yielded more than \$300 in return.” (para. 28)

To support the need for training and application certification, Dekker has spent the last twenty years continually refining its courseware offerings. In addition, an extensive certification program has been developed. This program is comprised of both methodology and applications training. The methodology training focuses on the disciplines of Project Management while the tools competency program focuses on mastering the software applications involved in a Project Management System.

To become certified, individuals must demonstrate educational and work experience, and complete a comprehensive exam series. Having certified individuals formalizes an organizations understanding of best practices and ensures that they have the resources necessary to get a full return on investment in any business systems they have in place.

To promote the disciplines of project management and enhance the implementation of project management systems, Dekker conducts on-site and public workshops each month. These events are held at various locations and via the web. Dekker workshops offer training on basic and advanced topics of Project Management, Enterprise Project Management, Project Portfolio Management,

Earned Value Management, and the complete suite of Dekker applications.

In addition, for the past 20 years Dekker has sponsored a significant multi-workshop three day training event at the annual Dekker PPM Forum™. This event provides a cost-effective means for existing systems users to maintain knowledge on the techniques used in other organizations, while also providing a forum for untrained users to learn the intricacies of a new system. Regardless of the level of experience with the tools or the maturity of the individuals in the practice of Project Management, students immediately realize a benefit from participating in these training events. Often students indicate that they have been using a tool or practice in a particular way for so long that they did not realize that other features are available or a different approach to an implementation would improve the current process and increase capabilities.

Dekker makes a significant annual investment into the creation and maintenance of the Dekker applicative and tools-based workshops. The continual investment Dekker makes in training collateral is based on feedback from attendees of this world class training. Dekker also actively participates in industry groups and works with government organizations to ensure that Dekker tools and training workshops continue to meet the needs of our students, their organizations, and the industries those organizations service.

Check the PPM Forum and Events pages on the Dekker website at [www.DekkerLtd.com](http://www.DekkerLtd.com) or call 1.800.4DEKKER to get a schedule of these exciting workshops and to get more information on the Dekker Certification program.

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## References

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