



ANAGRAM GROUP

Singapore Corporate Training Guide 2018/2019

BY ANAGRAM GROUP



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No Budget: 4 Ideas for Low-Cost Yet Effective Corporate Training for SMEs

By Liyana Stuart

Are you an SME without much of a training budget? You don't have a marketing budget – let alone a training budget, yet you want to ensure your staff is skilled to compete in the global economy, and there's no better way to do this other than training.

Here are 4 ideas on how you can train your staff at affordable prices.

#1 – Online Training

Online training platforms, such as Udemy and Coursera, could be one way your staff could get training.

With courses as cheap as US\$10, ranging from Digital Marketing to Coding, this is a fast and convenient way for staff to pick up a new skill – plus, they can learn from anywhere with an internet connection. How does online training work? Usually, you can make payment with PayPal or your corporate credit card, and you will receive access to a website or web program where you can view slides, watch videos, and hear audio of a trainer speaking. Some online training courses come with a certificate, while others don't.



At only a fraction of what in-person training costs, what's the catch?

Effectiveness. With online training, there is no face-to-face feedback and interaction, which could dampen the effectiveness of the training. The jury is still out on whether online training can ever replace face-to-face, classroom training.

So, can your staff learn a complex new skill, such as 'Managing Social Media' from a 1-hour online training course?

With online training, there is no face-to-face feedback and interaction, which could dampen the effectiveness of the training.

Perhaps not completely as online training usually lacks activities, face-to-face interaction, peer feedback, and exercises, however it is possible to learn one aspect of managing social media – such as measuring social media reach – from an online course.

#2 – Customised Training

Customised training might not be cheap, but it is one way you can truly get your money's worth and Return of Investment. Some training companies are able to customise the content of a workshop for maximum effectiveness and relevance to your business and industry.

For example – let's say your company is in the business of insurance and you wanted to enrol staff in a Communication Workshop.

Some training companies – like Anagram Group – might be able to customise the workshop, at no additional charge, to include case studies and examples of communication scenarios in insurance, directly relating to what your staff experience on a regular basis.

The result is that you have a more tailor-made, bespoke workshop directly suited to what your company needs – your staff will get more out of the training rather than a generic workshop. Think of it like buying a suit – a suit that has been fitted to your exact measurements will always fit better than one that's off the rack.



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#3 - Public Workshops

Public workshops are also another way for you to send select members of your team for training that will directly benefit them. This is especially suitable for your team if you have just 1 or 2 staff in a particular department that needs training – for example, you may have just 2 people in your finance department, and it doesn't make sense to send the entire team for a finance workshop.

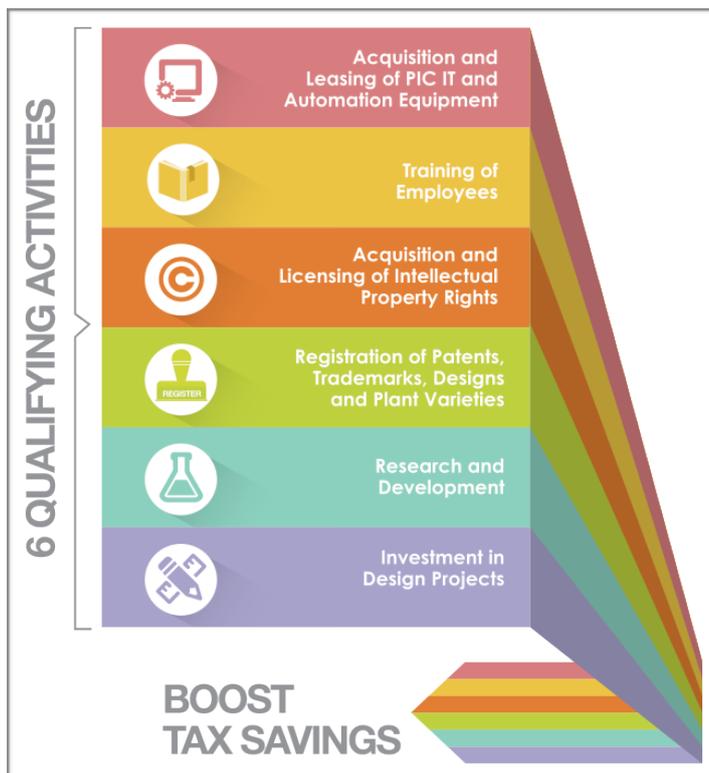
Usually organised by schools, universities and training companies, public workshops are a great way for your staff to still get the training they require while on a budget.



The catch is that public workshops can get cancelled if attendance is low as the organiser may not be able to make a profit when organising it. So when making payment for the public workshop, do check the fine print, as it might state that a 'minimum attendance' is required before the public workshop takes place. In such cases, be sure to ask what the refund policy is, should the workshop not go on as scheduled.

#4 – Offset training costs with grants

Another way you can offset training costs is with government grants such as the Productivity & Innovation Grant, for training of employees' which "refers to the costs incurred to provide training to employees for the purposes of the trade and business, and can include both training conducted by the business' personnel or by external trainers."



The rules around using the Productivity & Innovation Grant – and similar grants – may differ from year to year, so check out what the criteria is yearly.

Credit: <https://www.iras.gov.sg/irashome/Schemes/Businesses/Productivity-and-Innovation-Credit-Scheme/>

5 Questions to Ask Before Selecting Your Training Vendor

By Liyana Stuart

Sourcing for corporate training in Singapore? Anagram's Co-Founder and Head of Client Relations, Liyana, writes about 5 questions you need to ask before selecting your vendor.

Corporate training is a big market in Singapore – with hundreds of training companies and thousands of corporate trainers out there. When selecting a training workshop for your corporate needs, there are 5 factors you need to think about:

#1: What is the training company's background?

One of the first things to ask is what is the training company's background – who are its clients, what type of workshops does it typically do, and of course where can you see feedback about its previous workshops from its clients. Usually this information can be found on its website 'About' Page, or through a corporate brochure.

#2: Who is the corporate trainer?

The trainer you decide to go with, is just as important as the training company itself. You can ask the training company for the bio or profile of the trainer. Usually the bio will give you information on the trainer's experience, expertise, companies he/she has worked with, and clients he/she has worked for.



For example, if you are looking for a Leadership workshop or a Management workshop, you would probably want a trainer with both Leadership and Management experience – better still if the trainer has had experience leading and managing teams not just locally but regionally or globally.

“The trainer you decide to go with, is just as important as the training company itself.”

#3: What is the price of the training?

For corporate training, there can be a large range of prices depending on the trainer and company selected. For example, a trainer could charge as little as \$600 a day, and some trainers who have become recognised authorities, or who are also professional speakers can charge \$9000 a day.

From our own research - the bulk of corporate training in Singapore ranges from \$1500 to \$5000 a day, depending on the training company. Some companies also charge more as they employ part-time trainers on a freelance basis so they still need to make a margin, whereas some owner-operator companies can be more flexible on price.

Training companies can also charge per person, or in tiers - for example, our [training workshops in Singapore](#) range from \$2900 to \$4200 a day for a group of 20 pax.

We give discounts for groups where there is less than 20 participants and we also give [SMEs, charities, and non-profits](#) 10% off.



You should also clarify that the training prices are nett, and also if the price will change depending on the number of participants.

#4: What is the training methodology and style?

Training methodology is very important in training as it's basically the training philosophy of a company.

Some companies may be more fond of the lecture-style of training - where the trainer is giving information to participants, and others may prefer a more interactive style of training.

We at Anagram Group believe in a more interactive style of training, with case studies, videos and so on. Our philosophy is that the trainer shouldn't be speaking for more than 20 minutes at a time without jumping in with an exercise, activity or game. For instance, here's an example of [training methodology](#).

#5: Clarify if 1 workshop will meet your needs

To learn more about if the workshop will meet your training needs, it is best to ask the training company about what content the participants can expect. You can usually request for a brochure or a workshop outline, and also ask about the learning objectives for the workshop.



If you are trying to train a group of new managers in a variety of skills for their new jobs, for example, you would probably need more than 1 workshop – for example, they may benefit from a [Negotiation Skills Training Workshop](#), or [Emotional Intelligence Training](#), or [Leadership Training](#).

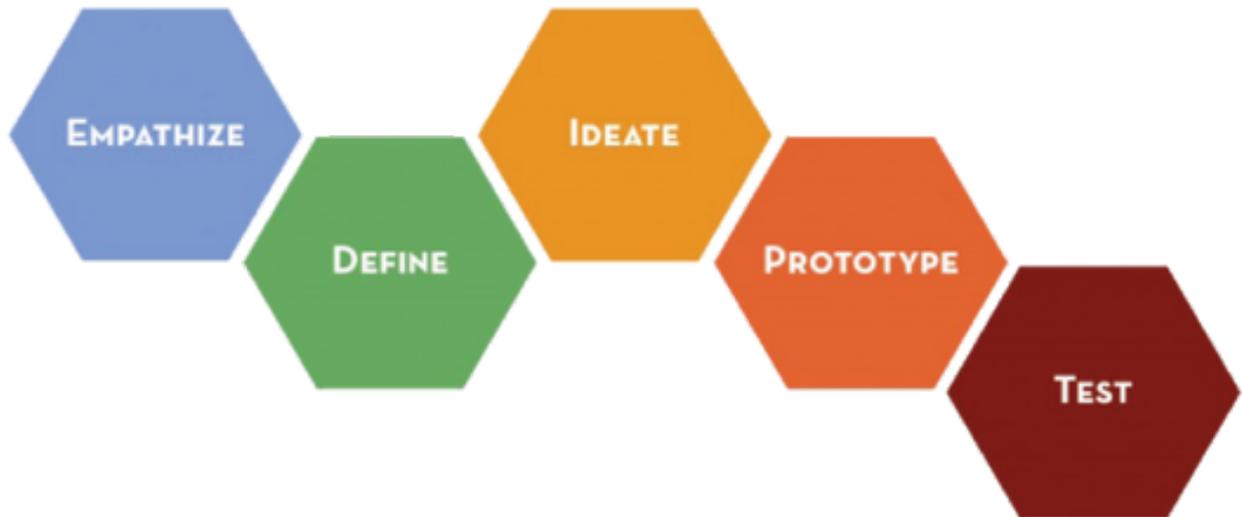
A training company that conducts all these workshops can probably put together a series or a program for a group of participants easily, and may also be able to give a discount for a bulk purchase.

Be sure to contact the training company to enquire about a multi-workshop program it can put together.

Design Thinking Training - How Can It Help Your Organisation?

By Mark Stuart

Sourcing for corporate training in Singapore? Anagram's Co-Founder and Head of Client Relations, Liyana, writes about 5 questions you need to ask before selecting your vendor.



Design Thinking. It's a hip and trendy buzzword dominating the corridors of firms across the globe from product design companies to corporate accountants. But what is it really, and does it hold any value in helping drive change and innovation?

I first came across the term a few years ago, and being a finance professional it meant nothing to me. I approached projects from a traditional Waterfall methodology and whatever our bank's IT project team had decided to adopt (Six Sigma, Lean, Agile etc.). What ensued was normally a slightly haphazard and prolonged period of frustration filled by delays, rebuilds and sometimes not even fixing the problem it was originally trying to change.

I can drive innovation and change at a corporate level but if there's one thing I would never describe myself as, it's a designer. What I love about Design Thinking is two key things: firstly, the aim is to innovate with the customer in mind, hence empathy and seeking out customer feedback are essential parts of the process.

The second key distinction is that it gives non-designers like me a framework to implement and drive change I was looking for. Since then, I've been able to use it to better structure change initiatives from processes to products to service.

For my own training, I participated in MIT's 3-month design thinking course which followed the Stanford's school framework highlighted below. This 5-step process

clearly lays out the key stages involved to arrive at a solution that meets your customers' (often latent) needs.

Empathy: The first part is to identify your customer's unmet needs. Trying to do this for them never works as well. The easiest way to achieve this is to interview as many as you can.

Start general and then go deeper using the '5 Why' technique, which involves asking why to every answer until you get a detailed-enough response. It feels strange at first but is remarkably effective. You might only get to the 2nd or 3rd Why before you get your answer.

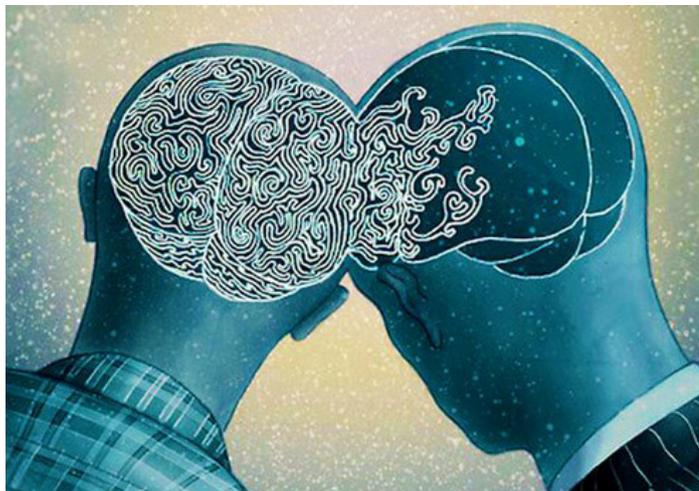
Define: This section refines your responses, and highlights themes and insights that you can draw from them. This allows you to then define a problem statement that will be used to drive the brainstorming in the next section.

Ideate: The Ideate phase is when you can unleash your creative thinking in coming up with solutions to your problem statement. The most common technique used here is brainstorming, which if done correctly, can be highly effective however many facilitators get this wrong. There are several different brainstorming techniques to employ, however some of my favourite include:

- Nominal Group Technique
- Group Ideation
- Buffets 5/25 Rule
- Word Frenzy
- Associative Brainstorming

Some simple rules to have in place at the start to ensure the sessions run smoothly, include:

- Defer judgement
- Encourage wild ideas
- One person speaks at a time
- Build on the ideas of others
- Express ideas visually



Some facilitators then advocate some form of voting to identify the 3-5 best ideas to follow up on. This leads to the Prototype phase.

Prototype: Prototyping is where we get to build what we're discussing or proposing. This is more obvious for product design (you just need a good supply



of materials for them to build with), but how do you prototype a service or online product.

Here, you might need to use your imagination but could involve sketching how a web page might look, or finding a way to trial a new process or service. Can you write out a procedure or process document that team members would need to follow?

Test: The final phase is of course testing. Does it actually work? Is it measurable? If the answer is no, then we move back through the phase and start again. You might only need to go back to the Prototype phase, other times you might need to readdress your problem statement.

At the end of the process, we're looking for some good implementable innovation that can benefit your company in the short to medium term. It should remain a fun process, involving a diverse group of people to ensure you get a wide range of ideas.

Design Thinking is a process that works when done effectively, and best of all, you no longer need to be a designer to utilise it.

5 Solutions to Prevent Your High Potential Training Program From Failing

By Mark Stuart

Over the past few years, the term HiPo has joined the list of HR buzzwords, alongside firm favourites such as Millennials, Gen Z, Holacracy, and micro-learning. In most firms, high potential (HiPo) employees are deemed those most likely to excel and progress into more senior positions.

They are the employees that firms want to ensure stay within the firm and don't get lost to the competition. In short, they are the future.



As a result, companies started to devise HiPo programs to invest in these employees to keep them engaged and motivated, and ensure they have the relevant skills to continue their career path. Training companies, such as Anagram Group, began to work with companies on these programs to ensure the ongoing development of their future leaders.

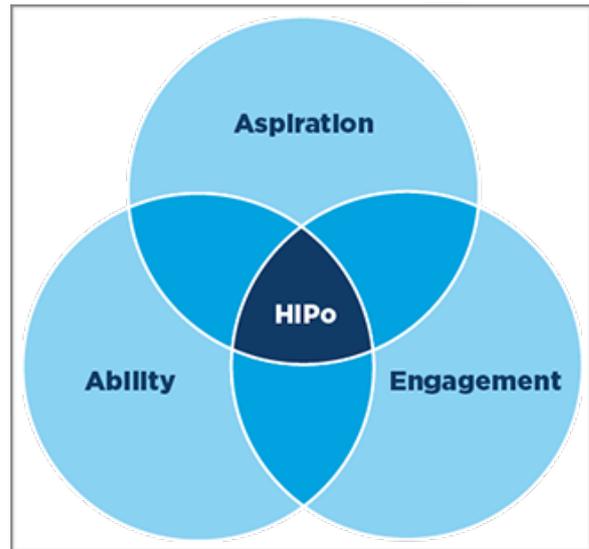
Problem #1: Lack of management buy-in.

Solution: The training company should have a pre-program meeting or call with the line managers of all the participants, co-ordinated by the HR/L&D team. This allows both sides to explain the reason behind the program, why their employee was selected (hopefully the managers were involved in the selection process), what changes they should expect to see throughout, and what is needed from the managers to support their employee for the duration of the program.

Support should include: regular catch-ups to discuss what they've been learning and how it can be applied in their jobs, facilitating opportunities to put their new skills in place, and creating a small amount of capacity in their jobs to let this happen. With the programs we run, we have the participants make an end of year presentation, displaying some of their new-found skills and confidence, in front of their managers and a panel of senior directors.

Problem #2: Wrong employees chosen for the program.

Solution: According to CEB Global, a successful HiPo candidate has three distinguishing attributes: aspiration for reaching a more senior position, the ability to be more effective in senior roles and engagement and commitment to the firm. However, if the wrong employees are selected, 55% are likely to leave or drop out of the program. This comes at a huge cost to the firm, so the HR department needs to invest time and collaborate with the business to ensure they get it right up front.



Problem #3: Lack of clarity from the employee as to why they have been selected for the program.

Solution: Both HR and the respective line manager should be talking with the participant and explaining why they have been selected, and confirm their desired participation. Certain things can derail the employees' enthusiasm for the program, resulting in: a lack of willingness to participate (usually a sign of disengagement), reluctance to appear 'above' their peers, or on the flipside, they suddenly think they are more important than their colleagues.

It should be clear that participation is seen as a positive activity, a reward if you like, but that they don't need to return to their teams and talk about how they had the day off for a workshop or went on some external team-building trip.

Problem #4: Lack of clear objectives and overall goals for the program

Solution: Agree up front what the company is aiming to achieve by running the program. Otherwise, what often happens is you get to the end of the year, the participants have taken some useful workshops, and then they return to their jobs and perform the same as before. Unless their development is structured throughout the year with an end state in mind, you won't get a good return on your dollar.

Ensure the training company delivers a varied program including workshops, individual and/or group coaching, additional and relevant articles to read between workshops that enhance learning, and some offsite time to get away from the office. Without variety, you risk seeing the participants become slowly disengaged.

Ensure the training company delivers a varied program.

Problem #5: Lack of ongoing communication between employer and training company throughout program

Solution: A HiPo program normally last for between a minimum of 3 months, and anything up to 12 months. It's a different engagement for both sides compared to the traditional 1 or 2-day workshop and then you never see each other again (unless you're called back of course, but that is still normally months down the line). The training company needs to treat their client as if they're in a relationship with them. Communication shouldn't be restricted to solely during workshops or coaching sessions.

They should be providing regular feedback to HR (ideally anonymously if something came from a participant) on identified issues or progress, making suggestions on changes to the program as they go along, and sending through relevant articles or case studies to supplement the workshops.

With that in mind, what can firms on both sides of the equation do better to ensure their HiPo program is a success and delivers ROI?

HiPo programs can be complex and daunting for both the employer and the training company.

There are far easier options to take, but if the employer wants consistent, meaningful change in their top-performing employees, it's worth the expense, calculated risk and the time invested. From a training company's perspective, it's also some of the most rewarding work that I get involved in. The opportunity to work closely with companies over a longer period of time, and have the opportunity to see the impact of our work, is what most trainers dream of.

The key to a successful program is quite simple – communication. The trainer, HR team, participant and line manager all need to have an open communication approach, and ensure all decisions are taken with the most important person in mind: the participant.

These programs take up a lot time but aren't your most promising employees worth it?



Introduction to Anagram Group

Our Soft Skills Training



About Anagram Group

Anagram Group is a corporate training company, which conducts soft-skills training workshops and banking & finance workshops in Singapore, Asia, and the UK.

Anagram is trusted by over 130 government, corporates and start-ups around the world.



Over 80% of clients rate us 'excellent' and engage us repeatedly.

Our Services



1-Day Workshops

Workshop prices start at just S\$2900

- Innovation & Design Thinking
- DISC Personality Profiling Workshop
- Emotional Intelligence
- Presentation Skills
- Negotiation & Influence
- Communication & Collaboration
- Stepping into Management
- The Emotionally Intelligent Leader
- Performance-Driven Management
- The 4 Levels of Leadership
- New Role, New Rules



Lunch & Learn Sessions

1 to 1.5 hour sessions are just S\$990

- Conquering 2017: Unleash Your Inner Leader
- Performance Management & Goal Setting
- Communication & Collaboration
- Negotiation & Influence
- Motivating Gen Y
- Stepping into Management
- Emotional Intelligence



Hi-Potential Programmes

Starting from S\$11,900 for 15 pax

A HiPo program is used by companies to identify, nurture and develop employees who have the potential to become future leaders. Anagram's HiPo program helps develop and equip your employees with the tools and skills to reach that potential.

Other Services

- Executive Coaching
- Group Coaching
- Facilitation