

New Horizons Training Success Case Study

Overview

Client

1-800-FLOWERS.COM

Solution Description

The top priority was analyzing the training needs of a diverse and geographically distributed workforce.

Value for 1-800-Flowers

Analysis showed that a worker who completed the training improves productivity by 15 minutes per day. Over a year, that is the equivalent of 15,000 hours of productivity savings which equates to \$276,000 in cost savings due to the training.

Performance gain is nearly a 6 to 1 benefit to cost ratio. According to Halloran, "I see this every day. We work with New Horizons to invest in the right programs through the right delivery methods. The result is less errors, increased productivity and greater employee retention — that's visible we see it."

Measured Benefits of New Horizons Training:

- 90% of employees felt the training significantly impacted their productivity
- Over 80% of learners experienced significant new knowledge and skill gains from New Horizons training
- 75% of program participants felt the learning would make a significant impact on the job
- Within the first eight weeks of being on the job after training, nearly 60% of the training information had been utilized

New Horizons Delivers Value for 1-800-Flowers

Background

For more than 25 years, 1-800-FLOWERS.COM, Inc. has been the leading innovator in the floral industry, taking the extra step to help people connect and express themselves quickly and easily with exquisite floral gifts crafted with care by renowned artisans and the nation's leading florists, as well as distinctive non-floral gifts appropriate for any occasion or sentiment. The Company provides gift solutions same day, any day, offering an unparalleled selection of flowers, plants, gourmet foods and confections, gift baskets and other impressive unique gifts.

Business Case for Training

Neil Halloran, Director of Fresh University, the training division for 1-800-Flowers, came to 1-800-Flowers eight years ago. Neil's top priority was analyzing the training needs of a diverse and geographically distributed workforce. At the top of the list was the need for developmental and PC training.

Due to past experiences with New Horizons while at IBM, Neil knew he could count on New Horizons for more than a quality training event at a good price. He wanted and received a valued partnership with New Horizons that continues today.

New Horizons, a Partner Not a Vendor

1-800-Flowers has complex learning needs. They were looking for a true partnership with a learning vendor. New Horizons has been that partner for eight years. The New Horizons team proactively participates in planning sessions to fully understand the business needs of 1-800-Flowers that would be met through training. New Horizons then reacts quickly to 1-800-Flowers needs with innovative and professional solutions.

"When we had a need for project management, New Horizons tailored a program to our needs and delivered it with top-notch experts and we now have a solid project management process that saves money, time and increases productivity," says Halloran.

Consider a training need identified not even twelve hours ago, per Halloran "We had a need yesterday for some customized Cisco training. New Horizons has already gotten back to me with their training plan and a timetable for delivery. We have training on the calendar for next month."

To 1-800-Flowers it's not so much about the training as it is the relationship. "New Horizons is the best vendor I have ever seen in all of my years when it comes to cultivating a client relationship," said Halloran. "New Horizons is always on the lookout for what is in the best interests of their clients. For example, New Horizons identified over \$13,000 in Microsoft Software Assurance Vouchers available to 1-800-Flowers that weren't being used. "The New Horizons team did the research, found the coupons, and proposed a plan to utilize them to meet our learning needs and strategy," stated Halloran.

New Horizons is also a trusted advisor to 1-800-Flowers. If New Horizons is not fully equipped to fill a need they will let 1-800-Flowers know it and suggest other vendors with whom they believe are better positioned to meet the need. "That's being an honest partner and looking out for our best interests," commented Halloran.

Results

The relationship with New Horizons has been a very successful one for 1-800-Flowers. It is also validated through rigorous performance metrics that both New Horizons and 1-800 Flowers track together and separately.

According to 1-800-Flowers, New Horizons rates extremely high in customer satisfaction on a consistent basis. The data proves this with over 80% of employees receiving training from New Horizons expressing significant satisfaction with New Horizons instructors, support, facilities, and course materials.

It is not just satisfaction metrics that convinces 1-800-Flowers of the value of their relationship with New Horizons. Data collected in recent years provides evidence that over 80% of learners experienced significant new knowledge and skill gains from New Horizons training and 75% of program participants felt the learning would make a significant impact on the job.

Months later, the rigorous metrics system of New Horizons measured the impact of 1-800-Flowers employees to determine if and when the training made a difference on the job. The analysis showed that within the first eight weeks of being on the job, nearly 60% of the training had been utilized. In addition, over 90% of employees felt the training significantly impacted their productivity. They also indicated that out of all the tools provided by 1-800-Flowers to help them improve performance, over 60% of the improvement was attributable to New Horizons training, a significant factor in achieving success in real results.

Later, 1-800 Flowers did another analysis of this productivity gain. The analysis showed that a worker who completed the training improves productivity by 15 minutes per day. Over a year, that is the equivalent of 15,000 hours of productivity savings which equates to \$276,000 in cost savings due to the training. "I showed these metrics to the VP of HR, the CFO and the President of our company, and they see the value of investing in our people and the value of the New Horizons relationship," commented Halloran.

New Horizons is able to compute additional metrics for their clients around ROI. In financial terms, the predicted ROI on New Horizons training for 1-800-Flowers with this estimated performance gain is a nearly 6 to 1 benefit to cost ratio. According to Halloran, "I see this every day. We work with New Horizons to invest in the right programs through the right delivery methods. The result is less errors, increased productivity and greater employee retention — that's visible we see it."

Another metric that validates the financial side of the equation is the fact that 80% of employees feel the training received from New Horizons was a significantly worthwhile investment for 1-800-Flowers. Participants comment on the hands-on-knowledge of the instructors and the professionalism of New Horizons that validate what executives like Neil Halloran see as well.

In fact, 1-800-Flowers was so pleased with the evaluation process of New Horizons and the valuable metrics provided, they now utilize similar measurement approaches for internal training. "We never had hard metrics before, yet New Horizons had some creative ways of providing quantified metrics on the value of training," Halloran said. The metrics are reasonable and validate what 1-800-Flowers observes day in and day out. Putting hard numbers to what is observed is a significant value-add to 1-800-Flowers.

A '360 Partner'

Halloran refers to New Horizons as a '360 Partner.' That means New Horizons is a partner that can handle all aspects of the relationship from the strategic to the tactical. They are a full service partner that is consultative and truly understands 1-800-Flowers needs.

The motto of Fresh University is "I am still learning." This is taken from the genius artist Michelangelo who would make the same comment despite his being the very best. To 1-800-Flowers, learning is a continuous improvement process. It improves real results like productivity and quality. More importantly, it improves employee morale. When a person receives the tools to be more successful on the job, they are more empowered and morale goes up. New Horizons is an example of a business partner that significantly impacts 1-800-Flowers in helping them achieve their pursuit of learning by consistently delivering high quality training that makes a quantifiable impact on the job.

About New Horizons Computer Learning Centers

Anaheim, California-based New Horizons Computer Learning Centers was named the world's largest independent IT training company by IDC in 2004. New Horizons is a subsidiary of New Horizons Worldwide, Inc. Through its Integrated Learning offering, New Horizons provides customer-focused computer training choices with a wide variety of tools and resources that reinforce the learning experience. With more than 250 centers in 53 countries, New Horizons sets the pace for innovative training programs that meet the changing needs of the industry. Featuring the largest sales force in the IT training industry, New Horizons has over 2,100 account executives, 2,400 instructors and 2,100 classrooms. For more information, visit www.newhorizons.com.