

## Solving the productivity puzzle with Andrew Leigh, co-founder of Maynard Leigh

Does training and development matter in your company?

No, I mean *really* matter?

Expressions of interest, budget commitments, and senior manager assertions may not be enough.

An extreme view is that most of the money spent on developing people tends to be wasted.

Business clarity consultant Ann Latham offers eight reasons for this:

1. Training isn't what employees need
2. The wrong people are being trained
3. People don't want the training
4. A lack of clear purpose or knowing what needs to be done differently
5. Employees are too busy dealing with inboxes and to-do lists
6. It rewards the wrong behavior
7. Mastering new skills takes time, patience and support which is not readily available
8. Training only happens to satisfy a regulation

All of the above may be true, yet those spending the most on training and development seldom bother to seek the detailed causes for their investment failing.

### Business networks

Is training and development worth it or not? Like education, the cost of ignorance, or not helping managers to perform better, means that employers can pay a heavy price for not developing their people. Take business networks: managers should be skilled in building these for numerous reasons, including business development and client support, working with colleagues, solving business issues, and enlisting support across the industry. However, these networks don't happen by accident. They rely on an ability to create strong social relationships. These invaluable connections can be the key to higher productivity and efficiency. It's entirely possible to learn these skills through well-implemented training and development.

**“The key to improving productivity is more about training and insight.”**

– Peter Wenham, CEO of Geometric Manufacturing, FT 23 Oct 18

In Germany, productivity rates keep climbing.

Company managers here have a lower education level on average than their counterparts in less productive Britain – instead, they've usually had extensive vocational training. One of Germany's leading international consultancies relies regularly on Maynard Leigh Associates to deliver practical social skills learning which makes a difference in their organization and externally with their most demanding clients. In a recent Financial Times article, Germany was heralded as a leader in productivity, whereas the UK is flagging behind. "We [in the UK] spend too little on training as a percentage of GDP," explains Tera Allas, a senior fellow at The Centre for Government. "It is a ticking time bomb."

Managers who can build social relationships and inspire others are worth their weight in gold. They forge more meaningful connections with all business stakeholders. Relationships are dynamic and ambiguous. They may require managers to use language that feels uncomfortable in business. Part of our challenge as suppliers is how to create safe places where people practice speaking and behaving differently.

**"The basis of leadership is the capacity of the leader to change the mind-set... of another person."** – Warren Bennis, scholar and leadership expert

Actors have long known the value of such a space, and call it rehearsing. Allowing business managers to try out new ways to build social connections is as simple as giving them scope to experiment, to rehearse, and if necessary to learn from their failures.



### Andrew Leigh, co-founder

Andrew is author of over a dozen books on management which have been translated around the world. His Essentials of Management was shortlisted for Book of the Year by the Chartered Institute of Management. In 1989 he co-founded Maynard Leigh Associates, now a leading consultancy specializing in behavioral change.

For more information on solving your productivity issues with training and development, contact us on [hello@maynardleigh.co.uk](mailto:hello@maynardleigh.co.uk).