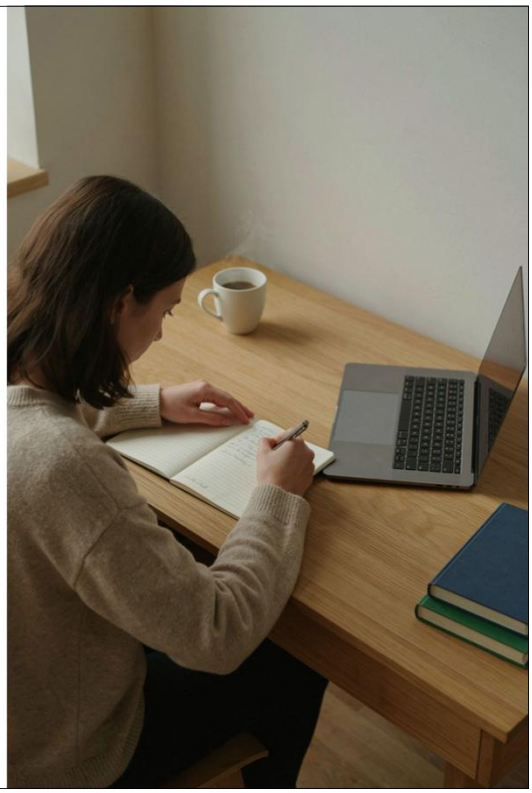
1B: Building Your Professional Development Business Case

How to Gain Employer Support for Your Professional Development | Presentation 2 of 3



What You'll Learn

Identify Needs Where development helps most	**Describe Realistically** Benefits, costs, and time
Draft the Case A concise one-page case	**Test It** Strengthen it with your coach



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1.4 | Start With Your Department's Needs

Every strong case starts with a problem worth solving, and follows the same five steps from training interest to finished case.



Start With a Real Need

Managers respond to requests that solve problems they already have.

Common Challenges

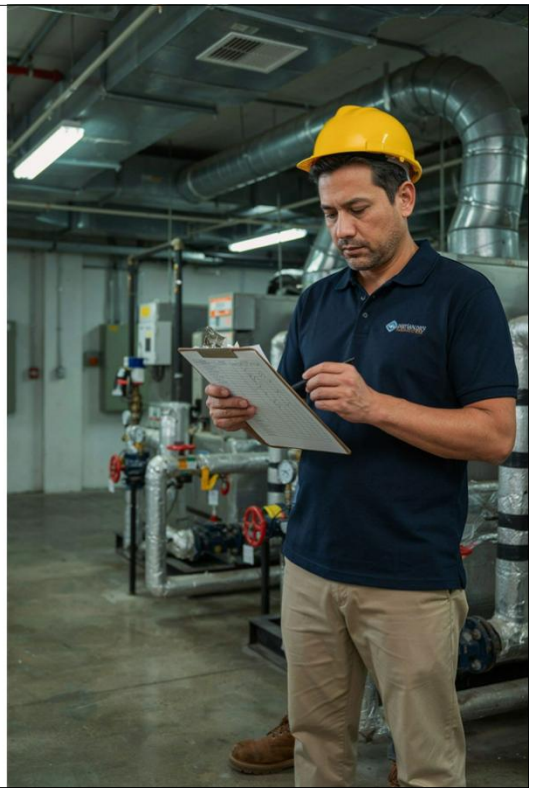
Maintenance backlog, inspection findings, budget pressure, upcoming projects, retirements

Retirement Risk

Years of building knowledge can leave with one person

Be Specific

Choose one or two needs that matter most — use your own facts and figures



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Match the Training to the Need

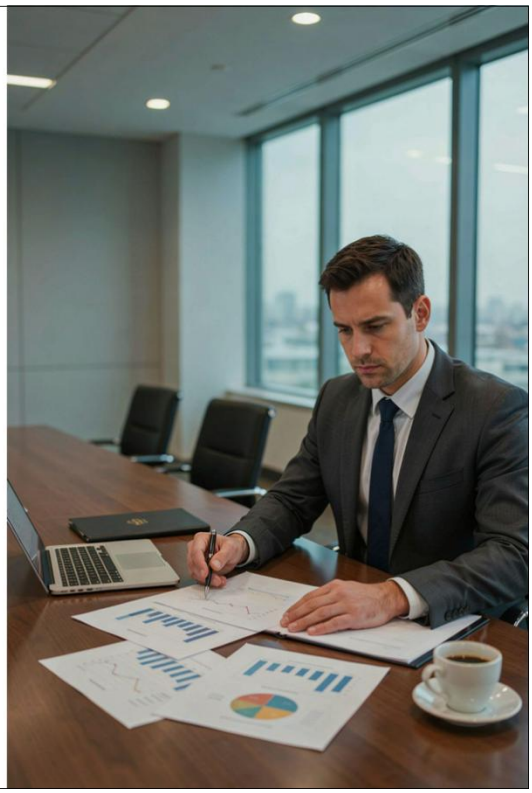
Connect each challenge to what the course actually teaches, and to what will change on the job.

Departmental challenge	Training content that connects	Evidence to gather
Growing maintenance backlog	Preventive maintenance planning and work prioritization	Backlog totals and the age of open work orders
Compliance or survey findings	Regulatory requirements and maintenance record practices	The findings report and corrective action deadlines
Budget pressure	Budgeting, cost control and capital planning	Recent budget variances and repeat repair costs
Upcoming renovation or capital project	Project planning and contractor oversight	The project scope, schedule and your expected role
Retirement of experienced staff	Leadership, supervision and knowledge transfer	Expected retirement dates and the duties at risk

SECTION 1.5

Benefits, Costs and Return

Strong benefits are **specific and realistic**. A credible case shows the full cost and explains the return without overclaiming.



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Realistic, Measurable Benefits

Describe what the training *should support*, not what it will guarantee.

Fewer Repeat Work Orders

On the same equipment

Audit Readiness

Better prepared for inspections and surveys

Capital Requests

Stronger, better-supported submissions

Track Indicators

Use metrics your department already records — before and after

The Full Cost Picture

Many requests fail because they mention only tuition.

Type of cost	What it includes	What to show your manager
Direct cost	Tuition, materials, exam fees and any travel	The total amount and when payment is due
Time away	Hours in sessions or study that would otherwise go to regular duties	The schedule and weekly hours, planned around peak workloads
Coverage	How your responsibilities are handled while you learn	Who covers which tasks, and how urgent issues will be handled

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Explaining the Return

A **modest, well-supported estimate** is far more persuasive than a large number your manager cannot verify.

Compare to Known Costs

e.g., repeat contractor calls

Use Concrete Language

"If better planning prevented even [number] repeat calls at about [cost] each..."

Avoid Overpromising

No promises about promotions, salary, or dramatic savings

Test With Your Coach

Before you submit



SECTION 1.6

Putting It in Writing

A written case gives your request structure and lets decision-makers review it on their own schedule. **Keep it to one page.**

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Five Parts of a One-Page Case

Each part answers a question your manager is likely to ask.

01

The Need

The departmental challenge and why it matters now

02

The Proposed Training

What it is, how delivered, how long it takes

03

Expected Benefits

What it should improve and how you will track progress

04

Cost and Time

Direct costs, time away, and your coverage plan

05

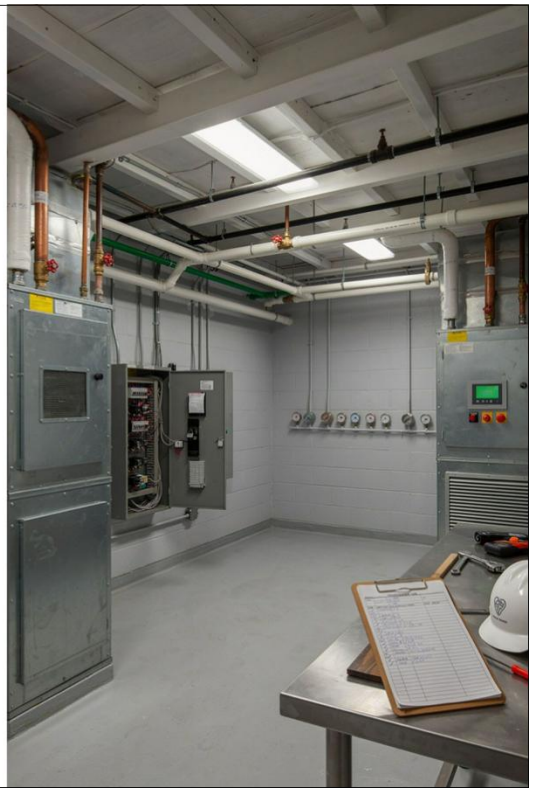
How You'll Apply It

Changes you will make and how you will report back

Worked Example: A Mid-Size Hospital

A chief engineer facing a growing preventive maintenance backlog and accreditation survey findings.

Need Backlog has grown; survey findings must be resolved before next visit	**Training** Online facility operations course over several weeks
Coverage Assistant chief engineer handles routine scheduling	**Application** Revised schedule and a progress report to the director



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One Method, Two Settings

Part of the case	Mid-size hospital	Multi-tenant office building
The need	Growing preventive maintenance backlog and accreditation survey findings	Tenant comfort complaints, slow response times and lease service obligations
Proposed training	Facility operations course covering maintenance planning and regulatory readiness	The same course, or one focused on building systems and service management
Expected benefits	A more organized maintenance program and better survey readiness	Fewer repeat service calls and more reliable building systems
Cost and time	Tuition and weekly study hours, with the assistant chief engineer covering scheduling	Tuition and weekly study hours, with a senior technician covering tenant requests
How you will apply it	A revised maintenance schedule and a progress report to the director	A revised response process and a quarterly complaint report to the property manager
Decision-maker	Hospital director focused on survey results	Property manager focused on tenant retention



Key Takeaways

Start With a Real Need

Match it honestly to the course

Benefits as Support

Not guarantees — plan how you will track them

Show the Full Cost

Tuition, time away, and coverage

One Page, Coach-Tested

Keep it concise and test it before submitting

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Reflection Question

> Which part of the one-page case would be hardest for you to write, and who could help you strengthen it?



What's Next

Presentation 1C shows how to present your case and respond to management's questions.

Presentation 1C

Presenting Your Request to Management

Business Case Template

Download the template to get started

Completed Examples

Hospital and commercial versions available for download

Written Topic 1B

Download for reference and review

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