An organization that invests in its employees is on a trajectory to operate in the black. Employee education and training can be prime factors in determining a company's success and has significant potential to increase profits.

According to the Association for Talent Development's 2014 State of the Industry, businesses spent an average $1,208 per employee for training and development. Using this money wisely can have tremendous results.

Google is continuously trying to create a workspace conducive to talent development. This is one of many reasons Fortune named Google the No. 1 company to work for in 2014.

Let's look at how Google supplies talent support to their most valuable assets — their employees.

School's in

It is well-recognized within the Google culture that employee development is two-tiered: Employees need relevant learning resources as well as additional working opportunities to develop what is learned in training.

Google offers core and job-specific courses to all its employees. Courses cover an array of topics from personal finances to management, to emotional intelligence.

"GoogleEDU is formalizing learning at the company in an entirely new way, relying on data analytics and other measures to ensure it is teaching employees what they need to know to keep profits humming," wrote Joseph Walker in The Wall Street Journal.

Employees teach one another in a Googler-to-Googler model. This lets employees advance from student to teacher. Google's head of "People Operations," Karen May, told Fast Company this mentoring paradigm "makes learning part of the way employees work together rather than something HR is making them do."

Reiterate training

Google seeks the optimal working experience by monitoring its employees' satisfaction and listening to their concerns.

People Operations, or POPS, conducts two comprehensive surveys a year on a sample of their employees. They use these findings to make smarter decisions on many work-related issues, including training. Google has even hired social scientists to conduct experiments within the organization and to suggest how best to cultivate talent.

Using internal business analytics and employee sentiment data to sculpt courses is a unique way to promote quality talent

development. Employee surveys tell Google which courses their employees want, which managers would make the best mentors, and which employees need extra training and guidance.

Room to play

Google has developed many successful products, including AdSense, Gmail, and Google Now, by encouraging their employees to spend 20% of their work time on personal projects.

Individual and group projects allow workers to experiment with and elaborate on the skills they learned from courses and mentors. This time is intended to be spent developing new ideas and practicing with nonstandard technologies.

"People do *not* learn through going on training courses," said Google's HR director Liane Hornsey at the HR Directors' Summit. "The vast majority of people learn through on-the-job learning. Training courses are [only] a tiny piece of what we do."

This same model has been incorporated by many of the nation's leading coding bootcamps. These organizations have found great success training the next generation of Web development talent by motivating students to start projects of their own choosing.

Small steps to building great talent

An organization doesn't have to be as lucrative or technologically savvy as Google to adopt a similar game plan. Here are some guidelines that will help develop talent, improve business, and increase employee satisfaction.

- Keep learning materials up-to-date
- Ask employees about their course preferences
- Identify potential mentors within management
- Motivate employees to coach one another
- Give employees projects to practice new skills