

Best Practice: How to analyse the cost-effectiveness of alternative strategies

It is essential to assess the cost-effectiveness of alternative learning strategies to achieve the optimal outcome for the least cost.

When selecting the optimal solution, the cost must be weighed against expected outcome and priority of the training. This could mean opting for a more expensive solution. However, in many cases a low-cost strategy might be just as effective or even more effective. In some cases, it can be necessary to choose the second-best solution in order to stay within the given budget.

A teaching service body may choose a low-cost solution for training, which requires the school manage, organise and deliver the training with its own resources. Before taking this route, the school needs to estimate whether they have the expertise and resources required to deliver it. Outsourcing training to a professional training institute may save time and ensure higher standards in training. In some cases, there may be middle-way solutions.

An alternative cost-effective strategy may be to develop the competencies of school leaders. If school leaders are competent it reduces the need for teacher training, as the school leader is able to run the school more effectively, ensure a sound school economy, promote a conducive work environment and climate, build well-functioning teams of teachers, make work practices more effective, deliver his or her own on-the-job training, guide teachers, and so on. Investment in learning & development programmes for school leaders is therefore a worthwhile investment.

When choosing a learning and development strategy it is important to ensure training is of a high quality and needs based, irrespective of which solution is chosen. When training is provided by a professional training institute, the institute must be carefully scrutinised and the quality and relevance of the training guaranteed through proper arrangements, contracts and oversight. This also applies to training provided by donors, who must meet the set standards of the teaching service.

