

**Casinos Position Themselves for Success By  
Investing in Employees' Skills, Professionalism**

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Casinos that invest in the skills and professionalism of their employees while rolling out an internal organizational improvement program position themselves to succeed in a highly competitive industry.

“Research shows that casinos have ample reasons to invest in their employees,” says Jennifer Privitera, manager of client service for Annapolis, Maryland-based Robinson & Associates, Inc. “There is much to be gained from this endeavor, the least of which is competitiveness and improved stockholder value.”

Privitera offers the following five tips about investing in employees.

**Tip No. 1.** There is a clear difference between investments and costs, Privitera says. “Spending money to improve employees’ customer service skills or their presentation skills, for example, is not an expense, it is an investment in the casino’s future,” Privitera says.

**Tip No. 2.** There is evidence that investments in employee training can predict a casino’s future performance, including stockholder return, Privitera says. “According to an article last year in The Business Journal in Phoenix, the American Society for Training and Development found that of 575 publicly traded firms reviewed between 1996 and

1998, those that invested \$680 more in training per employee than the average company in the study improved their total stockholder return by 6 percentage points,” Privitera explains.

**Tip No. 3.** You must invest money to make money, Privitera says. “In ‘Creating A Positive Culture,’ Phyllis Hartman and John Hayden say intellectual capital or talent ‘represents the value of today’s organizations, as it signifies the sustainable competitive advantage,’” Privitera notes. “Hartman and Hayden reference studies by Boudreau and Ramstad that say technology and processes can be easily duplicated or copied while people cannot.”

**Tip No. 4.** There are nonfinancial benefits associated with investing in employees, Privitera says. “Those benefits include increased employee and management communication, time savings and increased networking and knowledge, as well as improved access to mentors and experts,” Privitera says.

**Tip No. 5.** Employees respect companies that help them improve their skills, Privitera says. “In ‘Investment in Employees Key to Good Business,’ Michael Rodriguez clearly supports this idea,” Privitera points out. “He writes, ‘A good business owner or manager must value his or her employees as much as he or she values clients. Like any other investment, caring about your employees will pay dividends. A motivated and happy worker will choose the company every time.’”

Robinson & Associates has published a white paper that helps casinos understand what is involved in rolling out organizational improvements that can result in greater success in the future. Those interested in obtaining a copy of the white paper should e-

mail Marilyn Kuhnert, Robinson & Associates' client development specialist, at [mkuhnert@casinocustomerservice.com](mailto:mkuhnert@casinocustomerservice.com) or call her at 480-991-6421.

Robinson & Associates, Inc., is a global customer service consulting firm for the gaming industry. It helps casinos determine their Advocate Index, a number that indicates the extent to which properties have guests who are willing to be advocates. The company then implements its Advocate Development System in combination with the proven methodology of Advocate Index and best business practices to help casinos create more guest advocates and chart a course for growth and profitability. Robinson & Associates may be reached by contacting Marilyn Kuhnert or via its Web sites at [www.advocatedevelopmentsystem.com](http://www.advocatedevelopmentsystem.com) and [www.casinocustomerservice.com](http://www.casinocustomerservice.com).

Robinson & Associates is a member of the Casino Management Association and an associate member of the National Indian Gaming Association.

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