

When Training Becomes a Line to Cut, Risk becomes a Line to Carry

In periods of financial pressure, executive teams do what they are supposed to do.

They scrutinise spend.

They protect margin.

They prioritise capital over cost.

And inevitably, someone asks:

"Can we reduce training this year?"

On a spreadsheet, the saving looks immediate and controllable.

What is less visible – at least initially – is what quietly begins to increase elsewhere.

The Hidden Shift

Over the past few years, we've seen a recurring pattern across multiple sectors including health, social care, security, education and secure settings.

A well-intentioned cost-saving decision is made. Training budgets are reduced or deferred.

Nothing dramatic happens immediately.

Then, gradually:

- Incident severity increases.
- Staff confidence declines.
- Turnover begins to rise in high-risk areas.
- Management time is absorbed by investigation and oversight.
- Sickness absence linked to stress or injury increases.
- External scrutiny intensifies.
- Insurance costs increase.

The original saving remains visible in the budget.

The secondary costs accumulate in operational variance, workforce instability, and reputational exposure.

Training Is Not a Cost Line. It Is a Risk Control.

In sectors managing distress, conflict, vulnerability or public-facing risk, workforce capability is not discretionary.

It is infrastructure.

In one large dementia care provider, services experiencing serious incidents and frequent police call-outs introduced structured, sector-specific training, supported by risk assessment and internal capability development.

Within a sustained implementation period:

- Police call-outs were no longer required.
- Staff reported feeling safer at work.
- Restrictive practices reduced.
- Proactive, person-centred approaches became embedded practice.

That outcome was not about “delivering courses.”

It was about stabilising risk exposure and strengthening organisational resilience.

For executives, that translates into:

- Reduced downstream cost pressures
- Greater workforce retention
- Improved inspection readiness
- Lower likelihood of crisis escalation
- Stronger alignment with human rights and regulatory expectations

The Strategic Question

The question is not:

“Can we afford training?”

The more strategic question is:

“Can we afford the volatility created by underprepared teams?”

Replacing one experienced staff member can cost thousands in recruitment, onboarding and productivity loss. One serious incident can absorb weeks of senior leadership time. One regulatory escalation can carry reputational consequences that outlast any short-term saving.

Yet these risks are often treated as operational inevitabilities rather than governance variables.

From Spend to Protection

Forward-thinking organisations are reframing workforce development as:

- Cost protection
- Insurance against escalation
- Culture reinforcement
- Governance assurance
- Long-term stability planning

Multi-year capability strategies are not about increasing expenditure.

They are about reducing unpredictability.

In volatile systems, predictability is value.

The Leadership Signal

There is also a cultural dimension.

When training is sustained, particularly in areas relating to behaviour, conflict, and restrictive practice; leaders send a clear signal:

- Staff safety matters.
- Dignity matters.
- Prevention matters more than reaction.

Where that signal is consistent, organisations report not just safer environments, but stronger retention and morale.

Where it is inconsistent, workforce confidence erodes quietly.

The Cost of Inaction

If capability investment contracts while complexity increases, organisations risk:

- Normalisation of restrictive or reactive practice
- Rising workforce attrition
- Escalating oversight costs
- Increased litigation and insurance exposure
- Cultural drift from stated values

The financial cost is measurable.

The cultural cost is compounding.

A Reframe for 2026 Planning

As inflationary pressures continue and regulatory expectations evolve, executive teams are making multi-year decisions now.

The most resilient organisations are asking:

- Where are our hidden risk multipliers?
- What stabilises workforce capability?
- Which investments reduce volatility rather than simply reducing cost?

Training, when structured and sustained, belongs in that conversation.

Not as discretionary spend.

But as strategic protection.

If you are currently reviewing budgets and workforce capability for 2026–2029, it may be worth stepping back and asking:

Are we trimming cost – or transferring risk?

If helpful, our team of experts at Maybo are always open to discussing how organisations are approaching this reframing in practice.

Our clients often report considerable reductions in incidents – one educational sector client reported an 85% reduction in staff being hurt after implementing our training. Think of the hours and costs saved in investigations, report writing, lost time, higher staff turnover.

The cost saving would have been minimal. With our Direct Delivery training, the cost per employee of training starts at around £80. Our Trainer Subscription models provide even more cost-effective ways to deliver training in-house.

Don't carry the risk, operationally, financially, regulatory, for a small saving.