

# 'Management still need to be trained'

CONSULTANCY business 3gHR has launched an innovative management training programme to help Reading firms fight the credit crunch.

The Circle programme has been created to provide training for managers and senior executives at minimal cost.

It consists of a series of five one-day training workshops run over four months, each one covering a key aspect of management including leadership, building relationships and managing people.

Scott Chambers, managing director of 3gHR in Wyvols Court, Swallowfield, said: "We know from our customers that they are faced with a real dilemma.

"On one hand, they are facing the kind of business and operational challenges that most managers have little or no experience of.

"On the other hand training budgets are being cut, meaning they cannot provide their managers with the support they need to meet these new challenges.

"To resolve this dilemma we have created a geographical focused programme that allows companies to minimise travel and expenses and time away from the office.

"In fact we are even asking local firms if they would like to 'host' the events to keep costs down."

Company bosses can join the course at any time and complete the series at their own pace – so if they miss a module on

this 'turn' of the Circle they can pick it up on the next.

"Most of today's first line managers in commercial organisations have 'grown up' managing growth and expansion; especially here in the Thames Valley," said Chambers.

"Now they are suddenly facing the challenges of reduction and retrenchment, overshadowed by uncertainty, and at the very time they need support to deal with the new realities, survey after survey shows training budgets are being cut."

New research from PricewaterhouseCoopers found almost a quarter of companies across Europe expect training budgets to decrease this year.

And the May 2009 CIPD Employee Outlook Survey reported that 52 per cent of respondents have experienced increased work-related stress, with 38 per cent noticing more office politics.

Across the pond, the latest American Society for Training & Development online survey found that 53 per cent of learning departments are being asked to do more with less and 49 per cent were reducing travel for training.

"The logic seems to be that if you can cut spending on training, then you might avoid some redundancies," he said.

"But this fails to recognise that not equipping people to deal with the new realities only means reducing the

organisations' ability to bounce back or take advantages that even a recession might create.

"3gHR hopes to encourage local companies to buck this trend by investing in the development of the people who will work through this difficult time."

The company began trading in Reading 10 years ago and has provided leadership, performance management and talent engagement training to some of the area's leading corporates including Nokia, Oracle and Qualcomm.

"It's often the basics that let managers down," said Chambers.

"Being able to set and communicate clear expectations around results and behaviour are a pre-requisite to any kind of management role and yet we often find managers being ambiguous or even confusing in what they are asking for."

"And then there is the matter of giving feedback. Whether it is a failure to recognise people's contribution or a failure to help them learn from mistakes, many managers seem to forget how vital feedback is to maintaining and improving performance.

"Learning how to do this in a way that builds confidence and helps people achieve is a critical step to building a performance driven culture."

With events planned at the recently opened Hilton Hotel on Drake Way,



**SOLUTION** – Scott Chambers says firms can 'buck the trend'

Reading, 3gHR hopes to encourage local companies to buck this trend by investing in the development of the people who will work through this difficult time.

Meredith Bevan, general manager at Hilton Reading, said: "Hilton places great

emphasis on talent development, with team members benefiting from our industry leading training programmes.

"As a local business in Reading, we are happy to support initiatives which further encourage talent and growth."