Importance of Attending Training and Seminars

Well-trained employees can be a key to a successful business. Permitting employees to take time away from their daily routines to attend trainings or seminars can benefit the company as well as assist with each individual’s personal development. It also helps show that the company is invested in its employees and interested in including them in the company’s future success. Some potential benefits of allowing employees to attend trainings and seminars include:

- Increased job satisfaction and morale among employees
- Increased employee motivation
- Increased process efficiencies
- Reduced employee turnover

When employees attend seminars and trainings, employers should ensure they are properly compensating the individuals for time spent in these programs. Generally, any time spent in trainings, seminars, and lectures is considered hours worked; however, there are some exceptions to this rule. The United States Department of Labor offers some guidance on determining whether attendance at lectures, meetings, and training programs would be considered hours worked. The agency’s guidance states that attendance at lectures, meetings, training programs, and similar activities need not be counted as working time only if **four criteria are met**:

- It is outside normal work hours;
- It is voluntary;
- It is not job-related; and
- No other work is concurrently performed.

Allowing employees the time to receive proper training is essential to creating a sense of unity within the organization and to achieving company goals. Employers should consult with an attorney if they are unsure about how to properly compensate employees for trainings, seminars, and lectures under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Resources:
http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs22.htm