

**CASE
STUDY**

RESKILLING YOUR WORKFORCE

Developing a Win-Win Partnership
with The Software Guild



SOFTWARE-GUILD

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Executive Summary

In 2016, a Fortune 100 company discovered a need in their workforce for specialized software professionals. To leverage the expertise of existing employees, the company decided to reskill workers through software bootcamps. After seeing The Software Guild's (TSG) positive outcomes firsthand, the company approached TSG for the possibility of a partnership.

The company's first students attended TSG's classroom in Akron, Ohio. Outcomes from this experience were promising. Because of TSG's positive results and willingness to adapt to partner requirements, the company invited TSG to teach a cohort, this time at the Software Guild's headquarters in Louisville, KY. This cohort was characterized by a custom curriculum alongside individual academic support for students. Through TSG's commitment to academic excellence and student success, the Fortune 100 company has now reskilled a significant portion of its relevant staff. This partnership made it possible for the company to meet the business demands of today and prepare themselves for tomorrow.

THE PROBLEM

In 2016, leaders of a Fortune 100 financial services company began an initiative to reskill their IT talent in software development. A need for more developers, coupled with the company's recent adoption of Agile software development methods, meant a growing requirement for individuals with information technology skills required to move the company forward.



The company had already begun some layoffs, which can be costly, laborious, and damaging to company morale. The Fortune 100 company also felt adamant about remaining a long-term employer. In an organization where employees who celebrated their 10-year work anniversaries were still considered “new,” the idea of dismissing individuals with such knowledge and industry expertise was out of the question. Company leaders ultimately decided they wanted to leverage expertise, and equip employees with technical skills that would help them once again become relevant contributors. In an effort to retain talent, the company decided to seek a more permanent solution: reskilling employees. They began to look for a training program that could meet their needs.

○ **IN AN EFFORT TO RETAIN TALENT, THE COMPANY DECIDED TO SEEK A MORE PERMANENT SOLUTION: RESKILLING EMPLOYEES.**

What Do Layoffs Cost a Company

When expenses are high, layoffs may seem like the right solution. But they can be far more expensive than many realize. According to human resources expert Peter Cappelli, research has yet to find evidence that layoffs ultimately help a company's long-term performance. "There is no evidence that cutting to improve profitability helps beyond the immediate, short-term accounting bump," he said.

So how can layoffs be *detrimental*?



Each laid-off employee can cost a firm **50 PERCENT** of the person's compensation and benefits for each week that the position is vacant, even if others perform those duties.

If the position is left completely open, it costs the firm **100 PERCENT**.



Layoffs incur a multitude of indirect losses. The losses may include:

LOSS OF COMPANY KNOWLEDGE, LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY DUE TO LOWER EMPLOYEE MORALE AND LOSS OF CONTACTS, CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS.

Although difficult to quantify, each element contributes to the overall success or failure of an organization.

Research from the University of Wisconsin School of Business has found that for every laid-off employee, **FIVE MORE EMPLOYEES** will voluntarily leave the company within a year.



External costs for hiring new talent are also a major expense, including:



TECHNOLOGY FEES



CONSULTING SERVICES



TRAVEL EXPENSES



JOB/PROJECT ADVERTISING



GOVERNMENTAL COMPLIANCE



RELOCATION FEES



IMMIGRATION EXPENSES



RECRUITMENT FEES

The Beginning of a Partnership

Eager to find a solution to their problem, the company went in search of a training option. They wanted a program that would provide knowledgeable software developers, while simultaneously offering employees the opportunity to grow in their careers. Due to its short time frame and immediate applicability, a bootcamp structure was the most appealing. To test outcomes, the company enrolled several employees in programs of this kind across the country.

THEY WANTED A PROGRAM THAT WOULD PROVIDE KNOWLEDGEABLE SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY OFFERING EMPLOYEES THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW IN THEIR CAREERS.

TSG's bootcamps took place in Akron and Minneapolis. Throughout 12 weeks of training, three employee-students (two at the former location, one at the latter), kept a company-sponsored blog chronicling their experiences. The students attested to TSG's effective teaching methods, impressive results, and how the organization sought to promote long-term success among its graduates. Upon the employees' completion of the program, the Fortune 100 company enthusiastically approached TSG about the possibility of a partnership.

Employees Become Students

Once TSG agreed to partner, the company began recruiting employees for their reskilling initiative. Employees with business and technical backgrounds were specifically encouraged to apply, and the company received hundreds of applications. The employees selected for the program varied in technical skills. Finally, those who were accepted traveled to TSG's campus in Louisville to begin training.

A PROMISING PARTNERSHIP HAD BEGUN.

THE SOLUTION

The First Cohort: Louisville, KY

The company's initial cohort participated in TSG's standard 12-week Java bootcamp. In addition to learning Java, students gained a host of skills readily applicable to the workplace. These skills included proficiency in Agile software development, effective communication, logical problem solving, accommodating for changing employer requirements, and successfully collaborating with a variety of individuals.

Just as those three initial employees found, this first cohort walked away with an overwhelmingly positive experience. Student testimonials reported that after graduation, students felt more productive and effective in their work. They enjoyed merging technical and business knowledge, and found it helped them increase their contributions to company goals. The training had provided them with a more diverse set of skills, something which the company clearly noticed upon their return.



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS REPORTED THAT AFTER GRADUATION, STUDENTS FELT MORE PRODUCTIVE AND EFFECTIVE IN THEIR WORK. THEY ENJOYED MERGING TECHNICAL AND BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE, AND FOUND IT HELPED THEM INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMPANY GOALS.



Learning from Challenges

Although this first cohort demonstrated clear success, TSG still worked to address concerns. A central issue that arose during the first cohort was the challenge of finding suitable students. TSG and the company differed in admission standards, a discrepancy which led to students struggling with coursework and keeping pace with the class.

TSG adapted. They decided to provide additional academic support, and adjusted curriculum to compensate for gaps in knowledge. Due to TSG's willingness to tailor their instruction, the company decided to strengthen their collaboration.

The Second Cohort: A Customized Curriculum

After the success of the company's initial cohort, a second group of employees began the reskill experience. Eager to minimize costs and expedite learning, the company opted to create an on-site classroom at their northeast headquarters. TSG reciprocated this accommodation by sending instructors to the company's headquarters for the duration of the program.

Instructor Flexibility

Two unique benefits of working with TSG are their comprehensive support, and their ability to adapt to individual clients. While many training programs require students to travel to their campus, TSG was prepared to provide the Fortune 100 company with an on-site instructor for the duration of the second bootcamp. This allowed students to participate in the program with minimal disruption to their lives.

When the TSG instructor arrived at the company's headquarters, she was delighted to discover the lengths to which the organization had gone to provide for her instructional necessities. A classroom had been created. Technology and supplies were in place. The company proved supportive and welcoming. The instructor described this support as key to her ability to perform her job at the highest possible level.

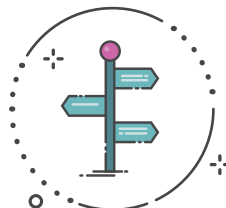
To successfully prepare for the cohort, the instructor worked closely with the company to identify objectives, and continued to do so in real-time for the duration of the program. This next iteration of training was characterized by the same fully immersive experience, but changed in pace to better support the students involved. The curriculum was also altered to better reflect the outcome requirements of the company, relegating some standard topics to supplemental subject matter and vice versa.

2 UNIQUE BENEFITS

of working with
The Software Guild:



COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT






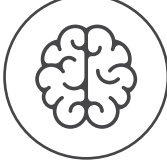


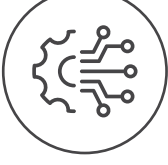



ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CLIENTS

What Students **Learned**

TSG continued to adjust their curriculum and teaching strategies throughout the program. Students were evaluated through weekly exercises, formative assessments, and general assessments given during weekends.

Topics students trained in include:

	JAVA® SYNTAX		INTELLIJ® DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT
	JENKINS® CONTINUOUS INTEGRATION		ECLIPSE® PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
	REAL-TIME PROBLEM SOLVING		LOGICAL PROBLEM ANALYSIS
	WORKING INDEPENDENTLY TO SOLVE ISSUES		EXPLAINING CODE TO OTHERS
	TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS		INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

TSG's unique, evidence-based approach to learning emphasized not only hard skills, but tools employees could use to successfully tackle complex problems. Through teaching multiple topics simultaneously and requiring students to directly apply their learning, TSG enabled those in training to effectively recall and apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios. This immersive training was a key differentiator that contributed to students' post-bootcamp success.



When asked about the nature of the class, **the instructor stated:**

“WE RESPECT PEOPLES’ EXPERIENCE AND WE RELY ON THEM TO BE PRODUCTIVE GROUP MEMBERS. WE LEVERAGE (STUDENT) KNOWLEDGE TO GET THE OUTCOME WE WANT FOR THE CLASS, WE DON’T JUST RELY ON INSTRUCTORS’ EXPERIENCE. IT’S A COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT.”

– SOFTWARE GUILD INSTRUCTOR



In addition, TSG took pride in tailoring their courses to fit the specialized needs of those who took them. Among these initiatives were:

- providing night and weekend support
- offering increased unit testing
- expanding upon supplemental lesson plans
- working with a wide range of ages and technical abilities

Ultimately, this second cohort was defined by a deeper commitment to customized learning. In tailoring their instruction to this Fortune 100 company's physical location, specific organizational goals, and personalized academic support for students, TSG increased the company's overall chances of success in the reskilling initiative.

THE RESULTS

At the time of this writing, nearly

300
employees

have graduated from the company's talent development programs across their partners and are now reskilled.

The company sponsored

6
additional cohorts

all markedly positive experiences.

In all cases, the relationship between TSG and its graduates has remained professionally nurturing. Because TSG instructors were top-notch, and were willing to travel to the Fortune 100 company's headquarters, they built a network of students that continues to prove professionally and personally beneficial. The TSG community offers continued follow-up support to graduates in the form of online channels and other communication methods. There is also an abiding attitude of graduates who have permanently "joined The Guild." Many students are still in contact with classmates, and have expressed interest in returning to class at TSG should the opportunity present itself.

When graduates returned to work, they quickly began to receive task assignments. These included working on large platforms, fixing bugs, coding, and other related responsibilities. Thanks to their reskilling experience, it has taken employees only a few months to get up to speed. They are also able to use their existing knowledge about the company to contribute at a faster rate than coding counterparts who are recent college graduates. With their new training, these employees now have the tools they need to address the company's future technology problems. Finally, they continue to benefit from ongoing support from TSG as they embark on the next stage of their professional journey.

“I AM VERY APPRECIATIVE OF THE EXTRA TIME ALLOWED TO COMPLETE OUTSTANDING ASSIGNMENTS. I FEEL THAT I HAVE BEEN SET UP TO SUCCEED AND I WANT TO USE THE EXTRA TIME NOT JUST TO COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENT, BUT MASTER THE MATERIAL.”

— SOFTWARE GUILD STUDENT

What the Company Saved

The Fortune 100 company that needed solutions ultimately saved time, resources, and talent. They also saved a substantial amount of money. IT recruitment agencies generally charge 15 to 30 percent of a new hire's salary.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,
this salary falls on a median of

\$102,280

Considering the 300 employees who have retrained,
this number calculated to an estimated

\$4.6 to \$9.2 million

Because of TSG's expertise, flexibility, and encouragement, the Fortune 100 company has solved their problem. They now employ a host of qualified software developers that have been trained and supported through cost-effective means. Through reskilling their current workforce, the company is successfully prepared for future growth.

Moving Forward

The company is now considering expanding their training efforts. As of this writing they have launched an additional cohort in the Seattle office. They have also started additional training programs, including one for data engineering. Because the company operates globally, potential opportunities for employee reskilling and upskilling are endless.

TSG has proved an invaluable partner in this process. As an industry leader, TSG's capacity to support companies individually and provide quality, effective teaching strategies allows them to offer an unparalleled path toward workforce success. With the demand for qualified technical employees ever on the rise, this allows them to ensure companies remain competitive.

About The Software Guild

The Software Guild creates talented software developers through corporate training programs designed to enhance your workforce. Through immersive hands-on coding education, The Guild provides expertise in upskilling, reskilling, onboarding, and staffing. In partnership with companies who are active in workforce development, we help align corporate goals, design education solutions, and deliver student outcomes. The Guild has more than 450 companies in its employer network, boasts a high job placement rate for bootcamp graduates, and offers master instructors who have an average of more than 10 years of industry experience. With on-ground locations in Louisville, KY., and Minneapolis, MN., The Guild also offers courses in partnership with universities and companies across the country. The Software Guild is owned and operated by leading education technology solution provider The Learning House, Inc.