



EFFECTIVE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT INCREASES ORGANIZATION OUTPUT

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Abstract

Training and development is vital part of the human resource development. It is assuming ever important role in wake of the advancement of technology which has resulted in ever increasing competition, rise in customer's expectation of quality and service and a subsequent need to lower costs. It is also become more important globally in order to prepare workers for new jobs. In the current write up, I will focus more on the emerging need of training and development, its implications upon individuals and the employers. Noted management author Peter Drucker said that the fastest growing industry would be training and development as a result of replacement of industrial workers with knowledge workers. In United States, for example, according to one estimate technology is de-skilling 75 % of the population. This is true for the developing nations and for those who are on the threshold of development. In Japan for example, with increasing number of women joining traditionally male jobs, training is required not only to impart necessary job skills but also for preparing them for the physically demanding jobs. They are trained in everything from sexual harassment policies to the necessary job skills.

KEYWORD: *Training, Development, Organization Output*

INTRODUCTION

The need for Training and Development

Before we say that technology is responsible for increased need of training inputs to employees, it is important to understand that there are other factors too that contribute to the latter. Training is also necessary for the individual development and progress of the employee, which motivates him to work for a certain organization apart from just money. We also require training update employees of the market trends, the change in the employment policies and other things. The following are the two biggest factors that contribute to the increased need to training and development in organizations:

Change: The word change encapsulates almost everything. It is one of the biggest factors that contribute to the need of training and development. There is in fact a direct relationship between the two. Change leads to the need for training and development and training and development leads to individual and organisational change, and the cycle goes on and on. More specifically it is the technology that is driving the need; changing the way how businesses function, compete and deliver.

Development: It is again one the strong reasons for training and development becoming all the more important. Money is not the sole motivator at work and this is especially very true for the 21st century. People

who work with organizations seek more than just employment out of their work; they look at holistic development of self. Spirituality and self-awareness for example are gaining momentum world over. People seek happiness at jobs which may not be possible unless an individual is aware of the self. At ford, for example, an individual can enrol himself / herself in a course on 'self-awareness', which apparently seems inconsequential to ones performance at work but contributes to the spiritual well-being of an individual which is all the more important.

The critical question however remains the implications and the contribution of training and development to the bottom line of organizations performance. To assume a leadership position in the market space, an organization will need to emphasize on the kind of programs they use to improvise performance and productivity and not just how much they simply spend on learning.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - A KEY HR FUNCTION

Training and development is one of the key HR functions. Most organisations look at training and development as an integral part of the human resource development activity. The turn of the century has seen increased focus on the same in organisations globally. Many organisations have mandated training hours per year for employees keeping in consideration the fact that technology is deskilling the employees at a very



fast rate. So what is training and development then? Is it really that important to organisational survival or they can survive without the former? Are training and development one and the same thing or are they different? Training may be described as an endeavour aimed to improve or develop additional competency or skills in an employee on the job one currently holds in order to increase the performance or productivity.

Technically training involves change in attitude, skills or knowledge of a person with the resultant improvement in the behaviour. For training to be effective it has to be a planned activity conducted after a thorough need analysis and target at certain competencies, most important it is to be conducted in a learning atmosphere.

While designing the training program it has to be kept in mind that both the individual goals and organisational goals are kept in mind. Although it may not be entirely possible to ensure a sync, but competencies are chosen in a way that a win-win is created for the employee and the organisation.

Typically organisations prepare their training calendars at the beginning of the financial year where training needs are identified for the employees. This need identification called as 'training need analysis' is a part of the performance appraisal process. After need analysis the number of training hours, along with the training intervention are decided and the same is spread strategically over the next year.

Development

Lots of time training is confused with development, both are different in certain respects yet components of the same system. Development implies opportunities created to help employees grow. It is more of long term or futuristic in nature as opposed to training, which focus on the current job. It also is not limited to the job avenues in the current organisation but may focus on other development aspects also.

At Goodyear, for example, employees are expected to mandatorily attend training program on presentation skills however they are also free to choose a course on 'perspectives in leadership through literature'. Whereas the presentation skills program helps them on job, the literature based program may or may not help them directly. Similarly many organisations choose certain employees preferentially for programs to develop them for future positions. This is done on the basis of existing attitude, skills and abilities, knowledge and performance of the employee. Most of

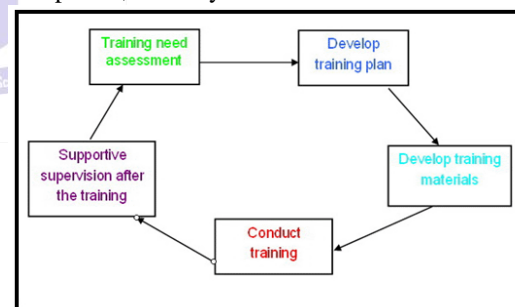
the leadership programs tend to be of this nature with a vision of creating and nurturing leaders for tomorrow. The major difference between training and development therefore is that while training focuses often on the current employee needs or competency gaps, development concerns itself with preparing people for future assignments and responsibilities.

With technology creating more deskilled workers and with industrial workers being replaced by knowledge workers, training and development is at the forefront of HRD. The onus is now on the human development department to take a proactive leadership role in responding to training and business needs.

SYSTEMS VIEW OF TRAINING - STAGES IN A TRAINING PROGRAM

The success of a training program is evaluated in terms of the end result or the increase in the work ability, skill or competency in the trainee. For any training program to be successful it is very essential to follow a certain process.

The basic process as illustrated in the figure below consists of four stages which are assessment, development, delivery and evaluation.



- The process of training begins with the needs **assessment** stage. The aim of the assessment stage is to understand whether or not training is required. If the answer is yes; the next step is determining competency or skills gaps and the appropriate training intervention required. The training intervention is essentially decided in terms of attitude, knowledge and skill (ASK), the combination of which is called as competency. The assessment also called as the 'training needs analysis' is undertaken at three levels, the job, the individual and organisational analysis.



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- Once the training needs analysis is complete, the next stage is that of **Development**. This stage involves the development of content and the training material. Right from designing the appropriate environment to deciding the various tools, everything is taken care of in the development stage. Games, A/V's, Case Studies, Class room intervention are various means that may be decided upon apart from the content delivered. For example, in behavioural training emotional intelligence, teamwork, listening are examples of competencies that are required to perform superior work. The same may be transferred into the trainees through any of the above means depending upon various factors like demographics, job nature etc which are taken care of in the first stage.
- The most important stage and perhaps the least talked upon from the training process is the **delivery**. Once the development stage is over it is time to conduct the training. Factors like time and venue of delivery are already decided in the earlier stages. There are various factors that determine the process of delivery like the participant demographics, the training intervention, the individual style of the trainer etc. This brings in a lot of diversity to the training programs.
- **Evaluation** is the last stage in the training process and more important from the perspective of evaluation of the effectiveness of training. Needless to say, it is aimed at analysing whether or not the training has been effective in achieving the objective (bridging the competency gap, changing the attitude, developing new skills etc). There are various ways in which the effectiveness of training programs can be evaluated but not many are able to answer in terms of ROI. The most effective tool for evaluation of training is the Kirk Patrick Model of Evaluation.

In order for the evaluation to be effective the both the criteria and design for training program is decided so that there is no discrepancy and the participants are able to evaluate the benefits effectively for themselves.

The evaluation is made on the basis of participant reaction to the training, their learning and the change in behaviour. This feedback is then reused in the first step 'training needs analyses for making future training more effective.

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

Training is an expensive process not only in terms of the money spent on it but also the time and the other resources spent on the same. The most important question therefore is determining whether or not a need for training actually exists and whether the intervention will contribute to the achievement of organisational goal directly or indirectly? The answer to the above mentioned question lies in 'training needs analysis' which is the first step in the entire process of training and development. Training needs analysis is a systematic process of understanding training requirements. It is conducted at three stages - at the level of organisation, individual and the job, each of which is called as the organisational, individual and job analysis. Once these analyses are over, the results are collated to arrive upon the objectives of the training program.

Another view of the training need is that, it is the discrepancy between 'what is' and 'what should be'. Taking cues from this the world bank conducted a needs analysis and arrived upon the conclusion that many of its units in eastern regions of Europe required transformation from state owned business to self-sustaining organisations. A number of universities were then contacted to develop the necessary modules and conduct the training upon the same.

Although each step in the entire training process is unique in its own, needs analysis is special in that it lays the foundation for the kind of training required. The assessment gives insight into what kind of intervention is required, knowledge or skill or both. In certain cases where both of these are present and the performance is still missing then the problem may be motivational in nature. It thus highlights the need and the appropriate intervention which is essential to make the training effective.

As mentioned earlier, the needs analysis / assessment is carried out at three levels - organisational, Individual and Job. We now take up each one of them in detail.



Organisational Analysis

The organisational analysis is aimed at short listing the focus areas for training within the organisation and the factors that may affect the same. Organisational mission, vision, goals, people inventories, processes, performance data are all studied. The study gives cues about the kind of learning environment required for the training. Motorola and IBM for example, conduct surveys every year keeping in view the short term and long term goals of the organisation.

Job Analysis

The job analysis of the needs assessment survey aims at understanding the 'what' of the training development stage. The kind of intervention needed is what is decided upon in the job analysis. It is an objective assessment of the job wherein both the worker oriented - approach as well as the task - oriented approach is taken into consideration. The worker approach identifies key behaviours and ASK for a certain job and the task - oriented approach identifies the activities to be performed in a certain job. The former is useful in deciding the intervention and the latter in content development and program evaluation.

Individual Analysis

As evident from the name itself, the individual analysis is concerned with who in the organisation needs the training and in which particular area. Here performance is taken out from the performance appraisal data and the same is compared with the expected level or standard of performance. The individual analysis is also conducted through questionnaires, 360 feedback, personal interviews etc. Likewise, many organisation use competency ratings to rate their managers; these ratings may come from their subordinates, customers, peers, bosses etc. Apart from the above mentioned organisations also make use of attitude surveys, critical Incidents and Assessment surveys to understand training needs which will be discussed in detail in other articles.

TECHNIQUES FOR COLLECTING DATA FOR TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The process of needs assessment happens at three stages or levels, the organisational, the job and the person or the individual. This is the basis for any needs assessment survey and remains the same more or less in all organisations around the globe. There are however many techniques for collecting the data for

training need analysis. This article discusses some of the methods used for the same. The needs assessment conducted at various stages tries to answer a different set of questions. Organisational analysis, for example, aims at the 'where in the organisation' of the training. Person analysis similarly attempts to decipher the question of 'Whom in the organisation'. There are therefore various instruments or techniques that are used to collect data for the analysis at each stage.

Techniques for Collecting Data at Organisational Level

As discussed already, in organisational analysis we try to ascertain the areas in the organisation that require training interventions. For example, among the various kinds of interventions that organisations chose it was found out managerial training is picking up fast among corporations and also that managerial competencies amount for 98% of success in the jobs. Personnel and skill inventories, organisational climate and efficiency indices, Management requests, Exit interviews, management by objectives (MBO) are the various kinds of techniques that are used at the level of organisational analysis for collecting data for training needs analysis. Essentially all these tools collect data that is inferential in nature, but does not give a clear picture of the training needs. For example, the above mentioned tools may lead an organisation to deduce that 'there is a need for aligning the work processes with the organisational goals / objectives', which is not very rich diagnostically. It may require further analysis, which is done with the help of tools at the level of Job or the task.

The techniques for data collection at the level of the job include job description, performance standards, work sampling, job specifications, job literature analysis, and analysis of operational problems among others.

These techniques are aimed at extracting data for understanding the target of training i.e. what exactly should be taught in training. Time management may be may be one critical intervention in project handling management. These techniques at the level of job are useful but yet not sufficient in helping understand who requires training and when. Taking the above example further, time management may be a critical intervention for Projects people, but there may already be some who are very efficient in time management and may require the intervention at other level, which



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is only possible to ascertain with the help of techniques used at the level of the individual or the person.

Training may prove worthless if it is conducted without studying individual data.

Every member in a team is unique and works as well as performs at a certain level (n). There may be others who are at (n+1) or (n-1) or more. Thus, the same intervention may halt the progress of a certain individual and finally the organisation. There are therefore certain tools that help in deciding interventions at the individual level. Performance appraisal data, questionnaires, attitude surveys, 360 degree feedback, assessment centres, critical incidents are some techniques that are employed to a good benefit. All these techniques are integral to the success of any training program. Although each one of these may be used independently but the combined use offers a holistic view of training within an organisation.

DEVELOPMENT OF A TRAINING PROGRAM

Development of a training program is the next step after the training need analysis has been conducted and there is a clear consensus on the need of training within the organisation. The next vital question to answer is whether the training should be conducted by an in house expert or from a consultant outside. Many of the fortune 500 organisations around the world have their in house learning centers and many have even gone ahead to have their own training universities where they train people onboard and those who aspire to join in the future. Companies like Xerox, Good Year Tyres, Kodak, Mahindra and Mahindra, Birla etc have such setups for generating prospective employees with the requisite skills and also for training the existing employees. There are other organisations too that have tie ups with the best academic institutions for employee exchange programmes. Nevertheless the prerequisites for development of a training program remain the same. We start with the development of a conducive learning environment, followed by a choice of the training methods and techniques.

Designing the Environment - every individual is unique. One style of learning may not be applicable to each of the participants in a training program. Therefore 'how do various individuals learn' is what should be kept in mind while designing the training program. There are certain who learn the experiential way by doing and yet there are many who like the

lecture based learning method. There are however pros and cons of both and the appropriate learning style is generally the discretion of the trainer / facilitator.

Establishing the Variables - trainability is one factor that must be taken into consideration before developing any training program. It is the duty of the trainer to ensure that the employees are actually willing to sit and learn something in the training program. This is especially very true of sensitivity training that is not viewed positively by many. Trainability also implies that the employee is sufficiently motivated to learn apart from just the ability to do so. Before any training program sets off, it is the responsibility of the trainer to build hype about the event and such that it attracts all types of employees from target audience within the organisation. There are both formal and informal ways of doing the same. Formal ways would be by sending mails to the employees who are supposed to attend the program. Informal ways would be just creating conditions for discussion in the cafeteria or the lounge where employees sit together, discuss and hear things on the grapevine. Finally, once the training program has been delivered the evaluation of the same provides inputs for improving the process of training. These are called as the 'post learning inputs'. This evaluation which is conducted at various levels may be utilised accordingly. Most of the organisations evaluate training on the basis of Kirk Patrick Model. The feedback at each level - learning, reaction, behaviour and results can be used for effective design of training in future.

DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Training programs play a crucial role in enhancing employee's capabilities, upgrading his existing knowledge and help him acquire new skills and learnings. Effective training programs help employees to cope up with changes, think out of the box, survive the cut throat competition with a smile and contribute effectively to the success of organization.

Training programs need to be designed, keeping in mind the needs and requirements of employees. Training modules ought to be precise, crisp and informative. Training programs should not be designed just for the sake of it. Find out whether your employees really need any kind of training or it is being conducted just as a mere formality?



Designing and Developing Effective Training Modules

Know your Employees: Know your employees well before you begin designing training programs for them. Sit with them and try to find out where all they need assistance. Let them come up with their problems and what all additional skills would help them perform better. It is essential for managers to know the strengths and weaknesses of all his team members. Design your training program accordingly. Knowing employees well will help you figure out the skills you need to teach them. Training programs need to be specific if you expect your employees to benefit from the same.

Dividing Employees into Groups: One cannot design similar training programs for each and every employee. Divide employees into groups where employees who need to learn the same set of skills can be put into one group. You can also group employees as per their age, work experience, departments, and functional areas and so on.

Preparing the Information: The next step is to prepare the content of the training program. The content needs to be informative but interesting. Include diagrams, graphs, flow charts, pictures to make your training program interesting so that individuals do not lose interest in the middle of the session. The information needs to be relevant and authentic. Teach them what all is necessary and would help them in their current as well as future assignments. Prepare your training program keeping your audience in mind.

Presenting the Information: You need to design your presentation well. Decide how would you like to present your information? PowerPoint or word helps you design your training program. It is absolutely up to the trainer to decide the software which he/she would like to use. Make sure there are no spelling errors. Read your presentation twice or thrice and find out whether it has covered entire information you wish to convey or not? Highlight important information. Make your presentation in bullets.

Delivering Training Programs: Select your trainers carefully. Remember, the right trainer makes all the difference. Training programs should not be a mere one way communication. As a trainer, you need to understand that you are speaking not only for the

individuals sitting in the front row but also for employees sitting at the back. Be loud and clear. Do not speak too fast. The trainer needs to involve his/her audience and encourage employees to come up with questions and doubts. Employees should not attend training programs to mark their attendance. Try to gain as much as you can. Do not sit with a closed mind.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING MANUALS

Employees need to be trained on a regular basis to acquaint them with the latest developments, technologies, software's and make them ready for unforeseen circumstances. Employee training manuals are small handbooks which are given to employees by training managers for their future reference. Employee training manual should include relevant information which would help employees enhance their capabilities, eventually increasing their productivity and benefitting the organization. Individuals have a tendency to forget things after a certain period of time. Employee training handbooks help them recollect whatever has been taught to them in various training sessions. You can also give a nice name to your training manual as well.

Employee training manual is a collaborative effort of all trainers who put together information, latest happenings in respective domains, new updates for employees to help them acquire new skills and learnings. The ultimate goal of training manual is to help employees in their current responsibilities as well as future assignments. There can be two formats for training manuals. One which would give general information about company's policies and rules and regulations which every employee irrespective of his/her designation needs to follow. Such training manuals ought to be handed over to the employee the day he steps into the organization. It helps the new candidate to understand company's internal systems and procedures. Such employee training manuals give a detailed insight into company's timings, dress code, labour laws, safety techniques, and lunch timings, leave policy, hierarchy, reporting system, grading system and so on. They contain only general information that is applicable to all individuals who are directly associated with the organization. Trust me; no one remembers what he/she was told on the first day of joining. Let everything be in writing for employees to refer to in case of confusions and misunderstandings. Employees can also refer to their employee manuals without bothering their superiors



and fellow workers. Employee training manuals also ensure transparency at all levels. Rules are same for everyone whether he/she is a sales professional, admin executive or a Vice President.

The other types of employee training manuals are those which give specific project related, position related, task related information. Such training manuals are designed in line with employee's key responsibility areas and specialization. These manuals give specific information as to how a particular task should be performed. Position specific training manuals help employees acquire additional set of skills which would help them outshine their fellow workers and make a mark of their own. Such training manuals can also focus on specific tasks and roles. Such manuals guide employees to perform their tasks with perfection and help them if they are stuck somewhere. Employee training manual of a marketing professional would be different from that of a MIS executive. Marketing professional needs training on brand positioning, soft skills, time management, presentation skills, and effective listening skills and so on. Employee training manual of a MIS executive ought to throw light on reporting formats, excel etc.

Employee training manuals should have correct and relevant information. Make sure they do not have grammatical and spelling errors. Do not use complicated jargons as people might find it difficult to understand. Employee training formats should be in an "easy to follow" format.

Efficient Transfer of Learning during Training

Needless to say, training in an organization is aimed at evolving existing ways and patterns of work. It is aimed at individual development, which cannot happen until there is a transfer of learning from the trainer to the trainee and the same is reflected in their work finally. But how can this learning be maximized considering time, motivation and learning ability constraints?

There are certain practices that have been designed for both the training session and the workplace. An implementation of these will ensure an efficient transfer of the learning's and subsequent reinforcement. Some of these steps / practices are mentioned below:

Training should match the Workplace: Most of the training programs tend to be idealist in nature. The trainees leave with a good positive impact but they find a huge disconnect when they try to implement the same at their workplace. For good learning the context of training and the context of job should be the same. For example, at GE training involves action learning tools where real life problems are discussed.

Labeling: one good way to reinforce the learning or the important aspects of the training program is to name them appropriately such that they have a good recall rate after the training is over.

Create a Supportive Environment at Work: Managers or senior management people should try and create an environment that reinforces the learning and allows the trainees to apply new skills at their workplace. This may involve giving the employees freedom to be more entrepreneurial, innovative and risk taking.

Continued Learning: It is the jurisdiction of the management to ensure that learning be taken as a continual process rather than a onetime process. This means that there should be continuous follow-ups after training either by external consulting agencies or through an in house expert. Sometimes retraining may be required for continual skill up gradation and development.

Practice: Employees should be compelled to practice new skills. One of the better ways is to remove the existing obsolete tools of work, so that people become out of practice of using those.

Opportunity: In many organizations it was found out that it was the management and the work procedures that acted as a hindrance in implementation of new concepts. For example, in a certain study involving air force pilots it was found out that the trainees were given the opportunity of practicing only 50% of the tasks they learnt in the training! This is also true to mid-sized corporations that have a centralized functioning requiring approval for even minor changes.

Train - Practice - Train: This involves supporting the employees to learn new skills, practice them in between various training sessions. University of Michigan's centre for Learning and Development offers a management development program where



employees attend training for one week and practice them for the next three weeks before coming back for the next intervention. These trainees spend the three weeks working on organizational analytics, development and organizational system projects etc. If the above mentioned steps are implemented both within organizations and inside the training rooms, organizations stand a very good chance of making the training effective by ensuring a rich transfer of learning.

PREVENTING RELAPSE FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM

‘People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well neither does bathing - that is why we recommend it daily’ said Zig zagler. One of the strong objections to the usefulness of training is that the impact of training programs doesn’t last longer and that employees get back to older ways of doing things sooner. This may be true for motivation which is like an injection, the effect of which soon starts to fade away.

True, that a trainer or training has to ensure that not only does an employee sit for a training program, he or she should be sufficiently motivated to attend the latter and convinced about the usefulness of the same. Not only motivation, changes in behaviour and attitudinal changes also start to wane away when employees face a high risk situation where they may not afford to take chance practising their new skill. Most people therefore face a relapse after a certain period of time, howsoever good the training may have been or howsoever the trainer may have put in his efforts.

Training relapses are experienced in both technical and behavioural trainings. For example anger management may have been one of the interventions for a certain employee training and the trainees may have actually exhibited a good behaviour during the training program. But then when the same trainee faces trouble handling one of his subordinates or does not get some assigned task or job finished in time, he or she may get back to the old behaviour. Such relapses are important to prevent because they dilute the impact of the training program.

The model of relapse prevention should be an essential part of the training programs. This model lays stress on the importance of self-control and prevents relapse by informing the trainees about situations that may lead them to switch to existing behaviours. For

example in a certain quality management program, it was decided that the materials in a production line will be carried by conveyor belts rather than the traditional method of ferrying by hands. The new method was implemented successfully until the plant faced a problem and it did not know what to do. The belt stopped suddenly and since material output in the preceding step acted as input in the next step, all the production activity was hampered. Panic took over in 10 minutes time before the plant workers began carrying them with hands which led to chaos.

In the above mentioned example, there was a fundamental error in quality management training that did not inform the trainees about situations that may arise and how to act in those! These situations are discussed as part of the relapse prevention in the training. Furthermore it may not be possible for the trainer to pre-empt all the situations that may arise, acting at the spur of the moment with losing self-control and being aware to the moment is something that can well be taught / discussed in a training.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS FOR TRAINING

As discussed in previous articles, it is very important to evaluate the benefits of the training and be able to put that in terms of numbers. Training comes at a cost and therefore any organisation would be interested in knowing the return on investment (ROI).

Organisations use different methods to assess the benefits of training in terms of numbers i.e. the profits. Some of the frequently used methods are ROI and Utility analysis. There are many costs that are associated with the training apart from the direct and apparent costs. These costs can be described under two headings:

1. There are costs incurred towards the training needs analysis, compensation of the training program designers, procurement of training material and various media like the computers, handouts, props, gifts and prizes, audio visuals etc.
2. Then there is another category is costs incidental to the training session itself such as trainer’s fee / salary, facility costs / rental etc.
3. Finally there are costs involved is losing a man day of work (for those who are sent for training), travelling, boarding and lodging



and training material that cannot be reused in some other training program.

The various models that are used to estimate the benefits of the training program are as follows

The Return on Investment Model (ROI)

Organisations spend huge amount of money on employee development, it is therefore very important to ascertain the benefits of training. Different studies were conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs. In one of the studies it was found out that sales and technical trainings gave better ROI compared to managerial training programs. Ford, for example, evaluates all the training programs against the profitability in a given product line. The basic formula for calculating the ROI for training is as:

$$\text{ROI (in percent)} = \text{Program benefits} / \text{Costs} \times 100$$

Let's assume that the total costs incurred towards a certain training is USD. 80,000/- all-inclusive and the benefits in terms of overall improvement in productivity and quality are USD. 4, 00,000/-. Thus the ROI is 525 %, which means for each rupee invested the return in USD. 5.25 Over and above the cost of the program. This problem however relies upon the assessment of benefits from outside, sometimes which requires that non-financial benefits may be converted into financial benefits. This requires precision and the sources have to be credible.

Utility Analysis

This is another way of reflecting upon the usefulness of a training program. Utility itself is a function of the duration up to which the training leaves an impact upon the trainee, the relative importance of the training program, the importance of the position or profile that received training and the cost of conducting the training. For example leadership programs conducted for top and middle management tend to be high on value where as sales training programs for the front line sales staff tends to be low on value scale. Utility analysis basically derives the effectiveness from analysing the change in the behaviour of the trainee and the positive financial implications of the same. This model is not very famous because the deductions made are essentially subjective in nature.

SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

Most of training is either technical or behavioural in nature, but there are still other trainings that are neither. These fall under the ambit of special training programs and are conducted with an agenda of smoothening the work process within the organisation. Workforce diversity can be both positive and negative for the organisation. Positive in that it brings fresh and different perspectives to the latter and negative in that team building may not be that easy. Multinational corporations that employ workforce of all races, creeds and colour face the problem racism. Similarly organisations in the Asian subcontinent more specially, face the problem of sexual harassment of workers. There are other problems also apart from these and these can only be resolved with the help of awareness trainings.

Diversity Awareness Trainings - Handling workforce diversity is one of the emerging challenges for organisations in the 21st century. They face claims on from coloured workers, immigrants, older people, various ethnic groups, gays and lesbians for harassment at the work place. Also there is a need for addressing the values of various employee groups, for example, the older generation lives by a different set of values and does the younger lot. This leads to a conflict which can only be resolved by providing appropriate training intervention. Diversity awareness training is necessary to increase the competitiveness and the general competency of the organisation. Many firms have accepted diversity as a way of surviving and many that have not often face the charge of discrimination.

Sexual Harassment Training - these trainings are mostly conducted in the developed nations and in multinational corporations that function in various geographical locations. These trainings are not very common in organisations in the developing world. Almost all types of organisations, immaterial of what business they are into, what industry they operate in and what kind of people they have hired receive sexual harassment complaints at the workplace. In developing economies they go unnoticed and unreported but in developed economies where the workforce is empowered severely sexual harassment at the workplace is reported, resulting in penal actions and thus the sexual harassment training. Many organisation shave policies on sexual harassment but often they are not communicated.



Creativity Training - more and more organisations want innovation and creativity as a way of being and expression which ultimately happens only when its people are creative. Many organisations use experiential learning, brainstorming sessions to compel the employees think 'out of the box' and thus bring out the latent creativity in them. There are trainings conducted on the art of creative writing from them to write and express themselves beautifully. Organisations like Frito lay and 3M use creativity training to push their employees harder and make them entrepreneurial. These programs have reported to be successful; Frito Lay for example reported huge profits because of the creativity training.

There are other training types that involve training expatriates and inpatriates. These form however a very small chunk of the entire training programs. These special training programs are also with an intent of organisation and people development, aimed implicitly at organisational effectiveness and profits.

EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING METHODS

Experiential training is a whole body of training methods that are used to develop behavioural skills and physical abilities. Role playing, equipment simulations, games, on the job training (OJT), behaviour modelling, case analysis and computer based training are some of the experiential learning methods that can be used to deliver a training session.

Experiential learning is also called as 'learning by doing' and the training involves a two way interaction unlike the informational training methods which are more of one sided. Here the major focus is not just mere transfer of facts and figures but development of skills in the participants, which may or not be the case in informational training.

When sales training is imparted to the life insurance marketing people, they are introduced to policies and procedures and later asked to remember the same. These policies and procedures are unquestionable most of the time and the information flow is unidirectional, with the help of informational training methods. Whereas when it comes to developing sales skills in individuals, simulation games and role plays are used when there is two way communication between the facilitator and the participants.

A good training is a combination of both the training methods. Some of the the experiential training methods are discussed below:

On the Job Training (OJT): This training method is used to impart new skills to the employees when they are working on a certain position. Job rotation and apprenticeship training are some ways in which new skills can be developed within the employees.

Equipment Simulators: These are training methods where in real life situations / conditions are created to enable the employee to experience and prepare for the world of work. This type of training is often used to develop physical, behavioural and team building training. NASA for example uses simulators to train astronauts before they set out for the outer space. This type of training is very effective but the simulators are costly to develop.

Role Playing: A role play is used essentially to change attitudes and help people see things from the other person's eyes. It may also be used to practice certain job, behavioural skills or for analysing interpersonal problems. This type of training is more close to reality. The only drawback is that the employees may show hesitation role playing situations or may not even take it seriously.

Sensitivity Training: Sensitivity training is imparted to essentially increase the self-awareness of the employees. It is aimed to help the employees or trainees see how others see them. Such type of training is used to increase the self-worth of the trainees and also for changing interpersonal behaviours. More importantly it can wipe out negativity from the organisation; in fact many organisations in the west use this training method for top management.

Case Study: Case study analysis is perhaps the most frequently used tool for developing interpersonal, decision making and analytical skills within the trainees. It is a very good and cheap tool for developing problem solving skills within the individuals. The basic drawback is non availability of updated case studies. Generally one or two cases are discussed every year and there is no updating subsequently.

These are some of the experiential training methods that can be and are used for imparting training within organisations. Many organisations also use games and computer assisted instruction / training, the use and relevance depends on the kind of competency you are targeting.



TRAINING EVALUATION

Evaluation involves the assessment of the effectiveness of the training programs. This assessment is done by collecting data on whether the participants were satisfied with the deliverables of the training program, whether they learned something from the training and are able to apply those skills at their workplace. There are different tools for assessment of a training program depending upon the kind of training conducted. Since organisations spend a large amount of money, it is therefore important for them to understand the usefulness of the same. For example, if a certain technical training was conducted, the organisation would be interested in knowing whether the new skills are being put to use at the workplace or in other words whether the effectiveness of the worker is enhanced. Similarly in case of behavioural training, the same would be evaluated on whether there is change in the behaviour, attitude and learning ability of the participants.

Benefits of Training Evaluation

Evaluation acts as a check to ensure that the training is able to fill the competency gaps within the organisation in a cost effective way. This is especially very important in wake of the fact the organisations are trying to cut costs and increase globally. Some of the benefits of the training evaluation are as under:

Evaluation ensures accountability - Training evaluation ensures that training programs comply with the competency gaps and that the deliverables are not compromised upon.

Check the Cost - Evaluation ensures that the training programs are effective in improving the work quality, employee behaviour, attitude and development of new skills within the employee within a certain budget. Since globally companies are trying to cut their costs without compromising upon the quality, evaluation just aims at achieving the same with training.

Feedback to the Trainer / Training - Evaluation also acts as a feedback to the trainer or the facilitator and the entire training process. Since evaluation accesses individuals at the level of their work, it gets easier to understand the loopholes of the training and the changes required in the training methodology. Not many organisations believe in the process of evaluation or at least do not have an evaluation system

in place. Many organisations conduct training programs year after year only as a matter of faith and not many have a firm evaluation mechanism in place. Organisations like IBM, Motorola only, it was found out, have a firm evaluation mechanism in place.

The Way Forward

There are many methods and tools available for evaluating the effectiveness of training programs. Their usability depends on the kind of training program that is under evaluation. Generally most of the organisations use the Kirk Patrick model for training evaluations which evaluates training at four levels - reactions, learning, behaviour and results. After it was found out that training costs organisations a lot of money and no evaluation measures the return on investment for training, the fifth level for training evaluation was added to the training evaluation model by Kirk Patrick which is called as the ROI. Most of the evaluations contain themselves to the reaction data, only few collected the learning data, still lesser measured and analysed the change in behaviour and very few took it to the level of increase in business results.

CONCLUSION

A business should never stand still and so nor should the development of your staff, who are the key asset in driving your business forward. Regular staff training is essential in helping this ongoing skill development. This can often be a worry to business managers though, due to its ongoing cost to the business. However, if you look past this, there are a number of important benefits why training and developing staff training can be beneficial to the business and should therefore be made a priority. With a quality training plan in place, you will also see your return on investment within your balance sheet.

Keep up with industry changes: Industries are constantly changing and so it is important for a business to develop to avoid being left behind. It's also important to make sure your business is complying with any industry regulations, which can be achieved through training and development, making sure your staff's skills and knowledge are up-to-date.

Be in touch with all the latest technology developments: New technology is being developed all the time and so it is not sufficient to run a one-off training session. Regular training needs to ensure that



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staff are using all the latest technology comfortably and to its full potential. This can be achieved through implementing a customized staff IT training program, and by integrating employee training with IT support.

Stay ahead of competitors: Standing still can kill your business, so by making sure your staff are constantly advancing, you will continue to move forward and remain competitive within the marketplace.

Be able to see weaknesses and skill gaps: With regular training, a business can more easily identify any gaps in the market and skill gaps within the existing workforce. By identifying these gaps early, there is time to train staff in these required areas so they can fulfil the role effectively.

Maintain knowledge and skill: Although one off training may be provided to new starters, or other employees, it's important that training schemes are put in place to help develop skills throughout their job. To retain knowledge, skills need to be practiced and refreshed on a regular basis so elements aren't forgotten.

Advance employee skills: Once a business has spent money on providing basic level skills, these can easily be built upon and improved to provide much more benefit to the business. Staff that know more can bring more to the table, and your business will reap the rewards.

Provide an incentive to learn: If training is provided as part of a longer development pathway, employees will have much more incentive to learn, participate in the session and put their new skills into practice.

Increase job satisfaction levels: Through continued investment from the business, staff can have a much higher sense of job satisfaction, which can improve their motivation towards their work. This reduces employee turnover and increases productivity, which directly improves the profitability. It also prevents competitors from taking away your best employees by offering training incentives.

Provide internal promotion opportunities: Employing new staff involves high recruitment costs and hiring fees. However, with ongoing training, your existing staff can become more eligible for internal promotions. Unlike new staff, you can guarantee they

have a complete knowledge of your business, the correct skill set and are people that you know and trust.

Attract new talent: All businesses want to have the best employees and so with ongoing training, this will not only mean better staff retention, but the business may also attract better talent from the start, as this gives the business a good image and is a key feature many people look for within their job search.

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