

COURSE: RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

LECTURE 11 : ASSESEMENT OF TRAINING NEEDS

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Lecture learning outcomes:

At the end of the lecture you will be able to:

Understand and discuss the training procedure

TRAINING PROCEDURE

A training design is a blueprint for a training event or experience. It is detailed plan for trainers that what they will do. Why it is to be done, and the best way to reach training's objectives. Training is the most important component of Human Resources Development (HRD) philosophy of modern organizations, which rely on training design and implementation. It helps them to find solutions to their day today problems by identifying their problems and guiding them in the right direction. It functions as a process from identification of the needs to evaluation and feedback. Training as a constructive design mobilizes all available resources in organizations and moves them towards attainment of human goals. A good training programme has seven steps, which in a sequence form a constructive training design and implementation process.

STEP 1. IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEED AND ANALYSIS.

Identification of training needs of individuals and groups is the first and most important step in the training process for achieving the goals of individuals, groups and organizations. It helps to bring to the surface the prevalent attitude of individuals and the climate of organizations.

What is Training and Training Needs? For any assessment of training needs, it is mandatory to know what we actually mean by training and training needs. Training is any structured activity that is the result of a consciously assessed learning need designed to improve an individual or organization's performance. "Training can be defined as the process of bringing the manpower of an organization to the desired level of performance, behaviour and attitude from the existing level of performance, behaviour and attitude." Thus, the definition itself says that the gap between the actual and desired performance, behaviour and attitude leads to birth of training needs for employees at workplace. And training is imparted to fulfill only this gap, the urgency depending upon the nature, size and seriousness of the gap.

Hence, arousal of training needs is a "condition of requirement" of moving to desired level of performance, behaviour and attitude from existing level of performance, behaviour and attitude. This condition of requirement is specific to all organizations, whether social or economic, government or non-government, profit or non-profit organizations.

STEP 2. SETTING UP OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES.

A training and development programme must clearly lay down its objectives. Objectives spell out the real mission of an organization. These also help individuals to be aware of their own objectives in relation to the organizational objectives. O. Jeff Harris, Jr. observes: "Training of any kind should have as its objective the redirection or improvement of behaviour so that the performance of the trainee becomes more useful and productive for himself and for the organization of which he is a part. Training normally concentrates on the improvement of either operative skills (the basic skills related to the successful completion of a task), interpersonal skill (how to relate satisfactorily to others), decision making skills (how to arrive at the most satisfactory causes of action), or a combination of these." Training normally intended to fulfill the following objectives.

- Helps trainees in acquiring knowledge of the subject matter.
- Helps to bring about a change in the attitude and behavior of trainees.
- Helps in developing knowledge about self to an extent that enables trainees to develop their potential.
- Helps in interaction among trainees themselves, who learn from each other experience.
- Aims at enhancing the capacity of trainees so as to enable them to increase their problem solving capability.
- Aims at helping the process of learning and developing.
- Aims at bridging the gap between expected level of performance and the actual level of performance.
- Aim at providing a scientific base for acquisition of knowledge and skills. Objective spell out the real mission of an organization.
- These also help individuals to be aware of their own objectives in relation to the organizational objectives.

Objectives have to be expressed in behavioral terms. They have to be expressed in terms of measurable quality, which can be seen in action. A behavioral objective defines the standards of acceptable performance.

Trainer have to give specific objectives, stated in terms of what employee will be able to do when they leave the training program and return to their job. Behavioral objective, when they are properly written, are powerful tool for the trainer to use in bringing about management's commitments to training programmes. Properly designed and accepted objective form a road map for designing training programmes. It is relatively easy to write a good training objective if the trainers follow a few simple steps. The trainer keeps in mind that description relate to what participants will be able to do at end of a training programmes, conditions under which they have to perform and criteria for success.

STEP 3. SELECTION AND DESIGNING OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Preparative efforts for analyzing the needs and deriving objectives from the need analysis have to be integrated with the resources and rich experiences available in an organization while designing a training and development programme. Training will be more effective and successful if the following basic factors are considered while designing the programme.

Basic Factors in Designing a Training and Development Programme:

Each programme has its own special demands of needs to be fulfilled often we become the victims of generalization and retard the effective process of learning. The feasibility of transforming objectives into outcomes depends mainly on the following basic factors:

- i) Level of participants: The level of participants assessed through some pretests. An area of consideration affecting the choice of a training programme is trainee characteristics, specifying the number of employees who need training, their ability levels, and individual differences in training needs. If an organization's objective is to implement major changes, everyone in it should be involved.
- ii) Training period: The duration of training varies with the skill to be acquired, the complexity of the subject, a trainee's aptitude and ability to understand, and the training media used. Generally, a training period should not be unduly long; if it is, trainees may feel bored, uninterested.
- iii) Content of the programme: There are four basic areas of the training programme content. Each represents a type of behaviour of material to be learned. The four content areas are, information, acquisition of skills, attitudinal change, decision-making and problem solving skills. In practice, training programmes often incorporate more than one type of training content.
- iv) Effective training methodology: The appropriate training methodology is decided on various factors like the nature of the topic, time, receptivity level of participants and availability of faculty resources. We are all living in the days of specialization. An integrated programme has to be prepared with the cooperation of all the specialists.
- iv) Responsibility for training: Training is the responsibility of four main groups: a) The top management, which frames the training policy; b) The personnel department, which plans, establishes and evaluates instructional programmes. Supervisors, who implement and apply developmental procedure; d) Trained employees, who provide feedback, revision and suggestion for corporate educational endeavors.
- v) Principles of training: There are three basic principles, which should be kept in mind for effective training:
 1. Training is most effective when the learning experience occurs under conditions identical with those the trainee will encounter on the job.
 2. Training is most effective when some individual in the organization is held responsible for the progress of the learner.
 3. Training is most effective if the learner is given helpful, friendly and personal instruction.

vii) Evaluation system: Designing an evaluation system well in advance perhaps helps trainers to consolidate their efforts in the right direction for its effectiveness.

viii) Budget provisions: Budget provisions play a very important role in designing training programmes. The programmes, faculty resources, methodology etc. are all decided according to funds available in the budget. Budget size is likely to increase as a function of the number of trainees, organizational level of trainees and extensiveness of training needs.

STEP 4. SELECTION AND DEVELOPING TRAINING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The forms and types of employee training methods are inter-related. It is difficult, if not impossible; to say which of the methods or combination of methods is more useful method than the other. Training methods and techniques are supportive to learning and should be carefully selected and used in appropriate context so that they are helpful in the learning process. It is trainer's job to make all possible efforts to make learning more effective and interesting. It is necessary to use training aids and equipment to enhance the intensity and pace of learning. Broadly speaking, training methods can be divided into two parts: On-The-Job Training (OJT) and Off-The-Job Training/Class Room Training

STEP 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Once the training programme has been designed, it needs to be implemented. Implementation is beset with certain problems. Firstly, most managers are action-oriented and frequently say no to training efforts. Secondly, there is problem of locating suitable trainers within an organization. Any training programme implementation involves action on the following lines:

1. Deciding the location and organizing training and other facilities.
2. Scheduling the training programme.
3. Conducting the programme
4. Monitoring the progress of trainees.

The disappointments which arise from training programmes usually originate from

- (i) the members being wrongly selected;
- (ii) the members being badly prepared and motivated;
- (iii) the course being bad in content or method;
- (iv) the course objectives being inappropriate; and
- (v) the course not being related to organizational realities. Training is done according to the programme designed within a stipulated period.

In the process of training, participants have to be motivated to develop a keen interest for learning. The trainer's responsibility lies in leading participants towards a goal designed at different stages with the full cooperation of the participants. Training has to be oriented to the level of participants age, qualification, knowledge and experience.

Charles E. Watson suggests four levels of learning to cause a voluntary and rational behavioural change. They are:

- Reaching the knowing-about level.
- Reaching the understanding level.
- Reaching the acceptance level.
- Reaching the ability-to-apply level.

These four levels of learning should not necessarily be constructed as four successive levels. As a practical matter, however, learning typically does proceed in successive stages, beginning with knowing about and ending with ability to apply. In the general, people usually need to know about something before they can begin to accept it, and to accept something before they are willing to apply it.

Reaching the knowing-about level in a training situation, awareness creates a thirst for knowing certain concepts and prompts the learner to acquire as much knowledge that is needed for performing a task. Effective training brings people to the knowing about level with an attitude of knowing more about the concept so that they can apply it successfully and achieve the results they desire. Training methods such as case studies, role-playing, management games, in-basket exercise and simulations can cause the knowing-about level to occur. These methods can both introduce trainees to new concepts and demonstrate their usefulness to new concepts and the degree to which trainees understand, accept and possess the ability to apply them.

Reaching the understanding level. The understanding level is reached when the following two conditions exist. Firstly, trainees know why there is a cause-effect relationship between correct or appropriate application of a concept or principle given in a situation and the probable outcome, and they also know how this 'cause and effect' relationship operates. Secondly, trainees know the theory underlying a concept or principle sufficiently well to be able to modify or adapt it, thus making it appropriate for most given situations.

- People understand new ideas only from their own frame of reference.
- People understand things more fully and deeply when they discover them for themselves than they just hear about them.
- People remember things they discover for themselves for a longer period, compared to those things, which they have merely been told about. To reach a level of deep understanding, learning should be trainee-centered, not instructor-centered. The instructor establishes learning conditions and trainees are responsible for teaching themselves through a process of self-discovery.

Reaching the Acceptance Level . Knowing about and understanding a concept does not guarantee that it will be accepted. Acceptance is reached when people's values, attitudes and beliefs are not so strongly contrary to a concept or principle.

Reaching the ability-to-apply level . Ability-to-apply level requires that trainees have knowledge, self-confidence and willingness to try. Participants returning to jobs from training programmes

face several formidable challenges. They need encouragement from their superiors and subordinates to try out the new concepts and principles they learnt in the training programme.

STEP 6: EVALUATION OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Evaluation of training and development programmes should be a continuous process for improving what we teach and how we teach. Evaluation helps to design and organize successful training programmes, based on the feedback received from participants. Gail Trapnell has suggested five dimensions to the evaluation of training as:

Context Evaluation : Context evaluation attempts to assess the environment prevalent among managers, supervisors and workers. It aims to know their attitudes towards training programmes, which have been organized. It also focuses on the appropriateness of training objectives when new programmes are organized and when new group of participants are exposed to training.

Input Evaluation: Input evaluation assesses the appropriateness and adequacy of all resources that go into a training programme. It focuses on the elements of design, performance, objectives, instructional method and other physical resources. The physical and human resources identified must be capable of reaching the standard already visualized and set.

Process Evaluation: Process evaluation deals with implementation of a programme design. It calls for how trainers utilize the physical and human resources for realizing behavioural objectives. It indicates the level at which the programme is being conducted during normal and existing situations. The success and failure of a programme is decided by the efforts taken during process evaluation.

Product Evaluation: Product evaluation assesses the competence of participants. It also evaluates how they are performing in their on-the-job situation. Results to pre-tests and post-tests can be compared to determine trainees' gain in knowledge, skills and attitudes in their job situation. Superiors are also involved to assess participants. **Impact Evaluation:** It assesses the cumulative difference that training efforts have made in an organization's productivity, efficiency and profitability. It can be measured from the resulting changes brought about in downtime, accidents, absenteeism, customer complaints etc.

Positive improvements made in these factors enhance the role of training and development.

Implication of Evaluation: if a satisfactory method of evaluating training performance can be found, everyone can reap the benefits.

- Firstly, the organization is better equipped to meet its obligations and the management's decision to invest money in this activity is vindicated, encouraging it to continue to provide resources.
- Secondly, the employee is more fulfilled and is stimulated to put more effort into work.
- Third, the boss of the employee has everything to gain from having an effective work unit and is likely to be willing to release employees for training in future.
- Finally, the training staff enjoys job satisfaction of a high order when they see that their efforts are producing the desired result.

They can grow from strength to strength in applying the experience and knowledge they have obtained from successful activities. There is no doubt that evaluation of training is a profitable investment from everyone's point of view.

STEP 7: FEEDBACK LEADING TO FURTHER IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS

From the evaluation of training programmes a feedback report is prepared and communicated to participants, faculty members, trainers/coordinators and sponsors, so that they may benefit from the results of the evaluation. Each one is looking for different kind of information and interpretation from the evaluation. While some will be looking for the content, some others for process analysis. With the help of feedback participants come to know their level of achievements through the training programme. Immediate feedback given to participants based on the evaluation of training programmes which help them to know the performance they will be able to achieve and the kinds of efforts needed to improve their effectiveness. Trainers are very anxious to know whether their efforts have yielded the desired results.

A detailed analysis of the feedback would help them to modify their approaches. It would enable them to design future training programmes taking into consideration all the successes and failures of the programme. Sponsors or managers, who have nominated the participants, are very curious to know how well they have performed during the training programme. The feedback report received from trainers will help them to look for specific changes in the behavior of the participants. To be precise, it helps them to sharpen their point of view to look for anticipated changes in their day-to-day situations. Training plays a very vital role in Human Resources Development (HRD). Based on the feedback, training systems are revitalized and HRD efforts are improved. It is very clear that training, in the process of developing people, improves related sub-systems for overall effectiveness of an organization. Training helps to improve performance appraisal system, potential appraisal system, career planning system etc.

It is challenge to modern managers to conversant with the training design and process of operating them for getting results. Training can create credibility in an organization by its continued commitment and devotion to the organization. Thus Designing and implementation of training and development programme involves identifying relevant competencies, clustering and sequencing them, defining specific learning objective, determining resources, choosing learning methods and providers, deciding how to monitor and evaluate, and setting up an administration. In brief, a common training and development program has seven steps, which, in a sequence form a blueprint for a good training design and implementation process in public and private sector organizations.

The seven steps in the Training and Development implementation

- 1. Need Analysis:** — Identify specific job performance skills needed to improve performance and productivity.
 - Analyze the audience to ensure that the program will be suited to their specific levels of education, experience and skills, as well as their attitude and personal motivations.
 - Use research to develop specific measurable knowledge and performance objectives.
- 2. Objectives of Training and Development Program .** Determine Aims and Objectives:

- Decide learning to be achieved
 - State in terms of expected outcome of learner behavior (knowledge, skill and attitude)
- 3. Selection and Designing Course curriculum based on objectives**
- Determine syllabus and scope under stable to learner — Decide subject sequence
 - Determine training activities
 - Decide Aids in presentation.
- 4. Training Methods and Techniques:**
- Varied to suit input of knowledge, skill and Attitude
 - Maintain learner's Interest and involvement.
 - Suitable time, cost and training facilities.
 - Meets job environment.
 - Strengthen learner's learning.
- 5. Implementation Any training and development program implementation involves action on the following lines:**
- Deciding suitable location — Scheduling the training programme — Selection of knowledgeable and skilled trainers
 - Monitoring the progress of trainees.
- 6. Evaluation of Training and Development programme.** Assess program success according to:
- Reaction - How well did learners like the course?
 - Learning - To what extent did participants appreciate the relevant knowledge provided, skill demonstrated and desired attitude emphasized.
 - Behavior - To what extent the change expected is perceivable.
 - Results - What final results were achieved?
The significance in Quality of work.
- 7. Feedback and Follow-up** — Organize on-the-job further help, guidance, counseling — Arrange diagnostic meetings — Extend help of superiors and colleagues.

References

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