

Training



Training

Training refers to the teaching/learning activities carried on for the primary purpose of helping members of an organization to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes needed by that organization. Broadly speaking, training is the act of increasing the knowledge and skill of an employee for doing a particular job.

Planning and Training Activities

The following steps must form the basis of any training activities:

1. Determine the training need and objectives.
2. Translate them into programmes that meet the needs of the selected trainees.
3. Evaluate the results.

Training should be seen as a long-term investment in human resources.

Performance = ability X motivation

Why Training is needed?

Organizational Viability and the Transformation Process

Argyris contends that an organization's effectiveness is dependent on its ability to accomplish the following three objectives:

- 1. To achieve its goals*
- 2. To maintain itself internally*
- 3. To adapt to its environment*

Technological Advances

Organizational Complexity

Human Relations

Training Inputs

There are three basic types of inputs: skills, attitudes, and knowledge.

Skills

Training activities nowadays encompass activities ranging from the acquisition of a simple motor skills to a complex administrative one. Training an employee for a particular skill is undertaken to enable him to be more effective on the job. For instance, new workers can trained to achieve levels of output attained by experienced older workers. Similarly existing workers whose levels of output are below par can be retained.

Attitudes

Through orientation programmes, organization develop attitudes in new employees which are favourable towards the achievement of organizational goals. Training programmes in industry are aimed at moulding employee attitudes to achieve support for company activities, and to obtain better cooperation and greater loyalty.

Knowledge

Training aimed at imparting knowledge to employees in the organization provides for understanding of all the problems of modern industry. This knowledge for worker is specific to his job, and related broadly to plant, machinery, material product, and quality and standard of product. Knowledge for managerial personnel may be related to complexity of problems in organizing, planning, staffing, directing and controlling.

In general, training initiated for imparting knowledge to employees should consider three aspects:

1. Knowledge in general about factory and work environment – job context
2. Specific knowledge related to job – job content
3. Knowledge related to quality and standards of product or quality of work.

AREAS OF TRAINING

Areas of training can be classified into the following categories:

1. Training in company policies and procedures (*induction training*)
2. Training in particular skills
3. Training in human relations
4. Training in problem solving
5. Managerial and supervisory training
6. Apprentice training

Learning and Training

Motivation

A trainee needs to have a desire to learn and benefit from the programme. If he is not interested, or is demotivated, then the learning outcome is going to be insignificant and the company will have spent its money badly. On the other hand, being too intense about learning and outcome may result in setting over-ambitious goals for the individual.

Reinforcement

For learning to take place and be internalized to the desired extent, a trainee is rewarded or given some encouragement. This reinforcement, or the acknowledgement that what has been acquired is desirable, can be either an extrinsic or intrinsic reward – external praise or some tangible reward, or the individual's feeling of a sense of progress.

Feedback

During the training process, it is useful for the trainee to be told how he is progressing. That knowledge of results is an effective motivator has been confirmed by several researchers. Constant and periodic feedback has positive effects on the trainee's learning. Unless the trainee knows how close his performance comes to the desired standard, he will not have an opportunity to improve. Feedback, therefore, provides a basis for correcting oneself. Secondly, feedback helps to sustain the trainee's interest in the task, or in the learning that is taking place, by bringing greater involvement with the learning process. If feedback is to be meaningful, it should follow a learning segment as quickly as possible.

Transfer of Learning

The maximum use of training can be made if the trainee is able to transfer his learning to his actual work role. This is possible if identical elements are incorporated in the training situation from the job role, either existing or proposed. The more similar the learning situation is to the job situation, the higher the degree of transfer the trainee can expect, and hence the greater the relevance of the training programme.

Repetition

Repetition etcher a pattern into our memory, e.g., when one studies for an examination, it is necessary to repeatedly go over ideas so that they can be recalled later.

Relevance

Relevance relates to the meaningful use of material which aids learning, e.g., trainers usually explain in the overall purpose of a job to trainees before assigning them a particular task.

Training Policy

A company's training policy represents the commitment of its top management to training, and is expressed in the rules and procedures which govern or influence the standard and scope of training in the organization. Training policies are necessary for the following reasons:

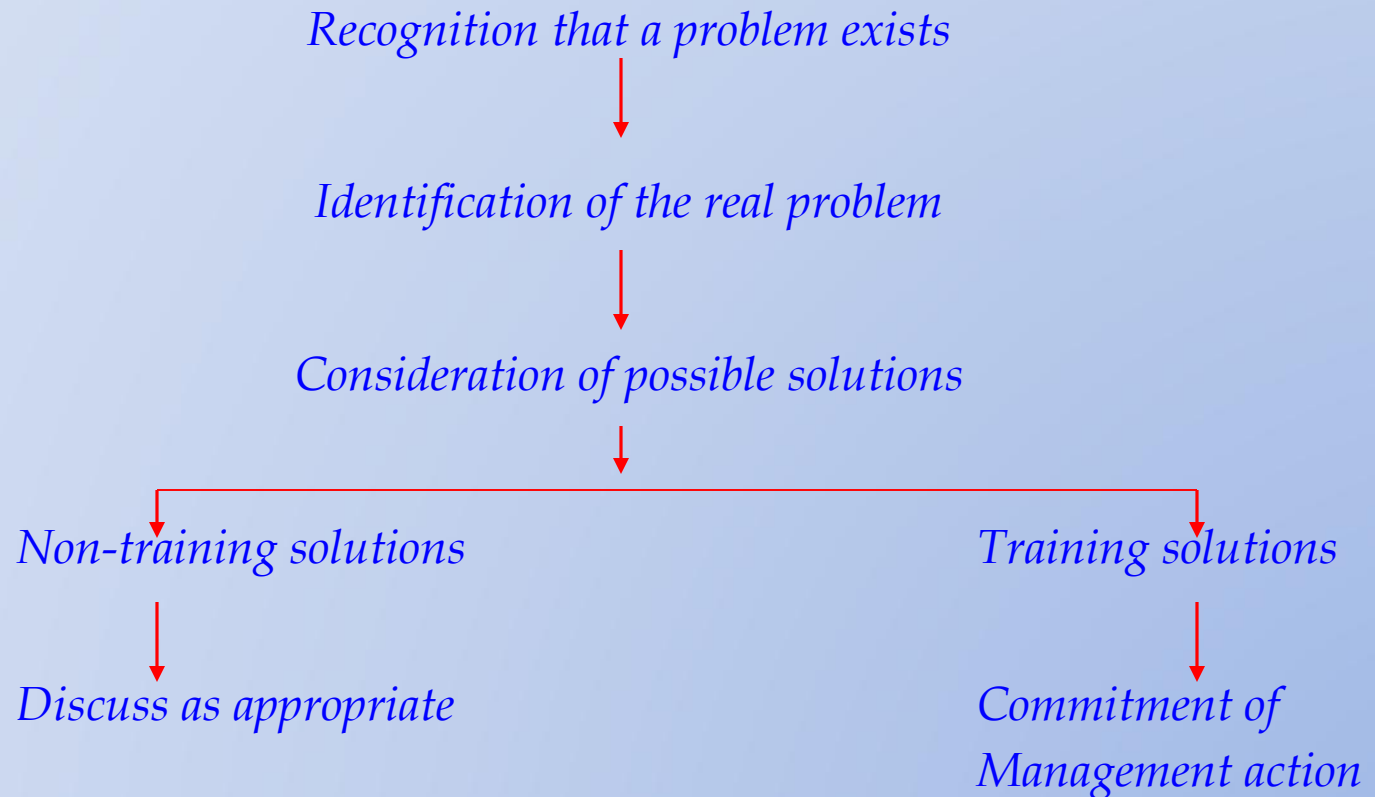
1. To highlight the firm's approach to the training function, provide guidance for design and execution, and to provide information regarding programmes to all employees.
2. Formulation of policy helps in identification of priority areas in training, and since resources are scarce, they are prioritized according to felt needs.
3. A training policy document helps to communicate the firm's intent regarding an employee's career development, and also gives the employee the opportunity to better his prospects through training.

Positive Outcomes of Training

- ✓ Training helps employees to learn their jobs and attain desired levels of performance speedily thus cutting costs and contributing to better utilization of machines and material.
- ✓ Training helps to reduce the cost of raw material and products – reducing losses due to waste, poor quality products and damage to machinery – which would result if an untrained employee were to learn on his own.
- ✓ Employee motivation is enhanced when employees know that the firm would provide them with training opportunities to increase their skills and knowledge, thus enabling them to develop and qualify for higher posts. Such practices create favourable attitudes towards the organization, which could result in better adjustment and commitment to one's work and the organization.
- ✓ Finally, training aids in the development of individual skills, better methods, new equipment, and sometimes new work place relationships.

Training Needs Identification

Models for Identifying Training Needs



Models for Identifying Training Needs ...

Many methods have been proposed for identifying training needs. A survey conducted by Sinha (1974) listed in rank order the following methods of identifying training needs:

1. Views of the line manager
2. Performance appraisal.
3. Company and departmental plans.
4. Views of training manager.
5. Analysis of job difficulties.

Thayer and McGhee's Model is based on the following three factors:

1. Organizational analysis.
2. Task analysis
3. Man analysis

Training areas identified by trainees

A survey conducted by Kalra indicated that participants would like to have training programmes in the following areas:

1. Training in taking responsibilities/decision-making.
2. Greater practical focus rather than conceptual focus in training programmes.

Sinha's study identified the following areas, in rank order, as preferred by responding manager.

1. Analysis of business environment (social, economic and political).
2. General management training, consisting of areas like planning, organization, directing, motivating, coordinating and controlling.
3. Functional areas, such as marketing, personnel and finance.
4. Specialized technique-oriented programmes, such as production planning, maintenance management, value analysis, works simplification and interview technique.
5. Problem solving and decision making.

Training Methods

Training methods are a means of attaining the desired objective in a learning situation. Given background work such as identification of training needs, a programme design and its duration (*based on these needs*), it then becomes pertinent to analyze and select the best method or combination of methods, given the several constraints, to attain the programme objectives. The choice of a method would depend on a wide variety of factors, such as competence of instructors, relevance to the participants, the programme design, cost implications etc.

Objectives of Training Methods

Demonstration value – Complete demonstration of job requirements is training of a kind that enables the trainee to grasp the meaning of ideas, concepts, or procedures visually. Such a method can be used effectively as an aid to overcome the “breakdown” of communication. Please remember things that they see and hear, much longer than they do information they receive through talks and reading, alone.

Developing interest – One of the factors to be kept in mind in choosing a method is its ability to hold and arouse the interest of the trainee in the learning situation.

Appeal to many senses – From the trainer’s point of view it would be beneficial to utilize as many of the trainee’s senses as possible, in order to improve retention of learning.

Classification of Methods

Depending on the learning outcome, and the process by which it is attained, it is possible to categorize the various methods into several groups.

On-the-job-oriented training methods – *In this cluster are included methods whose main objectives are centered around the job, more specifically, learning on the job itself by a variety of methods. Methods which fall into this category are:*

- 1. On-the-job training.*
- 2. Job rotation.*
- 3. Guidance and counselling.*
- 4. Brainstorming sessions.*
- 5. Syndicate method (working in small groups).*

Simulation methods – Real-life situations are simulated for imparting training. The methods falling in this category are:

1. Role play.
2. Case method.
3. Management games.
4. In-basket exercise.

Knowledge-based methods – In this method of training, an effort is made to expose participants to concepts and theories, basic principles, and pure and applied knowledge in any subject area. Basically, it is aimed at creating an awareness of the knowledge of fundamentals.

1. Lectures.
2. Seminar/Workshops.
3. Educational training programmes at academic institutes.
4. Programmed instruction.
5. Films and TV.
6. Group discussion, especially in combination with some of the above, for assimilation and integration.

Experiential methods – The focus in this category is on achieving through group processes and dynamics, a better understanding of oneself and others. In this method individual members talk about themselves and others, and by mutually supportive roles generate greater understanding and skills in interpersonal competence.

1. Sensitivity training – T-L Groups
2. Transactional analysis
3. Achievement-motivation workshops.

Training organization

- ❑ In-Company/ External Programmes
- ❑ Training Budgets
- ❑ Lead Time: Planning

Evaluation of Training

McGhee and Thayer indicate that evaluation helps management to answer the following questions:

- ✓ *The relevance of the programmes to the organization's needs – what changes if any should be made in existing programmes to realign them to the organization's needs.*
- ✓ *Feedback on the choices of areas of training will also need to be examined in the context of its contributions to the organization's effectiveness.*
- ✓ *Should the money continue to be spent on this activity, or another more relevant activity which will improve attainment of the organization's objectives?*

The Evaluation Process

Criteria for Evaluation