

Training and Development: Concept and Importance

Meaning

Training and Development is one of the main functions of the human resource management department. Most organizations 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 organizations globally. Many organizations have mandated training hours per year for employees keeping in consideration the fact that technology is deskilling the employees at a very fast rate.

Training refers to a systematic setup where employees are instructed and taught matters of technical knowledge related to their jobs. It focuses on teaching employees how to use particular machines or how to do specific tasks to increase efficiency.

On the other hand, development refers to the overall holistic and educational growth and maturity of people in managerial positions. The process of development is in relation to insights, attitudes, adaptability, leadership and human relations.

Characteristics of Effective Training Programs

However, not all training is created equal. The extent to which training can influence learning, behavior change, performance, and profitability depends largely on how it has been designed and delivered. The following features have been directly associated with improved employee and organizational outcomes:

- **Start with training needs assessment:** This is a systematic process to determine who needs to be trained (i.e., who needs improved KSAs), what they need training on (i.e., what tasks need to be improved), and how the training process will be supported and aligned with strategic objectives.
- **Identify and communicate purpose, objectives, and outcome:** These are identified based on the results of the training needs assessment and must be communicated to trainees in a clear and

easy-to-understand way. When communication includes a message on how the training will be applied and what the expected outcomes are, motivation to learn increases.

- **Relevant content:** To be effective, training must include content that is directly linked to trainee job experiences. This makes intuitive sense, but when ignored it can reduce the impact of training on performance to zero. Just think about the training sessions you've attended that have been unrelated to your daily work-life.
- **Active demonstration:** Trainers need to actively demonstrate the specific skills and processes included in the training. Conducting these live demonstrations provides trainees with a model of desired behavior and results in greater learning and transfer of training, regardless of the topic.
- **Opportunities for practice:** Effective training programs include multiple opportunities for trainees to practice the skills they've learned during class-time. By building application exercises into the training workshops themselves, you provide trainees with a safe place to try new skills, where they can make mistakes and not worry about consequences.
- **Regular feedback during training:** Trainers also need to give feedback to employees while they are practicing their new skills. Feedback should be given both during practice and after exercises have been completed. It should also be directly related to how the trainee performed the task and never be focused on personal characteristics.
- **Post-training environment:** After training it is important that employees are given opportunities to perform the skills they've learned. If the post-training environment does not support this, research has shown that training will have little to no impact on trainee performance and organizational utility; that is, little or no ROI.

Importance of Training

Training bridges the gap between the job requirements and employee's present capabilities. Every organization should provide training to its workforce due to the technological changes and automation. Training is required for both employer and the employees.

1. Advantages of Standardization

The methods of production are standardized through training. All trained employees follow same methods and techniques of production and hence there can be little variation in output and standards produced by different employees. By using standardized methods, the quality of output would be increased.

2. Ensures Flexibility and Stability

The organization gains, stability as it continues to have trained personnel for its varied requirements. Continuous and timely training makes the organization more competent and enables it to overcome shortages of skilled personnel.

3. Improved Employee Morale

Training increases morale of the employees. Training increases employee's morale by relating their skills with the job requirements. Trained employees can see their jobs in the more meaningful ways. This increases the morale of the employees.

4. More Employment Opportunities

A trained employee gets more employment opportunities as compared to the untrained employee. This is because every firm wants the trained and capable workers.

5. Reduced Supervision and Direction

A trained employee knows what job he has to do and how to do that job and requires no guidance and supervision. Supervisors can devote their time to solve more important problems rather than concentrating on constant and regular supervision.

6. Economical Use of Resources

A well-trained employee makes better and economical use of available resources (materials, machines, and equipment). Optimum utilization of resources results in reduced cost on production and higher profits.

7. Increase in Productivity

Increase in the skills of the employees, usually increments the both quality and quantity of output. Training plays an important role in increasing the efficiency of the employees and increases their skills for doing the job in a better way. This increases the productivity in the organization.

8. Future Manpower Needs

Through proper training employees become eligible for promotion handling more responsibility. An expanding and growing organization wishes to train the existing employees so as to place them in higher positions in future.

9. Better Industrial Relations

Training provides a platform for maintaining smooth industrial relations. Employees develop a feeling that organization is taking care and interest in them through training programmes.

10. Reduced Accidents at Workplace

According to a survey, maximum accidents are caused due to the deficiencies in the skills of the people than due to the deficiencies in the working conditions. Proper training for the skills required for the job contributes towards the reduction in the accident rate.

11. Consistency

A robust training and development program ensures that employees have a consistent experience and background knowledge. The consistency is particularly relevant for the company's basic policies and procedures. All employees need to be aware of the expectations and procedures within the company. Increased efficiencies in processes results in financial gain for the company.

12. Reduced Learning Time

An untrained worker consumes a lot of time to learn the methods, technique of doing the work. Skilled and trained employees reach the acceptable level of performance within no time. Therefore, training results in reduced learning time.