

AFRICA CENTER FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT

NAME: MURAA JACKLINE LORDEL MUSA

MODEL: 6

ASSIGNMENT: 6

**COURSE: POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HUMAN RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT**

1. Discuss the internal and external factors that will necessitate human resource development

Human resources departments play an important role in such areas as workforce planning, employee and labor relations, training and development and legal compliance within their organizations. Because it is not directly involved in the production of goods and service, HR may be seen as a separate function apart from the day-to-day operations of a business. Yet, an effective human resources department can make a real difference to the organization's success. An HR department typically encounters a number of internal and external factors as part of its function.

Available Labor Pool

Perhaps the main function of human resources departments is to maintain adequate staffing levels through workforce planning. One external factor that influences the ability to recruit qualified candidates is the labor market availability, which is affected by unemployment rates, number of qualified workers in the reasonable commuting distance and, in some cases, the availability of applicants with specialized skills such as nursing or technology. An organization might have difficulty identifying and attracting suitable candidates, especially if the same skill sets are in demand throughout the industry.

The company's geographic location may also be a factor if the labor pool is not large enough in the immediate area. Then, HR managers may need to focus their recruiting efforts outside the region and pay relocation packages as appropriate to encourage qualified staff to take up a position.

Government Regulations – With the introduction of new workplace compliance standards your human resources department is constantly under pressure to stay within the law. These types of regulations influence every process of the HR department, including hiring, training, compensation, termination, and much more. Without adhering to such regulations a company can be fined extensively which if it was bad enough could cause the company to shut down.

Economic Conditions – One of the biggest external influences is the shape of the current economy. Not only does it affect the talent pool, but it might affect your ability to hire anyone at all. One of the biggest ways to prepare against economic conditions is to not only know what's happening in the world around you, but also create a plan for when there

is an economic downturn. All companies can make due in a bad economy if they have a rainy day fund or plan to combat the harsh environment.

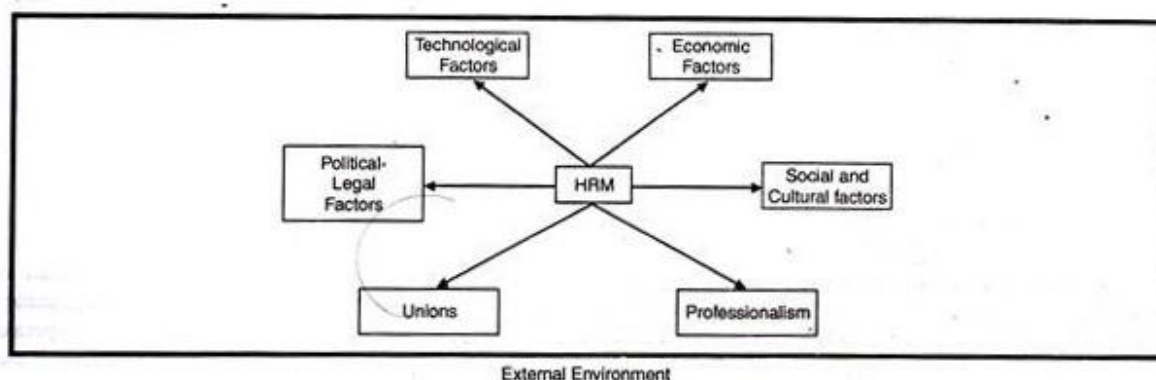
Technological Advancements – This is considered an external influence because when new technologies are introduced the HR department can start looking at how to downsize and look for ways to save money. A job that used to take 2-4 people could be cut to one done by a single person. Technology is revolutionizing the way we do business and not just from a consumer standpoint, but from an internal cost-savings way.

Workforce Demographics – As an older generation retires and a new generation enters the workforce the human resources department must look for ways to attract this new set of candidates. They must hire in a different way and offer different types of compensation packages that work for this younger generation. At the same time, they must offer a work environment conducive to how this generation works.

Those involved in human resource management does more than hiring and firing, they make sure that every type of external influence is listened to and proper procedures are followed to avoid lawsuits and sanctions. If you're in HR make sure that you're paying close attention to external influences because there is a good chance they're affecting your job and the company you work for. So next time you talk to someone involved in the human resource management process think twice about the amount of factors that affect their job and how important it is for them to be on top of their game.

Article shared by : Shreyas Kammar

This article throws light upon the six major external factors affecting HR resources and development of an organisation. The external factors are:
1. Economic Factors 2. Political-Legal Factors 3. Social and Cultural Factors 4. Technological Factors 5. Unions 6. Professionalism.



External Factor # 1. Economic Factors:

Economic factors include all those economic forces which affect the HR function. Highly relevant economic factors are suppliers, customers, competitors, and globalisation.

A brief description of these factors is as follows:

(i) Suppliers:

As regards the HR department, the suppliers are those who provide human resources to the organisation. The suppliers include the universities, colleges, employment exchanges, training institutes, consultancy firms etc. The quality of inputs of employees depends upon the suppliers.

(ii) Customers:

Customers of the organisation also influence the HR functions. Now-days, customers are considered the kings. They want high quality products at reasonable prices. Each and every employee in the company must contribute towards achieving the quality of goods.

It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure that their work is of the highest standard. Sales are affected by the product quality which is directly related to the skills and qualifications of the employees.

(iii) Competitors:

Competition in a particular industry plays a very important role in the HR functions and activities. If several companies make job offers to one individual, the organisation with more attractive terms and conditions will win. As the number of competitors increases the importance of staffing function and compensation practices also increases.

When due to competition, employees with particular skills are hard to obtain the organisation will have to train their own employees through proper planning, training and development activities.

(iv) Globalisation:

Due to globalisation, the HR managers are required to play challenging roles and create competitive advantage for their concern. Global firms have to continually reorganise their operations and refocus their energies around their crucial areas of competence. Today the business environment has become highly volatile in nature.

Changes of various kinds hit the firms from all angles. Successful managers are those who anticipate and adjust to such changes quickly rather than being passively swept along or caught unprepared. If firms hire people who cannot adjust to changes, then they are hiring the wrong persons.

Agility is the name of the game now-days, if the firms have to survive. The HR managers have an important role in creating a favourable work climate to initiate and implement changes quickly. They have to

anticipate important and crucial changes in advance and initiate proactive steps immediately.

In the long run, how effectively a company uses its human resources can have a dramatic impact on its ability to compete or survive in an increasingly competitive environment.

External Factor # 2. Political-Legal Factors:

The political-legal environment covers the impact of political institutions on the HRM department. All activities of HRM are in one way or the other affected by these factors. To be specific, HR planning, recruitment and selection, placement, training, remuneration, employee relations and terminations are governed by the constitutional provisions.

The HRM cannot manage the personnel unilaterally because it has to abide by the rules and regulations imposed by the Government from time to time. HR managers have to be aware about the legislations enacted by the governments at the centre and the states.

The important legislations affecting HRM in India are:

- i. Factories Act, 1948
- ii. Trade Unions Act, 1926
- iii. The Payment of Wages Act, 1936
- iv. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948
- v. Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
- vi. Workmen' Compensation Act, 1923
- vii. The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965
- viii. The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972
- ix. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
- x. The Apprentice Act, 1961

xi. Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946. etc.

External Factor # 3. Social and Cultural Factors:

Now-days the society at large has become more demanding. Firms cannot operate in isolation; they are stuck with the society. Social impacts have to be evaluated before taking any action programme. Society therefore includes the firm's own employees, their friends, relatives and neighbours also.

A firm has to operate by public consent to satisfy society's needs. Considerable pressure can be exerted on the firm to alter its practices, if the public believes that it is not operating in the best interests of the society. HR managers have to understand the relevance of conducting their business in a socially relevant and responsible manner.

A few examples of societal pressures are as follows:

- i. When the firm is operating in an area where large scale unemployment is there, it cannot afford to hire only qualified employees. The firm has to compromise by hiring people who are capable of being trained.
- ii. If the expectations or the tall claims made by the firm are not met, the fate of the firm is automatically sealed.
- iii. Before cutting jobs in a big way, HR managers have to assess the societal reactions beforehand and come out with proactive steps etc.

Cultural factors affect the HR functions in the following ways:

- i. Culture creates different types of people who become members of an organisation. Culture trains people along particular lines tending to put a personality stamp on them. HR managers have to deal with people keeping in mind their cultural values.
- ii. The attitudes of the workers toward work are the result of their cultural background. In some cultures people are dedicated towards their work, whereas in some cultures people have a deep apathy towards work.

iii. Time dimension, which influences HRM, has its roots in culture. In some cultures, people are oriented towards the past, in others they tend to be more focussed on the present. Still some others are futuristic in nature. For example, Japanese have a futuristic society.

They have long term future oriented time horizons. They believe in retaining the employees for long periods of time, with a strong mutual commitment on both the sides. American society, on the other hand, is present oriented. Employees are hired and maintained so long as they are useful to the organisation. After that they are just dispensed with.

iv. Work ethics which determine the individual behaviour in the organisations, is the result of culture.

v. Ethics in a work environment implies hard-work and commitment. Strong work ethics ensure motivated employees and the reverse is true in case of weak work ethics.

vi. Achievement needs acquired by people from their culture also affect their behavioural patterns. People, with high achievement needs, tend to seek high degree of personal responsibility, set realistic goals, take moderate risks and use performance feedback in satisfying their need to achieve.

External Factor # 4. Technological Factors:

In the present competitive world, technological developments can dramatically influence an organisation's environment. Technological advancements can create new competitive advantages that are more powerful than the existing ones.

Technological advancement affects the HR function in the following ways:

- i. New technologies, generally, compel people to learn a new set of skills altogether or to upgrade their existing skills and knowledge. Moreover, there will be growing demand for workers with more sophisticated training and skills especially in sectors like telecommunications, biotechnology etc.
- ii. New technological advancements also lead to downsizing of workers. Increased automation reduces the number of employees in the organisations. The pressure to remain cost effective also forces the firms to cut down the manpower. Mergers and acquisitions, also lead to downsizing of employees.
- iii. In many emerging industries, the positions that have been filled up with workers possessing superior technical skills and knowledge, have tilted the power base from management to technical workers. Managers today have to have some understanding of the technical aspects of their subordinates' work. To manage the knowledge workers is a major area of concern for the HR managers.
- iv. Technological changes lead to collaborative team work where managers, technicians, and analysts work together on projects. Team based incentive plans make it necessary for all classes of employees to work in close co-ordination with each other.
- v. Along with upgrading the jobs, technology has its impact on human relations also. Technology lays down the requirements for much of the human interactions in organisations. Since interaction affects sentiments, technology indirectly determines what individuals in groups will feel and think about one another and about their work situation.

The impact of technology on the HR function is quite profound. In the days ahead, the risk and hazardous jobs as well as repetitive jobs would be handed over to the robots. As organisations become fully computerised and automated, the demand for people with multi skills will grow.

However, technology will lead to alienation of workers, since job opportunities will shrink along with opportunities for socialisation on the job. Factory work for skilled and unskilled workers will become scarce as organisations will start using lighter, faster, stronger and more intelligent robots in the years ahead.

External Factor # 5. Unions:

Trade unions constitute one of the major power blocks in many countries. With the formation and recognition of unions, the issues relating to employee interests are no longer determined by the unilateral actions of the management. These have to be discussed with union representatives. Thus, the scope of managerial discretion in HR decisions has been narrowed down.

External Factor # 6. Professionalism:

Job holders and seekers have become highly professionalised and knowledgeable now-a-days. On the one hand, such organisations can boast of a progressive and modern outlook of its personnel; but on the other, the problems faced are also serious.

A few of these problems are as follows:

- i. It is a difficult job to motivate such employees. The traditional incentives hardly affect these employees. They are motivated only by opportunities which offer challenges, growth and achievement.
- ii. Retaining such employees in the organisations is another difficult job. The modern employees are known for job hopping and rootlessness. The company has to make several allowances to discourage such practices.
- iii. Another problem is referred to as ‘**Techno-Structure**’ by Galbraith. Techno-structure is the composition of scientists and technicians of an organisation. This structure tries to control the organisation by influencing the managerial decision making.

Techo-Structured people are experts in their respective fields, but they are action oriented and not aware of the social problems arising out of business decisions. The HR managers are, thus, in a tight position trying to balance the offended feelings of technocrats and the social consequences of business decisions.

Internal Factor: Level of Growth

An internal factor that impacts human resources is the company's rate of current and projected growth. Companies experiencing aggressive growth and rapid expansion may require its human resources department to focus on recruitment and staffing. More stagnant companies may place a greater focus on efforts on employee retention and improving the company's culture and workplace environment through upgrading job descriptions and enhancing compensation and fringe benefits programs. Downsizing companies may have to take the regrettable decision to lose some of its staff; a message that's often left to HR to relay.

Internal Factor: Use of Technology

One of the key internal factors affecting human resource planning is the willingness for the HR department and company management to use technology to aid in certain key human resources functions. For example, companies that make greater use of tools such as online benefits management, where employees can make changes to their benefit plans on their own, provide human resources workers with more time to focus on other areas like recruiting or training and employee development. This can free up a considerable amount of time and resources across the organization.

2. Is education, training and development a responsibility of the Human Resource personnel?

Education

Education has been defined as activities which “aim to develop knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required in all aspects of life rather than a knowledge and skill relating only to a limited sphere of activity”. As such, it encompasses the concept of *why* things happen, rather than simply how they happen (or can be made to happen). This can help to make skills more transferable. Education is also about the wider knowledge underpinning processes and procedures, and their contexts. It is, therefore, a key element of development and closely associated with professional development.

Training

Training has been defined as “a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities”. Training is essentially concerned with short term performance – in respect of the job or task in hand. As such, it provides the preparation to undertake specific requirements by, usually, the development of particular skills – so, for example, it may include training to use a new piece of equipment or a new computer application, or to improve letter writing or report writing skills. It may also be linked to development plans, for either the individual and/or the organization, in which case it may be applied to assist with career growth and the building of skills which may or may not be immediately required, but will be in the future.

Development

The Manpower Services Commission defined development as “the growth or realization of a person’s ability, through conscious or unconscious learning” (1981). Thus, it more concerned with long-term individual, or organizational, development than short-term performance – although it encompasses this. It emphasizes continuous learning and growth. For the organization, it provides a focus to plan its own future through its human resources.

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.

Training and Development is a structured program with different methods designed by professionals in particular job. It has become most common and continuous task in any organisation for updating skills and knowledge of employees in accordance with changing environment. Optimisation of cost with available resources has become pressing need for every organisation which will be possible only by way of improving efficiency and productivity of employees, possible only by way of providing proper employee training and development conditioned to that it should be provided by professionals.

The function of human resource development is to improve performance and ability. While employees are often expected to know a certain amount about their jobs or have a specific degree or level of education upon hire, much of what an employee learns about their job is developed over the course of doing the job. This development includes specific organizational knowledge or job-specific duties that are not necessarily taught in the classroom.

Regardless of the form the development takes, it functions as a means to improve the overall performance and ability of employees in the jobs they are doing and in future positions. Human resource development can function to improve performance or individual abilities in an area in which an employee is weak (such as management skills or accounting practices). It can also function to teach an employee about an area in which the employee has had no prior experience, such as when transitioning from one role into a different role (i.e., cross-training).

HR development may also function to help an organization conform to government regulations or guidelines by training employees on relevant laws or regulations for which they are responsible. It may also take the form of professional development by educating in specific areas or fields. The Professional in Human Resources certification, Project Management Professional certification, and Six Sigma Black Belt are examples of courses

and certifications designed to train and develop professionals in these specific fields.

The role of human resource development is to support organizational goals. The cost and time associated with development and training of employees are only worth it if it directly helps the employees achieve increased performance, resulting in increased performance for the organization. When employees are improving their ability and performance, an organization achieves higher levels of success. However, the training and development of employees must be focused on the desired goals of the department, which must align with the stated goals of the organization.

For example, let's look at an employee in the accounting department. Suppose the employee wants to take some classes on new accounting practices. These classes could potentially develop the employee's abilities in his career, which would help the organization. This development would be beneficial. However, if the employee wanted to take cooking courses, while that may develop his personal skills and abilities, there would be no positive impact on his career or on the goals of the organization.

A more subjective situation arises when you have employees seeking assistance from their organization with their educational goals. This same employee may want to develop his skills and abilities by obtaining a degree in accounting, yet the university he is attending requires him to take some English and philosophy courses in order to receive a degree. While, overall, the degree would provide a benefit to the organization and support the organizational goals, the specific courses within that degree may not have a direct support on the organization's objectives.

Conclusion

Human resource development adds value to an organization by adding value to its employees, and value can constantly increase. Additionally, HR development is a fundamental part of what makes an employee successful as an individual and what makes an organization more successful as a whole. In order to be successful, an organization must be willing to develop its employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities.

This development can take place through one-on-one mentoring sessions, workplace meetings, instructor-led training sessions, and self-led instruction, to name a few. When human resource development aligns with and supports the goals of the organization and is focused on improving the abilities and performance of the employees, it becomes an essential part of the success of the organization.

3. Explain how you will identify the training and development needs of staff in your organization?

Identifying learning and development (L&D) needs involves the assessment of employee capabilities alongside an understanding of current or anticipated gaps in knowledge or skills. This analysis can be conducted at the individual, team or organisational level. In any case, the outcomes can identify the appropriate learning provisions required to enable sustained business performance and should be closely aligned to the overall organisation strategy.

This factsheet examines the basics of identifying L&D needs, including guidance on how to conduct a capability analysis and suggested methods for collecting and making use of the data. It also provides insight for those operating in smaller organisations into addressing their particular challenges in identifying learning and development needs.

CIPD viewpoint

Clear and systematic identification of learning and development needs is a key aspect of ensuring effective learning provision across an organisation. However, the process can be seen as a rigid, box-ticking one-time exercise unless it's aligned with organisational requirements. The need for organisational agility means people professionals must act quickly to deliver a learning needs analysis when required.

The process demands an appropriate mapping of organisational needs linking the learning to the desired business outcomes. Using our 'RAM' model – focusing on Relevance, Alignment and Measurement – is one way to make sure that the learning needs analysis does not become too inward-focused but maintains a clear focus on business improvement.

As with other L&D areas, we should also be aware of the increasing use of talent analysis approaches which, if used systematically, can provide new data and insight for identifying the learning needs of individuals and organisations.

Identifying learning and development (L&D) needs is based on an assessment of prevailing levels of skills, attitudes and knowledge, and on any current or anticipated gaps. This assessment can use formal and/ or informal methods. Such an analysis will enable decisions about what learning provisions are

needed at individual, team or organisational level. These gaps should be interpreted and prioritised in connection with the wider organisational strategy.

Implementing a formal learning needs analysis (LNA) - also sometimes known by alternative terms such as training needs analysis (TNA) or training and learning needs analysis (TLNA) - may be seen as a current or future health check on the skills, talent and capabilities of the organisation (or part of the organisation). It is based on the systematic gathering of data about employees' capabilities and organisational demands for skills, alongside an analysis of the implications of new and changed roles for changes in capability.

Such a process needs to flow from business strategy, and its aim is to produce a plan for the organisation to make sure there is sufficient capability to sustain current and future business performance. It is also vital to consider statutory and compliance requirements.

Links with learning and development strategy

Creating an effective learning and development strategy is critical in ensuring that the approach to L&D aligns with business needs.

A clear analysis of L&D needs to inform such a strategy is important because:

- Organisational performance depends on having the right people in the right place with the right skills at the right time.
- Providing learning opportunities can help build organisational effectiveness as well as enabling staff to achieve personal and career goals which can increase employee engagement.
- Having a clear idea of what needs to be learned and the outcomes that are expected provides a foundation for L&D professionals to evaluate effectiveness and demonstrate the impact of L&D to the organisation.
- Well-planned learning is an effective retention strategy, particularly when linked into talent strategies. It is also useful in times of high attrition providing it's designed to capture in house knowledge well, therefore stopping knowledge 'walking out of the door'.

Preparing for a learning needs analysis

Engaging with a variety of stakeholders, including subject matter experts, operational managers and the intended learner group, is vital and they need to

be consulted with early in the process. This also continues when the results are communicated.

Levels of learning needs analysis

Analysis of learning and development needs can be done at a number of levels:

- **For the organisation as a whole** - to analyse the amount and types of learning needed to ensure that all employees have the right capabilities to perform in line with the organisation's strategy.
- **For a specific department, project or area of work** - new projects and opportunities require new ways of working or reorganisation, while restructuring also necessitates changes in roles.
- **For individuals** - linking their own personal learning and development needs to those of the business, often carried out as part of performance review. See our factsheets on performance management and performance appraisal for more information.

The relevant function (for example, L&D or HR) needs to ensure that analyses carried out at any of these three levels are integrated and not seen in isolation.

Depending on the circumstances, a learning needs analysis may be for a specific aspect (such as an organisational or project-based skills audit), an ongoing operation (for example as part of an organisation review process) or a combination of approaches. However if L&D is aligned to the organisational strategy then this will be an iterative process and not seen as a single event.

The 'RAM' approach

While it's critical that any assessment of learning needs should be careful and thorough, in today's rapidly-changing business environment such a process also needs to be agile and readily responsive. We've developed an approach we call 'RAM' (Relevance, Alignment, Measurement) based on our research with the University of Portsmouth.

The RAM approach helps to focus the analysis on the key business and organisational outcomes in the following ways:

- **Relevance:** how existing or planned learning provision will meet new opportunities and challenges for the business.
- **Alignment:** if the plan is to deliver a changed L&D offer, it's critical for HR and L&D to talk to key managers and other stakeholders about what they're seeking to deliver and how the function can help them achieve it. It's also important to ensure that L&D is aligned to other key strategies

such as reward, organisational development, engagement and other aspects of the management of human resources. Alignment with organisational strategy and its marketing and finance strategies and other dimensions of corporate strategy gives focus, purpose and relevance to L&D.

- **Measurement:** it's also critical that the HR and L&D function measures and evaluates the interventions effectively and consistently. It may be helpful to use a mix of evaluation methods such as return on investment (ROI) and broader measures of expected change and improvement such as return on expectation, and to link L&D outcomes to key performance indicators (KPIs).

Capability analysis

Knowing which jobs will be done now as well as those proposed in the future is the first step when reviewing skills needs. Keeping an open mind helps future proof in this process; nobody honestly knows what jobs will exist in the future, however being agile and prepared for them is important. Next, for each category of employees covered, the following questions can be considered:

- Which capabilities will be required to carry out the job? (the person specification)
- Which capabilities do existing employees possess? (a formal or informal skills analysis)
- What are the gaps between existing capabilities and new/future requirements? (the learning specification)

L&D professionals often find it helpful to use a breakdown of capabilities into 'knowledge, skills and attitude' when analysing needs to make sure that no aspects are missed. For example, when looking at the competence requirements in a project manager:

- **Knowledge** elements might cover the nature of the projects managed, techniques of project management and the system used to manage projects, plus being well-networked to find any knowledge gaps.
- High levels of **skill** in dealing with other people, managing the project team and influencing important stakeholders would be expected.
- Certain **attitude requirements** would be relevant, such as attention to detail together with drive or persistence to overcome obstacles and see the project through.

Collecting and using the data

Gathering data on learning needs

After planning the extent and nature of the analysis, the next stage is to decide how the information can be collected. Potential methods include:

- Interviews and/or focus groups with line managers or other key players - these will often be primary sources of information on plans, work organisation and changes, or will expand on the data available in the documentation.
- Questionnaire-based or other surveys of managers, employees and their representatives. However it's vital that time is spent considering the questions that are asked, the likely response and what is done with the responses.
- Pre-existing online data, for example from management information systems or virtual learning environments.
- Information on existing competence frameworks and analysis of levels of competence achieved.
- Performance management and appraisal data captured both formally and informally.
- Documentation – for example organisation wide business plans, objectives and new work standards, job descriptions and person specifications. This tends to be desk based and can support other methods.

Much of this data will be sensitive, particularly where individuals' knowledge and skills gaps are exposed, so confidentiality must be respected. In addition, there are often times when major change is planned that senior management wish to keep confidential. In these situations learning professionals may need to build relationships and persuade management that learning interventions could contribute to the success of the initiative.

Using the learning needs analysis results

Collating the information from the needs analysis will allow a number of outputs that can happen concurrently:

- **A report of overall learning needs for the organisation or department** - to form the basis of an L&D strategy or form part of the business planning process.

- **Prioritising the learning needs identified** - discussions with senior managers will provide guidance on where they think the gaps are most critical. Concentrating on learning outcomes is important.
- **Learning and development plans** - once priorities and budgets are set, the L&D team will be able to set plans for learning interventions. These plans will prioritise content and methods or processes appropriate to meet the needs identified. Line managers will also have a clear idea of where they need to coach or develop skills in their teams.
- **Personal development plans** - plans for individual learning, aligned with the resources available.

Any company delving into training and development of its workforce should first learn how to properly identify and assess training needs. This is the single most important thing that helps executives to address the gaps between the existing training and training which will be required in the future. Here's a brief overview of three different needs managers should look at and three assessment methods for identifying key training needs at any organization.

Industry-related needs

Those are quite simple, but it can still be challenging to narrow them down when formulating your training program. There surely exists certain pieces of industry knowledge that employees should have. This need essentially derives from how the organization fits into the industry.

For example, a manufacturing group which creates parts for high-tech appliances may require the knowledge about where those parts go, what kind of appliances they structure, and how the manufacturing of those appliances coordinated by other companies affects the industry as a whole. When assessing this need, know how to differentiate what needs to be known from what would be nice to know.

Job-related needs

Job related needs are those that relate directly to jobs which are part of the organization. How to look for job-related needs? By researching whether there's training available for certain jobs. If not, organizations might create a complete training program for a job.

The purpose of job-related needs is to improve the final output of the job itself. It can be building an error-free part for a technological appliance or a completed call with a customer. The key is to identify which aspects of the job belong to executive positions and which ones are related to on-the-job training.

Task-related needs

A task-related need usually comes in the form of a requirement in a particular part or output within a job or job family. Just consider your own job – it's a combination of different tasks and processes that create your job on a daily to yearly basis. This is something that all jobs share.

Sometimes one or more aspects of a job aren't working and affect the overall productivity of a worker. Consider this example – a customer service representative performs well in sales and customer satisfaction, but when it comes to data inputs into the CRM system, they're pretty hopeless. This problem might affect contact with the customers or even the number of closed sales.

Assessment methods

Organizational perspective: This kind of assessment is focused on the effectiveness of the enterprise as a whole. It aims to identify any discrepancies, revealing the knowledge and skills required to bridge gaps. Organizational assessments analyze factors like the economy, new environmental policies and changing workforce demographics. These assessments determine which parts of the organization require training and whether it will fill the gaps when implemented.

Task-related perspective: Task assessments compile information about a particular job function. It's an analysis that identifies key tasks, competencies and skills that are required to perform the job efficiently. It's based on detailed job descriptions, skill analyses and inventory questionnaires which is how key training needs can be pinpointed. Enterprises undergoing restructuring or taking on a new direction can greatly benefit from this assessment. It basically determines whether there are any gaps between existing competencies and those required for improved performance.

Individual assessment: The individual assessment looks at particular employees to discover their level of performance. This analysis identifies

the existing skills and qualifications, as well as capacity for learning. Individual assessment will show who needs training and what kind of training is needed most. It uncovers the strengths of employees and areas for competency improvement.

Focus on each kind of training need before moving forward and determining the best course of action for the enterprise. Each assessment will help you improve different aspects of the organization and build specific training programs to address important gaps and boost the effectiveness of the company.

Proper training is the backbone of any successful organization. Employees who receive the right training are more productive, efficient, and satisfied with their workplace experience. You'd be astounded at the ways that excellent training shapes the landscape of your office environment. If you want to provide superior training, start by making a checklist that addresses the direct needs of the individuals involved.

Explore overall performance

Look at each section of your organization instead of the organization as a whole. Examine them, and assess which aspects are lacking, or performing below your desired standard. You'll want to refresh and improve all training, but identifying these key areas will show you where to place the biggest emphasis. Devote the majority of your time to these targeted areas and gently touch on the things that people seem to be doing well.

Compare yourself to similar organizations

What are they doing differently from you, and how is that helping them succeed? If you're seeing an enviable outcome from other organizations, you might want to jump aboard the same train. This may mean overhauling a lot of current policies and implementing new technology. When things change, everyone is going to need a training update.

Perform individual assessments

You may not have a lot of people doing the same work. Certain tasks may be delegated to very small groups, or even individuals. Measure the performance of these individuals to determine where their strengths and weaknesses lie. Training can boost productivity, but only if the training is tailored to the areas where productivity needs to be improved. You may find that some people need very specific training.

Consider your industry

Everyone undergoes some sort of basic training before starting a job, and some of that may even be required by law. Everything differs from industry to industry. How familiar are the members of your organization with the trends and standards within your industry? Try providing them with a bigger picture.

Different training programs for different roles

A file clerk doesn't need the same kind of training that an accountant needs. There are many different roles within your organization, and the people who fill them need to understand how you expect them to do their part. A training program needs to exist for each individual job. A one-size-fits-all approach will leave certain people lacking vital information, and this will cause problems down the road.

Train for common job requirements

Have you ever trained individuals for using software? Monitoring an anti-virus program? What about data entry? The tools they use and the small tasks they're required to perform comprise a significant part of their responsibilities. Though these things may seem routine, there's no use in creating complications by expecting people to figure them out on their own. Particularly when it comes to matters surrounding IT and security concerns, you should never let people poke around and guess how they're expected to fulfill their duties.

Always communicate with the individuals who do work for your organization. Ask them if they understand how things work, and take suggestions about how you can improve things. Keeping constant, open communication can help prevent training issues and misunderstandings before you begin to see their

negative consequences, and encourage individuals to tell you where they need assistance.

4. How will you foster development of skills amongst employees?

Fostering a Collaborative Environment

Share a common goal. At its core, a team is a group of people working together to accomplish a shared goal. In any teamwork-building effort, you'll need to remind your employees that they need to work together to accomplish that common goal.^[1]

- Remind employees why the team they're on exists, and emphasize the importance of collaboration and cooperation.
- Prioritize team efforts based on the common goal being worked towards.
- Consider creating a motto, award, or motivational poster that emphasizes and rewards teamwork.

Develop a vision statement reflecting your goal. In addition to having a shared goal, you may want to consider drafting a vision statement for your employees to follow. Your vision statement should reiterate the importance of teamwork, shared values, and inclusion in the workplace.^[2]

- Your vision statement should specify what inclusion should look like in the workplace.
- Try to establish specific behavioral expectations of your team. These expectations should foster a trusting, open, and cooperative environment.
- Give concrete recommendations for your employees. Don't use abstractions or metaphor; be clear, concise, and specific.

Reinforce office roles. As a manager or supervisor, your role is sort of a coach to your employees. But each employee should have a role as well. These roles should be clear to the employees, and should help work towards the shared goal you have for your company.^[3]

- Review each employee's role from time to time, and remind your employees what their roles are.
- Reiterate responsibilities and expectations when delegating work and assignments.

- Help your employees find ways to help one another.

Promote open communication. Miscommunication is threatening to the wellbeing of any organization. It could cause the team of employees to lose focus, trust, and morale.^[4]

- It's better to accidentally over-communicate than to risk under-communicating.
- Try to understand every aspect of the issue at hand.
- Clarify errors and clear up misunderstandings as soon as they arise.
- Reinforce teamwork and cooperation, and recognize your employees' efforts.

Address non-cooperative behavior. At some point, if you oversee operations and lead a team of employees, you may encounter someone who rejects teamwork and has a hard time being a team player. This person may be a "loner" type, or might simply not believe in the shared goals you've laid out for your employees. No matter what the situation may be, you'll need to address this behavior head-on to prevent your other employees from being affected.^[5]

- Have a calm, direct conversation with your employee to address his behavior. Explain why his behavior is a problem, and encourage him to modify his behavior for the betterment of your work environment.
- Remind your employee that he's part of a team, and he must embrace the ethics and morale of that team.
- Try creating a special niche role for your employee that he can successfully and productively fill. Take his experience, skills, and length of employment into account when designing a role for him.

2. Using Team-Building Activities

Have a clear focus. Before you turn your employees loose in a round of team-building exercises, it's important to establish what the point of each activity is and what you hope to accomplish with it. Activities can (and arguably should)

be fun, but they should ultimately serve a purpose and strengthen the bonds between your employees.^[6]

- Make sure your goals determine the activity you choose. Don't waste time with aimless activities just because they're fun.^[7]
- Communicate to your staff in advance what the purpose of each activity is.^[8]

Strengthen communication skills. One way to foster stronger communication between coworkers is to use children's building blocks to design small sculptures. This requires observation skills, strong leadership abilities, and group communication.

- Break your employees up into small teams (no more than four people per team).
- Build a small sculpture using children's building blocks. Make sure the sculpture is hidden from the teams.
- Hand out the necessary building blocks to each team.
- Choose one instructor from each team (perhaps supervisors or managers) to come up and view the sculpture at the same time. Their remaining team members should remain at their stations, out of view of the sculpture.
- Each instructor may only view the sculpture for 10 seconds at a time. After 10 seconds they must all return to their groups and direct their team mates on how to complete the sculpture.

Build trust. A good way to build trust between coworkers is by having one employee lead another. This is an excellent opportunity to pair together people who don't get along or don't trust one another.

- Set up an obstacle course using chairs, boxes, cones, and anything else you might have lying around the office - just be sure you don't use any objects that could hurt someone.

- Split your employees into pairs. Again, focus on pairing together people who might not work well together normally, as this is an opportunity to improve their relationship.
- Blindfold one person, and instruct him not to talk.
- Have his partner lead him through the obstacle course by giving verbal directions only. The goal is to have each blindfolded employee make it through the obstacles and reach the far side of the course.

Develop patience and teamwork. A good team activity for your employees is the "watch your back" exercise. This forces your employees to work together, have patience for one another, and coordinate their movements to work as a team. You can instruct your employees to carry over the coordination and patience they have for one another during this exercise into their day to day work lives.^[11]

- Make a start line and a finish line.
- Instruct everyone to stand side-by-side with their arms linked at the elbows.
- While keeping their arms linked, have your employees move together as a unit towards the finish line without losing anyone.
- To really build patience, you can time them and have your employees repeat the exercise until they can get to the finish line under a certain time limit. Figure out a time limit that is both challenging but realistic for the distance you're expecting them to cover.

Have employees create a team-building activity. Having your employees devise and implement their own original team exercise can change things up and get your employees motivated to succeed. It also requires teamwork in and of itself, as each group of employees must work together to develop an activity and agree on how best to design it.^[12]

- Create a fake problem. Tell your employees that you were going to spend an hour doing a problem solving activity, but you didn't want them to rehash something they've done before in the past.

- Have each group of employees devise their own unique problem-solving activity. They'll need to work together and form some type of consensus on whether the activity will work.
- Once each group has come up with their own activity, have each group of employees participate in one another's exercises.

Finding Other Ways to Build Teamwork

Host office potlucks. Buying your employees a meal (like a pizza party) from time to time can help boost morale. But hosting a potluck might be even more effective at fostering a sense of teamwork and cooperation. Each employee will participate and work together to feed the staff with their own specialty, which also works as a metaphor for inter-office cooperation.^[13]

- Announce the potluck a week or two in advance so that your employees can buy and prepare whatever foods they'll need.
- Ask your employees where their culinary strengths lie, and encourage them to create their own healthy, delicious contributions.

Start a sports league. Team work is a vital part of office productivity. It's also a natural part of team sports, which explains why so many offices host after work sports leagues. Starting a softball or bowling league can give your employees a chance to work together as a team while also relaxing and enjoying some down time together.^[14]

- Talk to other offices in your area and see if they'd be interested in joining a friendly recreational sports league.
- If other offices aren't interested, consider starting an intramural league that only involves your employees.
- Contact local venues (like ball parks and bowling alleys) to find out how to start a league, and ask about discounts available for larger teams.

Consider hosting a charity event. Another great way to have your employees bond while working towards a shared goal is a charity event. You can organize your own event, or sign up your employees to join in with an existing event.^[15]

- If you're starting your own event, seek feedback from your team. Talk to your employees, and ask them to vote on an event to participate in, as well as a charity to benefit from that event.
- Have employees who are interested in participating raise money or collect donations. Don't make donations mandatory, but remind your employees how important it is to help out the charity they choose.
- You can join a walkathon, for example, or simply offer your employees the opportunity to volunteer with an existing charity.

5. Discuss the training methods common in developing countries.

Surveys

You can conduct surveys or polls with a sample pool or all the employees of your organization. Surveys help find out performance deficiencies in specific areas. To conduct a survey, you can prepare a questionnaire and circulate among your employees. The questions in the survey should focus on the specific tasks and needs of the employees and organization. You can use different question formats such as open-ended, closed ended, projective, and priority ranking. Allowing employees to answer anonymously will increase the credibility and you will get genuine answers.

Pros and Cons of Surveys	
Pros	Cons
Reach a large number of employees in less time	May not go deep into the reasons behind the persistent issues
Inexpensive	Need enough time to develop an effective and detailed questionnaire
In case of anonymity, responses are given without fear and hesitation	Free responses might not be forthcoming

Easy to analyze, summarize, and report	
--	--

2. Observations

Training managers watch the work of employees in regular working situations. This observation, in turn, provides enough information on performance gaps. You need to consider technical, functional, and behavioral aspects while observing. This gives qualitative and quantitative feedback on the existing performance.

Pros and Cons of Observations	
Pros	Cons
Less interruption to regular work flow	Feedback can be unstructured; more anecdotal
Helps generate real-life data	Need an impartial, expert observer with process and domain knowledge
	Data collection possible only in work settings
	Employees may feel “spied on”

	Sometimes results may deviate when observation is ON
--	--

3. Interviews

Interviews allow you to collect data on performance gaps while talking with each employee or a group of employees. It can be formal or informal. You can conduct interviews in person or by phone, at work locations, or anywhere. Sometimes, you can interview the representative of the work group.

Pros and Cons of Interviews	
Pros	Cons
Easy to identify performance issues and explore possible solutions	Usually time-consuming
Immediate feedback is possible	Difficult to analyze and quantify results
	Need an experienced interviewer to generate data without making the interviewee self-conscious

4. Customer Feedback

You will come to know performance deficiencies with customers' feedback. They specifically indicate improvement areas. However, you need to formulate each question in the feedback form so that it is directed toward a specific service or performance.

Pros and Cons of Customer Feedback	
Pros	Cons
Can make improvements with constructive feedback	Low response rates
Get valuable insights about your target audience	May not give enough time for feedback

When you analyze training needs through these methods, you can decide which particular knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are required to improve workforce performance.

On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training allows employees to learn by actually performing a specific job or task. The employee will perform the job and learn as he goes. On-the-job training can be structured by using hands-on application supported by classroom-type instruction. It can also be unstructured using only hands-on application.

Cookie hired a new candy wrapper named Patti. Patti had no experience working in a candy factory. In fact, Patti had no experience working on an

assembly line either. Cookie used unstructured on-the-job training to teach Patti how to do her job. This method works well for the job of candy wrapping. As the candies move along the assembly line, Patti learned how to wrap each candy while working alongside a more experienced candy wrapper. The more experienced candy wrapper showed Patti exactly how to wrap candies, how to time the assembly line and how to detect irregularly shaped candies. If Patti made a mistake, the trainer would be able to correct it immediately.

The advantages of this method are:

- Immediate feedback on performance
- Swift remediation if task is not performed to standard

The disadvantages of this method are:

- Can slow down production for the trainer
- Can disrupt the workflow

Job Rotation

Job rotation teaches current employees how to do various jobs over time. The employee will rotate around to different jobs within the organization, performing various different tasks unrelated to his original job.

Cookie uses job rotation for tasks that require a specific skill set, like chocolate mixing. By learning different facets of the candy making process, the employees develop more skills. This method is useful when employees call out sick or take vacations.

Cookie temporarily moved Melvin, an experienced candy cutter, over to the mixing department to learn how to mix chocolate. Melvin worked alongside an experienced chocolate mixer to learn the job. With Melvin well trained in mixology, Cookie knew that if necessary, she could quickly and easily move him from candy cutting to chocolate mixing without disrupting the factory's output.

The advantages of this method are:

- Reduces employee boredom
- Increases skills
- Opens new opportunities to employees
- Hones in on employee interests

The disadvantages of this method are:

- Employee may not be satisfied with the new rotation

- Employee morale may decrease if employee is moved for a long period of time
- Can disrupt the workflow as employee learns new task or job

Job Mentoring

Job mentoring involves providing an employee with an experienced coach to oversee his or her learning experience. The mentor or coach provides advice and instruction, but is not performing the job with the employee as in on-the-job training. The trainee employee learns the job firsthand and may consult the mentor or coach at any time for assistance.

Cookie uses this method for high-level positions, like management trainee programs. This method works well for employees who have already acclimated to the company and have been moved up or promoted through the ranks.

Reference

- **Aguinis, Herman; Kraiger, Kurt (January 2009). "Benefits of Training and Development for Individuals and Teams, Organizations, and Society". *Annual Review of Psychology*. 60 (1): 451–474. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163505. ISSN 0066-4308**.
- **Bell, Bradford S.; Tannenbaum, Scott I.; Ford, J. Kevin; Noe, Raymond A.; Kraiger, Kurt (2017). "100 years of training and development research: What we know and where we should go". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 102 (3): 305–323. doi:10.1037/apl0000142. ISSN 1939-1854.**
- **Campbell, J P (January 1971). "Personnel Training and Development". *Annual Review of Psychology*. 22 (1): 565–602. doi:10.1146/annurev.ps.22.020171.003025. ISSN 0066-4308.**
- **Burke, Michael J.; Day, Russell R. (1986). "A cumulative study of the effectiveness of managerial training". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 71 (2): 232–245. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.71.2.232. ISSN 0021-9010.**
- **Birdi, Kamal; Allan, Catriona; Warr, Peter (1997). "Correlates and perceived outcomes of 4 types of employee development activity". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 82 (6): 845–857. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.82.6.845. ISSN 0021-9010.**
- **Marks, Michelle A.; Sabella, Mark J.; Burke, C. Shawn; Zaccaro, Stephen J. (2002). "The impact of cross-training on team effectiveness". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 87 (1): 3–13. doi:10.1037//0021-9010.87.1.3. ISSN 0021-9010.**
- **Rosemary Harrison (2005). *Learning and Development*. CIPD Publishing. p. 5. ISBN 9781843980506.**
- **Patrick J. Montana & Bruce H. Charnov (2000). *"Training and Development"*. *Management. Barron Educationally Series*. p. 225. ISBN 9780764112768.**

- **Thomas N. Garavan; Pat Costine & Noreen Heraty (1995). "Training and Development: Concepts, Attitudes, and Issues". *Training and Development in Ireland*. Cengage Learning EMEA. p. 1. ISBN 9781872853925.**
- **Derek Torrington; Laura Hall & Stephen Taylor (2004). *Human Resource Management*. Pearson Education. p. 363. ISBN 9780273687139.**
- **Bell, Bradford S.; Kozlowski, Steve W. J. (2008). "Active learning: Effects of core training design elements on self-regulatory processes, learning, and adaptability". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 93 (2): 296–316. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.296. ISSN 1939-1854.**
- **McDaniel, Mark A.; Schlager, Mark S. (June 1990). "Discovery Learning and Transfer of Problem-Solving Skills". *Cognition and Instruction*. 7 (2): 129–159. doi:10.1207/s1532690xci0702_3. ISSN 0737-0008.**
- **Keith, Nina; Frese, Michael (2005). "Self-Regulation in Error Management Training: Emotion Control and Metacognition as Mediators of Performance Effects". *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 90 (4): 677–691. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.90.4.677. ISSN 1939-1854.**
- **Wood, Robert; Kakebeeke, Bastiaan; Debowski, Shelda; Frese, Michael (April 2000). "The Impact of Enactive Exploration on Intrinsic Motivation, Strategy, and Performance in Electronic Search". *Applied Psychology*. 49 (2): 263–283. doi:10.1111/1464-0597.00014. ISSN 0269-994X.**
- **Roberts, Karlene H. (July 1990). "Managing High Reliability Organizations". *California Management Review*. 32 (4): 101–113. doi:10.2307/41166631. ISSN 0008-1256.**
- **Kozlowski, Steve W. J.; Bell, Bradford S. (2003-04-15), "Work Groups and Teams in Organizations", *Handbook of Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., ISBN 0471264385, retrieved 2019-03-01**

- *Improving patient safety through teamwork and team training*. Salas, Eduardo,, Frush, Karen,. New York. ISBN 9780199875542. OCLC 811142213.
- *Rebecca., Page-Tickell,. Learning and development (1st ed.). London. ISBN 9780749469894. OCLC 883248797.*
- *Brown, Judith (December 2002). "Training Needs Assessment: A Must for Developing an Effective Training Program". Public Personnel Management. 31 (4): 569–578. doi:10.1177/009102600203100412. ISSN 0091-0260.*
- *Tannenbaum, S I; Yukl, G (January 1992). "Training and Development in Work Organizations". Annual Review of Psychology. 43 (1): 399–441. doi:10.1146/annurev.ps.43.020192.002151.*
- *"13-1151.00 - Training and Development Specialists". www.onetonline.org. Retrieved 2019-03-01.*
- *Anthony Landale (1999). Gower Handbook of Training and Development. Gower Publishing, Ltd. ISBN 9780566081224.*
- *Diane Arthur (1995). "Training and Development". Managing Human Resources in Small & Mid-Sized Companies. AMACOM Div American Mgmt Assn. ISBN 9780814473115.*
- *Shawn A. Smith & Rebecca A. Mazin (2004). "Training and Development". The HR Answer Book. AMACOM Div American Mgmt Assn. ISBN 9780814472231.*
- *Cohn JM, Khurana R, Reeves L (October 2005). "Growing talent as if your business depended on it". Harvard Business Review. 83 (10): 62–70. PMID 16250625.*