EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
Training and development play an important role in the effectiveness of organisations and to the experiences of people in work. Training has implications for productivity, health and safety at work and personal development. All organisations employing people need to train and develop their staff. Most organisations are cognisant of this requirement and invest effort and other resources in training and development. Such investment can take the form of employing specialist training and development staff and paying salaries to staff undergoing training and development. Investment in training and development entails obtaining and maintaining space and equipment. It also means that operational personnel, employed in the organisation's main business functions, such as production, maintenance, sales, marketing and management support, must also direct their attention and effort from time to time towards supporting training development and delivery. This means they are required to give less attention to activities that are obviously more productive in terms of the organisation's main business. However, investment in training and development is generally regarded as good management practice to maintain appropriate expertise now and in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Training is the process for providing required skills to the employee for doing the job effectively, skiilfully and qualitatively. Training of employees is not continuous, but it is periodical and given in specified time. Generally training will be given by an expert or professional in related field or job.

Training is required at every stage of work and for every person at work. To keep oneself updated with the fast changing technologies, concepts, values and environment, training plays a vital role. Training programmes are also necessary in any organisation for improving the quality of work of the employees at all levels. It is also required when a person is moved from one assignment to another of a different nature. Taking into account this context, this unit aims at providing insight into the concept, need and methods of training, also areas of evaluation of training, retraining and dimensions of organisational learning. Training is a process of learning a sequence of programmed behavior. It is the application of knowledge & gives people an awareness of rules & procedures to guide their behavior. It helps in bringing about positive change in the knowledge, skills & attitudes of employees. Training is investment in getting more and better quality work from your talent.

Thus, training is a process that tries to improve skills or add to the existing level of knowledge so that the employee is better equipped to do his present job or to mould him to be fit for a higher job involving higher responsibilities. It bridges the gap between what the employee has & what the job demands.

Recurrent training is training that is scheduled at periodic intervals in order to keep employee skill abilities at a maximum level. Recurrent training often occurs in certain industries, like health care and aviation where human safety is involved. Recurrent training can be outsourced, provided by a visiting instructor, or performed by instructors from a corporate training department.

TRAINING DEFINED
The employee training and development process

Learning happens all the time whether or not you are fully aware of it. Are you a person who forgets to save your work on your computer on a regular basis? If a power failure occurs and you loose some data, do you learn anything? If you say to yourself, "I must remember to save more often", you have done some learning. This type of learning is called incidental learning; you have learned without really thinking about it or meaning to. On the other hand, intentional learning happens when you engage in activities with an attitude of "what can I learn from this?" Employee development requires you to approach everyday activity with the intention of learning from what is going on around you.

Who is responsible for employee training and development?
Employee training is the responsibility of the organization. Employee development is a shared responsibility of management and the individual employee. The responsibility of management is to provide the right resources and an environment that supports the growth and development needs of the individual employee.

For employee training and development to be successful, management should:

- Provide a well-crafted job description - it is the foundation upon which employee training and development activities are built
- Provide training required by employees to meet the basic competencies for the job. This is usually the supervisor's responsibility
- Develop a good understanding of the knowledge, skills and abilities that the organization will need in the future. What are the long-term goals of the organization and what are the implications of these goals for employee development? Share this knowledge with staff
- Look for learning opportunities in every-day activity. Was there an incident with a client that everyone could learn from? Is there a new government report with implications for the organization?
- Explain the employee development process and encourage staff to develop individual development plans
- Support staff when they identify learning activities that make them an asset to your organization both now and in the future

For employee development to be a success, the individual employee should

- Look for learning opportunities in everyday activities
- Identify goals and activities for development and prepare an individual development plan

The individual development planning process

An individual development plan is prepared by the employee in partnership with his or her supervisor. The plan is based upon the needs of the employee, the position and the organization. A good individual development plan will be interesting, achievable, practical and realistic. It is implemented with the approval of the employee's supervisor.

Step 1 - Self-assessment

The employee identifies his or her skills, abilities, values, strengths and weaknesses. To conduct a self-assessment:

- Use the many self-assessment tools found on the internet
- Compare your knowledge, skills and abilities to those identified in your job description
- Review performance assessments (performance assessments are often used as the starting place for developing individual development plans)
- Ask for feedback from your supervisor

Step 2 - Assess your current position and your work environment

The employee does an assessment of the requirement of his or her position at the present time and how the requirements of the position and/or organization may change. To conduct a position assessment:

- Identify the job requirements and performance expectations of your current position
- Identify the knowledge, skills and abilities that will enhance your ability to perform your current job
- Identify and assess the impact on your position of changes taking place in the work environment such as changes in clients, programs, services and technology.

Step 3 - Identify development activities

Identify the best ways to achieve your development goals.

- What methods will you use?
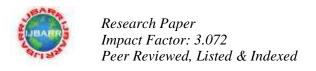- What resources will be required?

Step 4 - Put your plan in action

Once you have prepared a draft of your individual development plan:

- Review your plan with your supervisor for his or her input and approval
- Start working on your plan
- Evaluate your progress and make adjustments as necessary
- Celebrate your successes

Cost-effective methods for employee training and development

Employee training and development needs to suit your organization's context, job descriptions, employment contracts and collective agreements. When selecting employee training and development methods, it is important to remember the learning process. There are many ways to provide employees with learning opportunities, including:

On-the-job experience

Committees
1. Committees are part of every-day activity in any organization. They can also be effective learning tools, with the right focus
2. Committees made up of staff from different areas of your organization will enhance learning by allowing members to see issues from different perspectives
3. Set aside part of the committee's work time to discuss issues or trends that may impact on the organization in the future

Conferences and forums
1. Employees can attend conferences that focus on topics of relevance to their position and the organization
2. Upon their return, have the employee make a presentation to other staff as a way of enhancing the individual's learning experience and as a way of enhancing the organization. (Some conferences and forums may be considered off-the-job learning)

Critical Incident Notes
1. Day-to-day activities are always a source of learning opportunities
2. Select the best of these opportunities and write up critical incident notes for staff to learn from. Maybe a client complaint was handled effectively. Write a brief summary of the incident and identify the employee's actions that led to a successful resolution
3. Share the notes with the employee involved and with others as appropriate. If the situation was not handled well, again write a brief description of the situation identifying areas for improvement
4. Discuss the critical incident notes with the employee and identify the areas for the employee to improve upon and how you will assist the employee in doing this

Field trips
1. If your organization has staff at more than one site, provide employees with an opportunity to visit the other sites
2. This helps your employees gain a better understanding of the full range of programs and clients that your organization serves
3. Field trips to other organizations serving a similar clientele or with similar positions can also provide a valuable learning experience
4. Give staff going on field trips a list of questions to answer or a list of things to l5.Follow up the field trip by having staff explain what they have learned and how they can apply that learning to your organization. (Fieldtrips can also be an off-the-job activity)

Job
1. Tools can be given to employees to help them perform their jobs better. These tools include: manuals, checklists, phone lists, procedural guidelines, decision guidelines and so forth
2. Job aids are very useful for new employees, employees taking on new responsibilities and for activities that happen infrequently

Job expanding
1. Once an employee has mastered the requirements of his or her job and is performing satisfactorily, s/he may want greater challenges. Consider assigning new additional duties to the employee
2. Which duties to assign should be decided by the employee and her or his manager
3. Organizations with flat organizational structure are starting to give some managerial tasks to experienced staff as a way of keeping those staff challenged

Job rotation
1. On a temporary basis, employees can be given the opportunity to work in a different area of the organization
2. The employee keeps his or her existing job but fills in for or exchanges responsibilities with another employee

Job shadowing
1. 1.If an employee wants to learn what someone else in your organization does, your employee can follow that person and observe him or her at work
2. Usually the person doing the shadowing does not help with the work that is being done

Learning alerts
1. Newspaper articles, government announcements and reports can be used as learning alerts
2. Prepare a brief covering page which could include a short summary and one or two key questions for your employees to consider. Then circulate the item.
3. Include the item on the agenda of your next staff meeting for a brief discussion.

Peer-assisted learning
1. Two employees agree to help each other learn different tasks. Both employees should have an area of expertise that the co-worker can benefit from
2. The employees take turns helping their co-worker master the knowledge or skill that they have to share.

'Stretch' assignments
1. These assignments give the employee an opportunity to stretch past his or her current abilities. For example, a stretch assignment could require an employee to chair a meeting if the person has never done this before.
2. To ensure that chairing the meeting is a good learning experience, the manager should take time after the meeting to discuss with the employee what went well and what could have been improved

Special projects
Give an employee an opportunity to work on a project that is normally outside his or her job duties. For example, someone who has expressed an interest in events planning could be given the opportunity to work as part of a special events teamRelationships and feedback

Coaching
Coaching refers to a pre-arranged agreement between an experienced manager and his or her employee. The role of the coach is to demonstrate skills and to give the employee guidance, feedback, and reassurance while s/he practices the new skill

Mentoring
Mentoring is similar to coaching. Mentoring occurs when a senior, experienced manager provides guidance and advice to a junior employee.The two people involved have usually developed a working relationship based on shared interest and values

Networking
Some professional specialties have informal networks designed to meet the professional development need of the members. Members meet to discuss current issues and to share information and resources.

Performance appraisal
Performance appraisals are partly evaluation and partly developmental. In traditional performance appraisals the manager and employee evaluate the employee's strengths and weaknesses. In a 360-degree performance appraisal, feedback is gathered from supervisors, peers, staff, other colleagues and sometimes clients. The results of an appraisal can be used to identify areas for further development of the employee .

Classroom training
Courses, seminars, workshops
These are formal training opportunities that can be offered to employees either internally or externally. A trainer, facilitator and/or subject matter expert can be brought into your organization to provide the training session or an employee can be sent to one of these learning opportunities during work time

Off-the-job learning
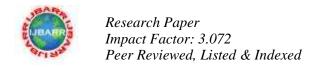### Courses offered by colleges or universities
Many colleges and universities offer courses relevant to employees in the non-profit sector. Employees may attend these classes on their own time or your organization may give them time off with pay to attend. Employees are often compensated by the organization for the cost of the course

Professional associations
Professional associations, like networks, provide employees an opportunity to stay current in their chosen field

Reading groups (also called learning circles or reading circles)
A group of staff meets to discuss books or articles relevant to the workplace/organization. Meetings usually take place outside normal working hours, such as noon hour or right after work

Self study

Self-paced independent reading, e-learning courses and volunteer work all provide learning opportunities. The employee engages in the learning activity by choice and at his or her desired pace of learning.

Information and course offered by the internet are called e-learning. A variety of learning opportunities can be accessed this way. The choices range from formal training offered by colleges and universities, to an informal walk-through of a given subject, to reading reports on a topic. E-learning can take place on or off the job.

CONCLUSION

Since training involves time, effort & money by an organization, so an organization should to be very careful while designing a training program. The objectives & need for training should be clearly identified & the method or type of training should be chosen according to the needs & objectives established. Once this is done accurately, an organization should take a feedback on the training program from the trainees in the form of a structured questionnaire so as to know whether the amount & time invested on training has turned into an investment or it was a total expenditure for an organization.