

Significance of Training for Human Resources Development

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Abstract: Human resource training is particularly important with respect to selecting, interviewing and hiring new employees. People who work in human resources must be able to find the right candidates for a wide spectrum of job openings. These individuals must know how to ask appropriate questions, evaluate a job candidate's responses and determine if the candidate gets past the screening process. For example, human resource managers must not ask questions about a person's age or religion. Asking the wrong question could elicit a potential law suit.

Keywords: Training, significance, human resources, development, employees

INTRODUCTION

One major area of the Human Resource Management function of particular relevance to the effective use of human resources is training and development. Employees are a crucial, but expensive resource. Most organisations have realised the importance of employee development in the transformation and maintenance of their business's viability and stability.

Tracey [1] asserts that in order for organisations to enjoy the benefits of training and development of employees they need to obtain the specialised skills needed to operate their businesses, to keep turnover and manpower costs down and to remain competitive.

Training and development of human resources can be traced back to the eighteenth century Swanson and Holton [2]. During that time shops operated by skilled employees produced almost everything from furniture clothing and household goods. Skilled workers would train the non-skilled workers. Mintzberg [3] pointed out that the trainees or apprentices learned

Principles of Training

Weldy [4] in her study cites [5] that furthermore; the learning organisation and transfer of training are considered to be the important competences for organisations to develop in order to succeed in today's turbulent marketplace. According to Weldy [4] the need to become learning organisation by focusing on continuous learning and use of knowledge to improve performance is considered a critical key to

success for organisation to facilitate individual, team, and organisational learning leading to continuous improvements and innovation in business operations. According to Leslie [6], there are four main requirements for learning to take place. The first is:

Motivation

Organisational motivation is composed of employees' understanding and integration of the company's mission, of the link between the company's culture history and its current strategy, of the alignment between the company's culture and its strategy, and the degree to which employees' compensation motivates them to implement the company's strategy [7]. Flippo [8] also came out with the fact that the more highly motivated the trainee, the more quickly and thoroughly a new skill or knowledge is learned. This means training must be related to something which the trainee desires. This could be money, job promotion, recognition and so on. Cole [5], states that employees who receive training have increased confidence and motivation. That is, training can achieve high morale for an organisation.

The Training Process

Training in an organisation involves systematic approach which generally follows a sequence of activities involving the establishment of a training policy, followed by training needs identification, training plans and programs design and implementation, evaluation and training feedback for further action. According to Leslie [6] in order to properly assess training there was a need to think through the purposes of training, process of training and the purpose of the evaluation.

Stages in Training and Development Processes

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Assessment of Training Needs	Designing of Training Programs	Implementation of Training Programs	Evaluations of training programs
Organisational Analysis	Instructional objectives	On the job methods	Reactions learning
Departmental Analysis	Learning principles		

Job Analysis	Teaching principles	Off the job methods	Job behaviour
Employee Analysis	Training Principles Content design	Characteristics of the instructor conducting the program	Organisation Ultimate Value

Fig-1: (Source: Subba Rao, “Essentials of Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations” Himalaya publication House, 3rd Revised & Enlarged Edition 2009, [13]

First stage – Determination of training needs

Training whether at strategic. Operational or contingent levels will not be effective unless an assessment of needs, design of training, delivery and evaluation of outcomes are put together in a coherent plan and strategy. The first step in managing training is to determine training needs and set objectives for these needs. According to Buhler [5] if an organisation has to justify its training expenditure, it must surely do so on the basis of organisational need.

Buckley and Leslie [9] stressed that the need to train and develop an employee may be identified in turnover rates, information gathered from exit interviews, informal discussions and performance appraisals. Hugh [7] adds on to this by stating that training needs are training requirements designed to improve work programmes this should help with professional development of the individual.

The need can also be determined by observing the job performance of work groups and survey job holders, supervisors and training committees. Any lapses in their efficiency and effectiveness help determine the training need. Individual need – Mintzberg [3] continues that employees training needs could be measured by the individual performances of the employees. He stated that he effectiveness and efficiency is measured against the required standards through interviews, observations, attitude surveys, or objective records of their performance.

Armstrong [10] argues that training needs analysis should cover problems to be solved, as well as future demands based on whether the organisation must acquire new skills or knowledge or must improve existing competencies.

This was also affirmed by Armstrong [10] they expressly indicated that the success of a training programme depends more on the organisation’s ability to identify training needs and the care with which it prepares the program for training to be successful.

Determining training objectives and training plan

Training objectives tell the trainee about what is expected out of him at the end of the training program. Training objectives are of great significance from a number of stakeholder perspectives; trainer, trainee, designer, evaluator [11]. After these analyses have been done, it is easier for the training objectives to

be established and also to know what the learners must be able to do after the training program. According to Weldy [4] it is stated that “it is important that a sound basis is established for other associated elements of Human Resource Management practice such as performance management (appraisal), reward management (motivation) combined with training and development”. What this means is that training and development itself cannot help in total employee development without the complement of employee appraisal and motivation.

Hugh [7] commended that training and development initiatives fail if there are no clear objectives and clearly defined outcomes. One of the things to consider in designing a training program is what the program is to accomplish, that is the objectives. In other words, a training program cannot be designed until what that program is to accomplish is known. It is imperative for organisations to realise that in designing a training program it is equally important to consider what the trainees should know or be able to do after the training is complete. Training objectives should however be attainable and measurable. A training program is successful if the objectives are achieved. Swanson and Holton [2] outline the process of planning training as:

Develop a training plan

Once attainable and measurable training objectives have been considered, a training plan can be developed. This planning tool provides a step by step written document for others to follow. A training plan can be either a complete training program or just one task. The training plan details the course content, resources required method of training, who should do the training and who should be trained.

Design a training lesson

Once a training plan outlining general program requirements has been developed, the organisation will need to concentrate on specific segments of that plan. This is done with the use of a training lesson. Generally, there is one training lesson for each training session. This means if ten sessions are planned, ten training lessons must be developed. A training lesson serves the following purposes:

- It provides a content outline for the lesson
- It suggests activities / specific instructions which will help to make training easier

- It defines suggested time to be spent on each segment within the segment

Select the trainer(s)

Who is going to train? Who is a good communicator and has the necessary knowledge / skill to train? What should the trainer do to get the trainees ready for the training? These are the questions to be addressed when selecting a trainer.

- **Prepare the trainer(s)**

Training is one of the most important things any organisation does. As a result, the personnel responsible for training must be given adequate training themselves, as well as equip them with the necessary logistics. Remotely linked to this, trainees must also be concerned and prepared for the learning experience.

Presenting the training

According to Shora [12] the success of this stage of training ensures success of the training program as all the previous stages are integrated in this stage. The trainer must choose appropriate training methods. Karthic [11] proposes the following as criteria for selecting training methods (course objectives, equipment, time and level of understanding).

- **Kinds of training**

There are various types of training that an organisation may adopt depending on the main objectives of training and these are outlined below:

- **Refresher training**

Here the employees are made to attend refresher courses at specific training institutions such as Institute of Management Studies, Polytechnics and the like, sponsored by the employer. This exposes the employee to modern trends in his field business. That is, it involves updating skills to meet the job requirements of employees. According to Shora [12] organisations should also realise that too much refresher training is wasteful, its periodic application is advised.

- **Orientation training**

This is mainly concerned with acquainting new employees with the organisation. This training is aimed at getting all new entrants familiarise with the organisation's goals, structure, culture, work standards and other conditions of employment.

- **Career or development training**

This involved developing and improving the knowledge, skills and attitude base so that he employee can ultimately perform duties or greater responsibility than those of the current job [6]. This type of training aims at preparing employees for the future. This enables employees to take up higher responsibilities.

- **Job training**

This involves teaching the employee how to perform the job for which he or she was hired or employed for. This is to help employees to acquire the necessary skills and experience for specific jobs.

Evaluation of Training

Upon checking the effectiveness of training, Buhler [5] stated that the training program is reviewed during and after its completion by the training officer, the line manager, and if necessary, by the trainees themselves. Evaluation differs from validation in that it attempts to measure the overall cost benefit of the training program and not just the achievement of its laid down objectives. Mintzberg [3] advocated that until control measures are taken to correct any deficiencies after the training, evaluation has not been completed and thereby ineffective. Evaluation is an integral feature of training, but it could be difficult because it is often hard to set measurable objectives.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

There are several methods for evaluating training. Swanson and Hulton [2] have cited some of these methods as follows:

- Questionnaires (feedback forms): this is a common way of eliciting trainee responses to courses and programs
- Tests or examinations: these are common on formal courses, especially those that result in certification for instance a diploma in word processing skills. End of course tests can also be employed after non-certificate short courses to check the progress of trainees.
- Projects are initially seen as learning methods but they can also provide valuable information to instructor about the participants' understanding of subject matter.
- Interviews of trainees after the course or instruction period are another technique for gathering information directly from the learners. These can be formal or informal, individual or group, face to face or by telephone.
- Structured exercises and case studies also provide opportunities to apply learned skills and techniques under the observation of tutors and evaluators.

CONCLUSION

Human resource training is also important for teaching human resource employees about various safety issues. Some company employees, especially those in factories, have to lift objects repetitively or work with hazardous substances like chemicals. The human resource manager and other department personnel must learn the various safety procedures for their industry, based on guidelines set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Companies can be fined or even sued for not following the proper safety procedures.

Human resource professionals must also be trained to resolve employee conflict. In most disputes, perceptions tend to create problems. The human resource manager must know how to discuss issues privately with individuals and come to a resolution. Otherwise, employee conflicts will cause disruption and even hamper productivity.

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