



UNIT-5

Training and Development

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the importance and value of quality training and development
- ✓ Discuss the different types of training that can be provided in the workplace
- ✓ Evaluate the affordability and cost effectiveness of training methods

Unit 5

Training and Development

The Importance of Training and Development in the Workplace

Employees must have the right skills and competencies for the job if they are to contribute to the company's success. Employers will try to ensure that new employees have the skills they require as soon as possible when recruiting new employees. However, this will not always be possible, and business needs will change over time, requiring even the most skilled and qualified employee to develop new skills or upgrade existing ones in order to meet new challenges and take on new responsibilities.

Training, learning, and development activities can help employees improve their performance, strengthen their skills, and be more motivated. Employee development needs should be identified proactively through regular performance reviews. Once the needs have been identified, a plan should be put in place to ensure that they are met and that any development activities actually produce results that can be measured against business goals. All employees should have access to development opportunities, according to the plan.

It makes sense to follow a structured approach to ensure that time and money spent on development activities is a good investment. The steps for providing effective employee development are outlined below. Following these steps can help ensure that training and development plans produce the results that the company requires to meet its business goals and objectives.

1. Determine Your Needs

Your employees' learning requirements can be classified as one or more of the following:

- Company;
- Team;
- Individual.

At the company level, you may determine that all employees require specific health and safety training in order to comply with legislative requirements, as well as appropriate equal opportunity and anti-harassment training.

At the team level, a group may need to learn or understand how to follow a procedure or process, such as credit control.

An employee's supervisory skills may need to be improved on a personal level. A link to the company's business objectives and priorities should be the starting point for all identified needs.

It's useful to think about both the present and the future when determining whether or not training and development is required.

The Present

Consider whether there are any performance gaps and whether providing training and development opportunities is the most effective way to address them. Performance evaluations, employee surveys, and company evaluations can all provide valuable insight into the current situation.

Identify and define the problem(s), focusing on past performance by looking at things like:

- High standards of excellence;
- The level of productivity;
- The number of accidents;
- Absenteeism;
- Customer grievances
- Employee turnover is a problem.

The Future

Consider the company's long-term goals and how they affect training and development.

Concentrate on:

- Business strategy: Do changes in business strategy necessitate the acquisition of new skills?
- Manpower and succession planning: Will identified successors require training and development in order to be competent in their new role?
- Is the company planning any new technology, products, or services that will necessitate training and development?
- New legislation (e.g., Health and Safety or legal requirements): Is the company likely to be impacted by changes in mandatory training legislation?

2. Make a strategy for meeting the identified needs.

We must first determine whether the need can be met with a learning and development solution (resources or systems may be required), then set clear learning objectives and

select the most effective learning solution. It's also crucial that all employees have equal access to learning and development opportunities.

Be very specific in defining requirements when completing the plan, whether at the company, team, or individual level, by considering the following issues.

Method/Solution

It's all too easy to fall into the trap of relying on standard solutions, particularly when it comes to training courses. Employees can learn new skills and knowledge in a variety of ways, and training courses may not be the most effective solution. Be aware of the various development methods available, as well as the associated costs and benefits.

While the natural tendency is to think of courses, whether open or tailored, other development methods can sometimes be more effective and have lower direct costs. In order to respond to identified needs, some or all of the following options could be considered.

- Observing a colleague at work;
- Guidance from a senior manager or a peer;
- Guidance from a manager or supervisor;
- Internal sessions in which employees can share their knowledge and experience;
- Reassignment to another department within the company;
- If possible, secondments to other organisations;
- Shifts in employment;
- Reading a variety of materials;
- Training programmes, including online programmes;
- Sharing resources and information, such as books, articles, and useful websites;
- Participation in difficult projects;
- Going to meetings;
- Visits to other businesses.

Responsibility for Implementation

Ascertain that everyone understands who is in charge of putting the solution into action.

Training Courses - Target Audiences

If a training course is the solution, be clear about who requires the training. The benefits should outweigh the costs, which include hidden costs such as team members' time, productivity loss, and the consequences, such as cover arrangements. As a result, be very specific and pick the people who will be trained very carefully. Decisions about who will

receive training should be made on a level playing field and should not be based on any prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Business Outcome

Determine the goals of the development activity for individuals, teams, and the company. Concentrate as much as possible on measurable outcomes.

Costs and Resources required

Calculate the costs of providing training and development activities against the budget, using rough estimates at this point. In light of the costs identified, it may be necessary to change the preferred delivery method.

Setting a deadline will help you stay on track and ensure delivery.

3. Put the Solution into Action

Line managers' responsibilities

Line managers should be involved in helping to define the most appropriate development method, providing support and encouragement, measuring and managing performance, and evaluating the outcomes in terms of performance improvement and lessons learned for the future when considering how best to implement the planned solution.

Training providers

If the solution is a training course, it's critical to make sure that the training is an effective way of meeting the identified needs. If the course is open to anyone from any company, double-check the provider's credentials and the course objectives before sending any employees.

If a large number of employees require training on a specific topic that no one in the company can provide, it may be worthwhile to hire an outside training provider who can deliver training on-site or off-site.

There are numerous training service providers, ranging from one-time training consultants to training organisations to colleges and universities, and it is critical to select the one that best suits your company's needs.

There is no simple formula for selecting providers, but here are some guidelines:

- Have them define the outputs/outcomes of the training you want them to provide, i.e. what people will know and be able to do after the training;
- Request references from other organisations where they have provided training;

- State whether they have recognised professional and/or national qualifications, if applicable;
- Speak with other businesses who have used the service provider.

It's important to keep in mind that any intervention aimed at improving an employee's skill or knowledge is only the beginning. There is a distinction to be made between learning and knowing, as well as between knowing and doing. The ultimate goal is to improve the employee's job performance, so it's critical to follow through and ensure that any learning is put into practise.

This is where the line manager's role is crucial, though part of it will be to encourage the employee to take ownership of what they've learned and put it into practise as soon as possible.

4. Assess the Development Process

An organization's ability to assess how effective its training and development efforts have been is critical. Consider the following scenario:

Has the investment in time, money, and resources in training resulted in the required performance improvement at the company, team, and individual levels?

- How cost-effective were the methods used?
- How effective were the providers (if applicable)?
- What can be learned from this experience to improve future training activities?
- Were the right people involved in the development activity's support? Was there, for example, effective management support?

You may want to gain a better understanding of the training's value, whether quantitative or qualitative (or indeed both). Sometimes it will be necessary to show a measurable financial benefit or impact on business results, while other times it will be sufficient to show that the trainees benefited and that attitudes and behaviours changed.

In either case, it's critical to make sure the evaluation process isn't so time-consuming that it becomes a goal in and of itself. The key to successful evaluation is to keep things as simple as possible.

Consider whether it is worth investing the time and effort to try to pin down evidence of the benefits/outcomes at every level when planning a training programme or intervention. The type of intervention, the intended objectives/outcomes, and the people involved should all factor into your decision.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Training & Development For Dummies 1st Edition by Elaine Biech*
- ✓ *Telling Ain't Training: Updated, Expanded, Enhanced, by Harold D. Stolovitch , Erica J. Keeps*
- ✓ *Train the Trainer: The Art of Training Delivery July 14, 2016, by Skills Converged*