



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Effective Training Can Be a Continuing Learning Experience

A training program can deliver its value only when employees are motivated to learn novel concepts. Essentially, the quality and diversity of training programs motivate employees to learn. The rationale behind training could vary from training new recruits to enhancing employee skills. Whatever the reason, a training program should be comprehensive, constant and reliable.

A training program comprised of traditional induction training and continuing education programs would be effective and add value to the business. Induction training outlines performance expectations and skills required. It also gives a better understanding of the job and its relevance to the organization. New recruits should be given substantial knowledge of the organization to enhance their performance. Continuing education should be an ongoing responsibility of managers so that employees can keep current on procedures, policies and the technology.

Training new recruits

Training starts with the development of a manual. The manual clarifies the technical and practical skills required for performing a particular job. Department managers should be responsible for updating the revised procedures and policies. The trainees must be kept in mind when designing the manual. In addition, on-the-job training should be given so that employees can apply the concepts learned.

Continuing education

Continuing education has a major role in enhancing employee skills. Behavioral scientists note that employees retain only 40 percent of what is learned in initial training sessions. Hence, a constant effort is required to refresh employee knowledge. The program could be either formal or informal.

Devising a continuing education program

The desired training outcomes have to be decided prior to designing a training program. The program could be aimed at enhancing employee skills or assisting them in individual development. Employees in an organization that wants to enhance employee skills will perform better. These organizations require employees who think out of the box and add value to the organization.

Therefore, the continuing education program should be so designed to answer the organizational needs. Such training will give employees an opportunity to develop management skills combined with a clear picture of their job and its relevance to the organizational goals.

Designing effective training programs



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- A recent Wall Street Journal survey revealed that most employees understand simple concepts. A training program should follow the KISS principle (Keep It Simple and Sweet)
- A training session should aim to bring employees from various departments together. This ensures knowledge sharing across the organization.
- From each department, one employee must be identified and trained to act as a trainer. This has a dual advantage. Whenever a new procedure is introduced in the organization, the identified employee can be trained to train others. Moreover, he or she acts as a local resource in the department.

The best training program

A program that works for one organization will not necessarily work for another organization. Hence, the best type of training program for a particular department is one that addresses its needs. Generally, training needs are identified through a random sampling of performance appraisal reports and identifying areas that need development. Training needs are also identified through training needs assessment programs wherein employees give their training requirements. For the best results, the assessment should be done anonymously. This enables employees to be more open and honest.

To be effective, a training program should concentrate only just one concept. However, if many concepts need to be covered, there could be two or more workshops. Ideally, a training session should be completed within 2 hours. Long sessions are monotonous and defeat the purpose. Also, the session should consist of a few interactive activities that involve participants.

Is a training session required?

Effective training may not always be the best approach. If the concept is basic and simple, then it is better to create a training alert. Communication of this kind acts as an effective tool to strengthen basic job concepts. Training alerts should be written in a bulleted format coupled with some flashy graphics. Eye-catching colors should be used.

Learning - A continuous process

Here are some tips for making training attractive:

- Couple learning with fun. Design some games that interest employees. For instance, a department manager can ask employees some work-related questions. They learn more in a fun situation than in a forced learning environment.
- A training program should interest the employees.
- A blended approach should be followed when devising a training program. While management gives the training sessions and alerts, employees should be motivated to look for ideas that might be useful for the department.
- Finally, it is essential to make learning a delightful experience for the employees. Employees will be eager to absorb knowledge when the concepts are fresh and



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presented in a lively and exciting manner. Adding some spice to current training methods can inspire employee learning.