

## **Training and Development Practices – An Organisational View**

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### **Introduction**

Training and development of employees is critical in organisations in this era of competition due to the fact that organizations need to survive, grow and develop. Consequentially, training and development has become an issue of strategic importance. Although many scholars have conducted research on training and development practices in organisations in both developing and developed economies, it is worth mentioning that most of the research has concentrated on the benefits of training in general. There is however, limited focus on evaluation of training and development practices in organizations and yet, training and development of employees is critical for the survival and growth of any entity.

### **Role of Training and Development**

Formal training programmes are an effective way of directly transferring the organisational goals and values to a whole group of people simultaneously (Shen, 2006; Harzing, 2004). Appropriate training can develop managers at all levels including the knowledge and skills required to gain competency in order to manage change in organisation in any business environment (Stewart, 1996; John, 2000). In multinational companies, training can provide an important impetus to achieve shared values and facilitates network building between headquarters and subsidiaries. Hellriegel et al,(2001) states that training of employees in organisation increases higher productivity through better job performance, more efficient use of human resources, goals and objectives more effectively met, reduced cost due to less labour turnover, reduced errors, reduced accidents and absenteeism, more capable, and mobile workforce and retention of the existing staff. Similarly, Echard and Berge (2008) stated that effective training techniques could produce significant business results especially in customer service, product development, and capability in obtaining new skill set. This linkage of training to business strategy has given many businesses the needed competitive edge in today's global market. Echard and Berge, (2008) also provides that effective training and development improves the culture of quality in business, workforce, and ultimately the final product (Huang, 2001)...an educated and well-trained workforce is considered to be essential to the maintenance of a business firm's competitive advantage in a global economy. Human Resource Management (HRM) practices of training and development enhance employee skills, knowledge and ability which in turn enhance task performance of individual and in the long run increases the organisational productivity (Huselid 1995). However, Wood, (1999) argues that HRM practices are universal across organisations or whether the effectiveness of human resources management is contingent upon factors while (Asgarkhani, 2003) argues that the success of training is contingent upon the effectiveness of performance planning and measuring. The fact of the matter is that the three fundamental aspects surrounding this approach are process classification, selection of proposed methods, and delivery. We could go further and consider Shandratilek (1997) and Dessler 2005 who emphasized that the point that the availability of high quality employees, places the organisation in a competitive advantage over others even within the same industry and that the inadequacy of expertise is a major constraint as such organisation take major concrete measures

to organize training programmes. The resultant effects of properly executed training programmes are reflected through the performance management process.

This is the integrated process employers use to make sure employees are moving towards organisational goals. Taking performance management to approach training means that the training effort must make sense in terms of what the company makes each employee to contribute to achieving the company's goals. Training does bear fruitful results not only to the organisation but also to the employees. Training is an opportunity for promotion and self-improvement, improved job satisfaction through better job performance, a chance to learn new things and there is greater ability to adapt and cope with changes (John et al, 2002). This is supported by (Bhalla, 2006) who argued that the objective of any organisation training program is to train their employees to meet the needs of the optimum profit potential. In addition, Hower (2008) pointed out that the purpose of training is to empower associates with the skills necessary to make decisions and accomplish their daily tasks and skills that help them give extraordinary service to customers. In the business of customer service, training is essential to the impact made on the customers. Customer service and problem resolution are trainable skills and will determine whether the customer impact is positive or negative. It also prepares employees for their next career move. This move may be in the organisations or in life in general. Lynton and Pareek (2000) argue that to enhance individual motivation for training, the employees should be part and parcel of what it communicates to applicants through all its contacts with them. This would make applicants feel confident that the training foci are clear and shows perceptive concern for people taking part in the program. Furthermore, (Guerrero and Sire 2001) supported Lynton and Parreek's view but they explained motivation with regard to teachers. They found that systematic observations by a colleague of a candidate's behavior in a session and sharing indications of his effectiveness with him subsequently greatly enhanced the candidate's motivation for training. Moreover, (Bushart and Fretwell, 1994) emphasizes that training employees leads to an increment in employees' satisfaction, updating of skills and an increased commitment to the organisation.

### **Training Evaluation**

Based on the management axiom 'nothing will improve until it is measured', the training programmes have to be assessed in terms of the programme itself, of the behaviour outside the training environment and whether or not it has desired effect. In other words, training has to be assessed in terms of training transfer (Wickramasinghe, 2006). Evaluation determines the effect of training at individual, departmental and organisational levels (Willis, 1998). However, several approaches are used to evaluate training programme in organisation but there is no one best way of evaluation, just as there is no best way to train employees. Training results can be best identified mainly on the organisational performance which is triggered by employee performance. This involves the comparison of statistical indicators of performance before and after training took place. The measurement indicators include sales volume and revenue, levels of customer complaints, quality and quantity variables in cost reduction, productivity ratios, cost ratios in terms of stock level and debt collection periods and industrial relations (labour turnover rates; absenteeism, grievances) (Thomas, 1992). Moreover, effective training can be gauged by the capacity of trainees to apply knowledge, skills and abilities gained in training to their work environment and maintain them over time in their job contexts (Pidd, 2004; Pearsons, 2002). However, (Berman et al, 2001) argues that training effectiveness is constrained because of inadequate transfer of learning from training environment to workplace environment. (Berman et al, 2001) also critic the current belief that effective training is necessary, the argument is that training is not sufficient in improving performance. This line of argument emphasizes that no discussion of the effectiveness of training would be complete without considering the role of human resource utilization.

However, most training attempts to improve the organisation and process performance by addressing only one level (the job level) and only one dimension of the job level (skills and knowledge). As a result, the training has no significant long-term training money is wasted, and trainees are frustrated and confused. If inappropriate training method is used then the results will not play any role into the business organisation, which will be waste of resources. (Rolf, 2002) outlines some of the consequences of inadequate training as poor planning skills and decision-making, which in turn will impair the organisation's profit and success. Other symptoms of inadequate training include overtime, high labour turnover and poor employee morale.

### **Conclusion**

Training and development of employees do exist in organisations. In addition, an organisation uses various methods, for instance job rotation is used to train employees in this era of globalization. Similarly, various methods are used to evaluate the training programs. The findings of the research showed that training of employees has a positive effect to the individuals and the organisation at large. For instance, training of employees improves communication in an organisation, transfer of skills and knowledge, improves job performance, encourages teamwork, boosts the morale of employees and leads to job satisfaction. Various approaches are used to evaluate the training programs but the commonly used is the reduction of accidents in the workplace and decline in material wastage. There are many methods used to train and develop employees but the research showed that mostly used method is job rotation (on-the-job) and role-playing (on the job). The two methods were found to be the widely and mostly used by the organisations under investigation. However, (Schuler and Jackson, 1996) suggested that decisions concerning delivery sites and methods might be constrained by the type of learning that is to occur, as well as the considerations of costs and time. The implication of this study is that it will broaden the literature of training and development in organisations. Furthermore, this study would spur debate among managers to come up with various strategies to ensure that employees are trained and developed to be strategically positioned cope with any changes in the business environment. Finally, the study will provoke various managers to understand the need for training and development of employees in their organisations.

### **References**

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