



Current practices in training methods- An overview

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Abstract

No single formula defines the form of training to be used for a given purpose. The skill needs of the employees, the size and the traditions of the company, the abilities of trainers, the time and money available for training and the experience of the company about the training activities that have been carried on in the past, all will affect the type of training that will be most successful in a given situation. Training effectiveness depends not only on what happens during training, but also on what happens before the actual training and what happens after the training has formally ended.

Keywords: E-learning, Indian organisation, off-the job training, on-the-Job training, training methods

Introduction

If you wish to plan for a year, sow seeds; if you wish to plan for ten years, plant trees; if you wish to plan for a life time, develop men." This is a Chinese saying which highlights the importance of training men. Employee training the process whereby people learn the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed in order to perform their job effectively. big industrial organisation can long ignore the training and development needs of its employees without seriously inhibiting its performance. Even the most careful selection does not eliminate the need for training, since people are not moulded to specifications and rarely meet the demands of their jobs adequately.

Training, Education and Development

The terms 'training', 'education' and 'development' are closely related but their meanings have important distinctions. Training is the act of increasing the knowledge and skill of an employee for doing a particular job. It is concerned with imparting specific skills for particular purposes. On the other hand, education is concerned with increasing general knowledge and understanding of the employee's total Thus, when we teach a person how to assemble two objects and tighten a nut, we are training him to do a specific job but when we are giving him a course in engineering, it is education. The distinction between the two is like the distinction between pure and applied sciences. more examples are given below to make this distinction clear:

- A course in management or human relations is education because no one specific technique or procedure is taught but fundamentals to all business situations are emphasised.
- A football coach who knows the theory of the game but who is utterly useless as a player is educated but not trained.
- A clerk who can compute quickly and accurately the loan value of any insurance policy is no doubt trained but not necessarily educated also for he may be unaware of the actuarial principles upon which the values are determined.

- A mechanic who repairs an automobile better than an engineer is only trained and not educated for he does not know engineering education and principles.

The content and scope of training is always specific, narrow and job-related; the content and scope of education is always broad and general. Training is always applied and practical; education is usually pure and theoretical. Training is mostly of short duration; education is of long duration.. Training gives quick and apparent results: the results of education are not so quick and apparent.

The term 'development' is a broad one. It includes both training and education. Its aim is to improve the overall personality of an individual. The term is mostly used in the context of executives only. Following are some important distinctions between training and development:

- Training is meant for operatives. Development is meant for executives.
- The aim of training is to develop some specific skill in an individual. The aim of development is to develop the total personality of the individual.
- Training is a one-shot affair. Development is a continuous process.
- The initiative for training comes from management. The initiative for development comes from the individual himself. To put it differently training is mostly the result of some outside motivation. Development is the result of internal motivation.
- Training is mostly a preparation to meet an individual's present It can thus be seen as a reactive process. Development is a preparation to meet his future needs. It is thus largely a proactive process.

Selection of methods and techniques depend upon the knowledge and skill of trainer, his qualification, capacities and potential. Selection of methods of training is vital to ensure active participation of trainees in the programmes and learning process. The training techniques can be classified into:

1. On-the-job training,
2. Off-the-job training and
3. E-learning.

On-The-Job Training**Job Coaching/Training**

It is an accepted practice with great success in managerial training and development. Its significance lies in "How to do on the job under guidance and supervision. The necessary requisites of on-the-job coaching are: Delegation; Counselling and Personal example setting.

Every employee, from top to bottom, gets some on-the-job training. Coaching or understudy is known as internship, which is applied for managerial personnel, and it is one of the methods of on-the-job training. The employees are trained under the immediate superior for a certain period, and therefore, assigned suitable work. It is highly economical, because the person is learning while doing the work. The trainees learn the rules, policies, and procedures during the training period.

Conference Leadership

It is basically used for managerial level people and is commonly used for the development of problem solving and decision making skills. It is also used for development of inter-personal relationship. Conference leadership method training is a type of on-the-job training, which involves a participation of 10 to 20 trainees. The leader or the senior most person introduces a subject for discussion and the participants express their viewpoints and ideas. The problems are discussed and the participants suggest solutions. The concept of this training is "to teach each other and learn together." This training can be more effective if the leader gives more opportunities to the group members. This method is best suitable for analyzing a problem with different perceptions and for the development of conceptual skills.

Critical Incident Method

This method aims at identification of a particular incident in workplace, or business, discussion of the incident with trainee for the purpose of determining appropriate training. The instructor explains the incident, followed by five steps:

1. Studying the incident in detail,
2. Getting the detailed information,
3. Identifying the issues or problem,
4. Decision making and
5. Reviewing.

Committee Assignment

Many companies use committees as a method for training. Committees are used as a training device under special conditions. The participation of managerial and other personnel in the committee is meant to take important decisions. This method also adds to their knowledge of other functions, relating to co-ordination and integration.

Job Rotation

Job rotation is designed for various operations of the organization, which provides a depth and breadth of work experience and it can be applied to all levels of employees. Job rotation plan should be planned carefully. Job rotation is most commonly used as a training device with the objective of broadening the outlook and background of the trainee. Job rotation is mostly suited for the young executives who join as management trainees in production and then shifted purchase, sales, personnel etc. With various exposures, he/she can handle different functions properly.

Job Instruction Training (JIT)

This method is for junior management level to operate the function and is training - a basic training regarding his/her function/work. The first step is to train the trainee on the importance of task, his role and responsibility towards the work. Second step is 'presenting instruction by way of giving information."

Vestibule Training

This technique enables the trainee to concentrate on learning the new skill rather than on performing an actual job. This training is in the form of lecture case studies, discussion, etc. In this method, the trainee can practice the work without fear of immediate boss and with the help of the well-trained trainer.

Off-The-Job Training

Off-the-job training is training away from the workplace. The trainees are deputed by the organization for attending the training. The main objective of the off-the-job training is to take away the employee from the workplace to have an interaction with people in the similar position and to change his attitude by way of handling the problems in different

E-Learning

E-learning is a new and emerging concept, and it is accepted as an integral of E-learning to using some form of technology to deliver training and educational materials. It can substitute training and education, approach/method in case of It imparting knowledge skills for specific structured event.

Previously India, E-learning was limited to CD-ROM's, which is used for the customer service. It is tested and is most highly cost effective. Many courses, which hardly need any human interaction, can be made on-line and deployed on the corporate intranet. For example, selling skills can be made into a highly interactive web-based training module with both pre and post assessment, where the grades go into a central database for easy administration of the agents performance. Now-a-days, E-learning has gained more popularity, acceptance and relevance in post COVID era.

Summing-up

Only in a few big industrial organisations in our country a variety of training programmes are conducted in terms of specific organisational needs and the peculiarities of the industry concerned. Employees' needs of training in these organisations are determined through supervisory recommendations, analysis of job performance, analysis of job requirements and employees themselves suggest the type of training needed by them. Small organisations, using simple technology, generally rely on entrepreneurial abilities rather than trained managerial talents.

In the majority of Indian organisations, training and development have remained a neglected and secondary function. Some organisations strongly hold the traditional view that managers are born and not made. These organisations just do not believe in training. There are also some organisations which think that the cost of training is high and not worth it. These organisations think that it is better to get an executive move to them after he has been trained in another organisation (called "executive pinching") rather than spend on the training of their own employees. In

some organisations training facilities offered by various Management Institutes are not availed of because of lack of communication or sufficient contact between them and these institutes.

In many organisations training is regarded as a non-essential or peripheral activity rather than a central one. It is more decorative than functional. organisations start a training department in order to look modern. In some other organisations training activity is assigned to the personnel department. The low status accorded to this activity is also revealed from the fact that the training departments of several organisations are headed by inconvenient or unwanted employees rather than employees of outstanding merit.

Many organisations do not have a separate budget for training and development and in no case the provision comes up to even one per cent of the sales turnover of a company.

In the majority of Indian organisations the procedure to select people for various training programmes is irrational. Not infrequently those persons are sent for training who either find themselves at a loose end (no suitable slot being readily available for their posting) or want a holiday at company expense.

In many organisations the fact of a particular employee having attended a specialised training course is not taken into account at the time of his subsequent postings. In these organisations, one can come across hundreds of examples of square pegs sitting in round holes.

Many organisations treat the training of their employees as a single shot operation. They do not look upon training as an integral part of their employee's career plans. Career planning, in fact, is conspicuous by absence in most organisations. Appointments to even most crucial posts are made more on the basis of pulls and personal preferences than on the basis of employee's specialised experience or training.

Talking specifically about management development programmes one finds that there is very little commitment to these programmes from the top. Sharu S. Rangnekar rightly observes that the basic problem of these programmes is that we have an untrainable top, a confused middle and a frustrated bottom. Everybody knows that the top management in India, whether in administration or in industry, is untrainable. One can see the top only at the inauguration or the valediction. For the remaining part of a development programme these 'omniscient' people are conspicuous by their absence. These people consider development programmes a luxury when the going is good and when the going gets tough they make these programmes the first victim of their economic drive.

Managers at the middle level are the most confused lot so far as these programmes are concerned. They find that the ideas of participative management, delegation, innovation, etc., which they learn during such programmes are mostly irrelevant and of marginal value because there does not exist in Indian industry that professional environment in which these ideas may be practised.

Managers at the bottom are the most frustrated lot because these people have to content themselves occasional development programmes of general orientation nature. To achieve economy these programmes are carried out internally in the company on a part-time basis using amateur faculty consisting of company executives.

So far as the designing of the course contents of management development programmes run by the various Institutes in our country is concerned there is almost a total lack of rapport between the business houses and the Institutes. No training institute in the country has ever made serious attempt go to industry/business to know their training needs and problems. The needs are assumed by the institutes on the basis of some which the industry tries to fit among its executives. Specifically tailored programmes are rare to find.

There is great dearth of professional trainers in India. The Indian Institutes of Management and the Indian Society for Training and Development cannot meet all our needs. With the exponential growth of technology the rate of obsolescence is also accelerating sharply. Many management experts feel that in the twenty-first century professionals would have to relearn their trade over during their life time if they have to remain in the race. This would need a very large number of highly professionalised trainers in our country.

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