Chapter 7 – Training

This chapter describes the role of training and its contribution to the competiveness of the organization. While the content, as with Chapter 6, may be some of the more recognizable content to students, and thus presents the opportunity to leverage such experiences, the idea of strategic training (LO 7-1) may not be as readily recognized. Table 7.1 may help illustrate this point.

Once the overview of training and its role within organizations is achieved, students may then be directed to Figure 7.2 for an outline of the training process. This figure aligns well with LO7-3 through LO7-8 and can help illustrate the steps necessary to effectively align and deploy training initiatives. Upon discussing this process in its entirety, the differing roles of the manager (LO7-2) may be introduced and reinforced.

The chapter closes by discussing specific training considerations around cross-cultural preparation (LO7-9) and diversity (LO7-10). Both topics may be integrated with the above as necessary competencies for strategic success.

Learning Objectives

LO 7-1: Discuss how training, informal learning, and knowledge management can contribute to continuous learning and companies’ business strategy.

LO 7-2: Explain the role of the manager in identifying training needs and supporting training on the job.

LO 7-3: Conduct a needs assessment.

LO 7-4: Evaluate employees’ readiness for training.

LO 7-5: Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of presentation, hands-on, and group training methods.

LO 7-6: Explain the potential advantages of e-learning for training.

LO 7-7: Design a training session to maximize learning.

LO 7-8: Choose appropriate evaluation design and training outcomes based on the training objectives and evaluation purpose.

LO 7-9: Design a cross-cultural preparation program.

LO 7-10: Develop a program for effectively managing diversity.

Society for Human Resource Management *Body of Competency & Knowledge*

This chapter contains content which may be identified within the following content areas in HR Expertise:

* Employee Engagement & Retention
* Learning & Development
* Organizational Effectiveness & Design
* Workforce Management
* Technology Management
* HR in the Global Context
* Diversity & Inclusion

Human Resource Certification Institute’s *A Guide to the HR Body of Knowledge*

This chapter contains content which may be identified within the following content areas:

* Business Management & Strategy
* Workforce Planning and Employment
* Human Resource Development

Guidance to Discussion Questions and End of Chapter Sections

**Discussion Question 1:** Noetron, a retail electronics store, recently invested a large amount of money to train sales staff to improve customer service. The skills emphasized in the program include how to greet customers, determine their needs, and demonstrate product convenience. The company wants to know whether the program is effective. What outcomes should it collect? What type of evaluation design should it use?

Table 7.7 (Outcomes Used in Evaluating Training Programs), Table 7.8 (Comparison of Evaluation Designs) should help guide responses. Students should identify customer service and its facets (greeting, determining needs, demonstration of product convenience) within their responses. All responses should demonstrate a connection between the outcome, evaluation, and the facet of customer service.

Example responses:

Students may identify cognitive as an outcome, and then measure knowledge of greetings and product knowledge through assessments. Evaluation might be identified as a pre-post assessment to trainees.

Results-based may also be identified, where the outcome is measured by overall sales and customer satisfaction. Evaluation may be viewed as a time series of financial results within a specific time period, or pre-post to the training.

**Discussion Question 2:** “Melinda,” bellowed Toran, “I’ve got a problem, and you’ve got to solve it. I can’t get people in this plant to work together as a team. As if I don’t have enough trouble with the competition and delinquent accounts, now I have to put up with running a zoo. It’s your responsibility to see that the staff gets along with each other. I want a human relations training proposal on my desk by Monday.” How would you determine the need for human relations training? How would you determine whether you actually had a training problem? What else could be responsible for the situation?

Responses should reflect a sensitivity of multiple factors, which may impact the identified problem (i.e. teamwork). Students should apply the concepts regarding needs analysis and the needs assessment process. An example of appropriate responses might include the identification of measurable issues with teamwork (manager observation, employee feedback, low productivity), interviews with employees and review of their performance evaluations. These steps may also help identify if there is actually a problem. Thus, student responses should also identify how the manager (Toran) may also be the issue, and may not be adequately prepared to manage teams.

**Discussion Question 3:** Assume you are the general manager of a small seafood company. Most training is unstructured and occurs on the job. Currently, senior fish cleaners are responsible for teaching new employees how to perform the job. Your company has been profitable, but recently wholesale fish dealers that buy your product have been complaining about the poor quality of your fresh fish. For example, some fillets have not had all the scales removed and abdomen parts remain attached to the fillets. You have decided to change the on-the-job training received by the fish cleaners. How will you modify the training to improve the quality of the product delivered to the wholesalers?

Responses may vary greatly, however, should identify and apply the Principles of On-the-Job Training in Table 7.6. Examples may be:

* Ensure the job is broken down properly.
* Ensure employees and trainees have all the necessary equipment, materials, and supplies.
* Ensure the trainee has spent adequate time with the employee prior to completion of training. This may include an assessment of competency.

**Discussion Question 4:** A training needs analysis indicates that managers’ productivity is inhibited because they are reluctant to delegate tasks to their subordinates. Suppose you had to decide between using adventure learning and a lecture using a virtual classroom for your training program. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each technique? Which would you choose? Why? What factors would influence your decision?

Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses, as found within those sections. Students should choose the technique/approach that allows for managers to (1) learn the tools to delegate, (2) practice delegating. Lecture style may lend itself well here. However, if students also identify trust as a potential issue, then adventure-based learning involving the entire team may then be identified as the best approach.

**Discussion Question 5:** To improve product quality, a company is introducing a computer-assisted manufacturing process into one of its assembly plants. The new technology is likely to modify jobs substantially. Employees will also be required to learn statistical process control techniques. The new technology and push for quality will require employees to attend numerous training sessions. More than 50% of the employees who will be affected by the new technology completed their formal education more than 10 years ago. Only about 5% of the company’s employees have used the tuition reimbursement benefit. How should management maximize employees’ readiness for training?

Responses should demonstrate an understanding of the concepts discussed regarding employees’ readiness for training, as well as the factors identified in Table 7.3. Responses may vary, but should identify the added complication of employees’ previous lack of training, thus greatly increasing the need to target self-efficacy, communicate the benefits of training and identify the goals as necessary to ensure employees are ready. Thus, initiatives focused on goal setting while providing employees with the needed support may be best.

**Discussion Question 6:** A training course was offered for maintenance employees in which trainees were supposed to learn how to repair and operate a new, complex electronics system. On the job, maintenance employees were typically told about a symptom experienced by the machine operator and were asked to locate the trouble. During training, the trainer would pose various problems for the maintenance employees to solve. He would point out a component on an electrical diagram and ask, “What would happen if this component was faulty?” Trainees would then trace the circuitry on a blueprint to uncover the symptoms that would appear as a result of the problem. You are receiving complaints about poor troubleshooting from maintenance supervisors of employees who have completed the program. The trainees are highly motivated and have the necessary prerequisites. What is the problem with the training course? What recommendations do you have for fixing this course?

Students should be able to identify the issue with transfer of learning, and how successful completion of training does not seem to lead to improved performance. Suggestions should look to improve the potential for transfer of learning, where training is more analogous with the work (i.e. case-based, on-the-job) instead of its current form of knowledge-based approach.

**Discussion Question 7:** What factors contribute to the effectiveness of e-learning training programs?

Responses should reflect the overall understanding of training, and how strong needs assessment, correct identification of learning objectives and exercises supporting the meeting of the objectives.

**Discussion Question 8:** Choose a job you are familiar with. Design a new employee onboarding program for that job. Explain how your program contributes to effective socialization.

Responses may vary, but should reflect the Four Steps in Onboarding, Figure 7.6.

**Discussion Question 9:** What features of games motivate learning, especially for Millennials?

Responses may focus on the desire for self-directed, technology-based training, which may also include gamification. However, students may also reflect on their own experiences as to what may motivate them.

**Discussion Question 10:** Why might employees prefer blended learning to training using only iPads?

Employees may prefer a blended learning program because (1) the limitations of online learning related to technology, (2) trainee preference for face-to-face contact with instructors and other learners, and (3) employees’ inability to find unscheduled time during their workday to devote to learning from their desktops.

**Discussion Question 11:** Are augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) the same training method? Why or why not?

No, augmented realityallows trainees to see the physical world around them, but their view includes virtual media. The major differ­ence between AR and virtual reality is that the physical reality is always present in AR. That is, AR provides information that supplements the real world the employee is working in, while virtual reality creates an entirely artificial environment that the employee trains in.

**Discussion Question 12:** What learning condition do you think is most necessary for learning to occur? Which is least critical? Why?

Responses may vary, but should reflect how for learning to occur, trainees must understand the objectives of the training program, training content should be meaningful, and trainees should have the opportunity to practice and receive feedback.

**Discussion Question 13:** What can companies do to encourage informal learning?

Suggestions could include providing employees with the technology they can use to engage in informal learning, which occurs through activities such as social networking. The company can encourage informal learning, too, by setting the expectation that employees continually acquire new skills and knowledge. Employees can informally learn through face-to-face and technology-aided interactions, which should be encouraged and supported by the company.

**Discussion Question 14:** List and discuss the steps in cross-cultural preparation.

Steps in cross-cultural preparation should include cultural training, as well as skills training for the job. Students may specifically reference the pre-departure, on-site, and repatriation phases as they explain the preparation.

**Exercising Strategy**

Social Media and MOOCs at PayPal

1. Is PayPal’s approach to training strategic? Why or why not?

Their approach is strategic in that it focuses on the company’s goals of increasing training usage and saving money.

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of PayPal’s use of social media and MOOCs for its training programs?

They are platforms with which employees are comfortable and knowledgeable, hence they have increased the number of employees getting training. One disadvantage may be that the courses are not customized to individual needs.

**Managing People**

Learning through Gaming at GameStop

1. Does Level Up support GameStop’s business? Explain.

It does support the business by providing training in customer service and management skills.

1. Do you think that online game-based learning like Level Up needs to be supplemented with some type of face-to-face training or coaching? Why or why not?

Responses will vary.

1. What features of game-based learning such as Level Up contribute to its effectiveness as a training method? Explain why.

Since the people taking the training are gamers, this is an effective way to engage them. They will tend to appreciate the rewards built into the program and the flexibility it offers.

**HR in Small Business**

Zeigler Automotive Group Drives Growth by Training Its People

1. Imagine you were helping Zeigler and Van Ryn prepare a needs assessment for training. Using examples from the information provided, what information would you include in the needs assessment?

Responses may identify customer service, teamwork, and company knowledge.

1. What training methods are Zeigler Automotive Group using? What other methods would you recommend it use? Give reasons for your recommendations.

Responses should identify self-directed, e-learning, video, and classroom. Additional methods may be suggested, but should connect the delivery with the objective.

Guidance to Chapter Cases

**A Look Back**

AT&T

1) Do you think AT&T’s training investment is motivating employees to engage in continuous learning? Why or Why not?

Responses will vary. Since the Career Intelligence portal is geared toward individual employees’ needs, it is more likely to be used. Also, the fact that there are several platforms for courses provides opportunities for different kinds of learners.

2) Does replacing traditional career paths with career lattices influence training? Explain.

It likely encourages training because employees have wider options for advancement, and they can take charge of their own careers.

3) What other steps should AT&T consider to help employees gain technical skills and apply them in their jobs?

Responses will vary, but should mention updating training as needed to keep up with changes in technology.

**Integrity in Action**

*At Tyson Foods Learning Goes beyond Job Responsibilities*

1. Do you think companies take the responsibility (and absorb the costs) for providing employees with knowledge and skill training outside of the scope of their job such as financial and computer literacy? Explain.

Responses will vary depending on the students’ work experiences.

**Competing through Globalization**

*Campari Group’s Spirited Language Training*

1. Which conditions for learning emphasized in Campari’s new language training program have contributed to its effectiveness? Explain how they have contributed.

Language training that uses authentic conversations helps students learn the language they need for work. Training is customized for individuals’ abilities and interests, increasing the chance that they will continue with it. Students can practice on their own time with virtual learning. Class participation is made public, motivating employees to use the courses.

**Competing through Environmental, Social, and Governance Practices**

*Community and Company Partnerships Develop Skills and Provide Jobs*

1. How do employers, job seekers, educational institutions, and local communities benefit from these types of apprenticeship programs?

It reaches those who might be left out of traditional higher education, including at-risk youth and veterans. This benefits the individuals who receive the training, but also the company who needs trained workers. Educational institutions can place their students in internships to help them be successful after graduation, which in turn helps them recruit more students. The community benefits with a lower unemployment rate.

**Competing through Technology**

*Artificial Intelligence Helps Customize Training to the Learner*

1. How can adaptable training using AI improve the effectiveness of training?

AI can be used to customize training, which is more effective than rote learning. Software can monitor what trainees do and how they engage with online training content. It then “learns” what types of other training courses it should suggest, when to provide training content, and how to provide training in the format (audio, video) that trainees pre­fer.

Other Classroom Materials: CONNECT

There are CONNECT exercises available through McGraw-Hill, which can greatly assist student preparation for class and understanding of chapter concepts. Instructors may wish to structure the class, where students must complete the CONNECT exercises prior to class, thus, further reinforcing material and allowing instructors to expand and challenge student understanding during class time. CONNECT exercises may be set-up to be time-based, requiring students to practice chapter materials for a specific timeframe. It is the instructors’ discretion how they desire to include this into the course grade, but a low-stakes grading system based on completion is suggested to help encourage student usage, while minimizing penalties for mistakes during completion.

The following activities are available in Connect for this chapter:

**Sweet Success: Strategic Training and Development**

*Case Analysis*

This activity has students evaluate the training and development programs from Just Born, the maker of Peeps, Mike & Ike, Hot Tamales, and other candies.

LO: 07-01 Discuss how training, informal learning, and knowledge management can contribute to continuous learning and companies’ business strategy.

07-02 Explain the role of the manager in identifying training needs and supporting training on the job.

07-04 Evaluate employees’ readiness for training.

07-05 Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of presentation, hands-on, and group training methods.

07-08 Choose appropriate evaluation design and training outcomes based on the training objectives and evaluation purpose.

Difficulty: 1 Easy; 2 Medium

Blooms: Remember; Understand

AACSB: Analytical Thinking

Topic: Employee Training

**Blended Learning Goes Better with Coffee and Donuts**

*Case Analysis*

This activity reviews various types of training methods.

LO: 07-06 Explain the potential advantages of e-learning for training.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Understand

AACSB: Analytical Thinking; Technology

Topic: Strengths and Weaknesses of Various Training Programs

**Training Readiness**

*Click & Drag*

This activity asks students to categorize various situations as social support, situational constraints, or employee readiness.

LO: 07-04 Evaluate employees’ readiness for training.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Understand; Apply

AACSB: Analytical Thinking

Topic: Evaluating Training programs

**The Business Case for Managing Diversity**

*Click & Drag*

This activity asks students to identify the key components of Walmart's successful diversity program.

LO: 07-10 Develop a program for effectively managing diversity.

Difficulty: 3 Hard

Blooms: Understand; Apply

AACSB: Diversity; Reflective Thinking

Topic: Recruiting a Diverse Workforce

**Assessing Training Needs**

*Click & Drag*

This activity presents various concerns and asks students to choose the appropriate component of the needs assessment for each concern.

LO: 07-03 Conduct a needs assessment.

07-04 Evaluate employees’ readiness for training.

Difficulty: 2 Medium

Blooms: Apply

AACSB: Knowledge Application

Topic: Employee Training

**Conditions for Learning**

*Click & Drag*

This activity presents various training programs and asks students to determine which condition for learning best applies to each training program.

LO: 07-04 Evaluate employees’ readiness for training.

07-05 Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of presentation, hands-on, and group training methods.

Difficulty: 3 Hard

Blooms: Apply

AACSB: Knowledge Application

Topic: Conditions for Learning

**CHRO Conversations: Interview with Dr Mirian Graddick-Weir (Part One)**

*Video Case*

This activity has students watch a video interview with the Executive Vice President of HR at Merck and answer questions about the impact effective training for diversity and inclusion has on the ultimate performance of an organization.

LO: 07-09 Design a cross-cultural preparation program.

Difficulty: 1 Easy; 2 Medium

Blooms: Remember; Understand; Analyze

AACSB: Reflective Thinking; Analytical Thinking

Topic: Develop a Program for Effectively Managing Diversity.