Methods of Evaluation: Training Techniques

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Abstract

The Evaluation of any training programme has certain aims to fulfill. These are concerned with the determination of change in the organizational behavior and the change needed in the organizational structure.

Hence evaluation of any training program must inform us whether the training programme has been able to deliver the goals and objectives in terms of cost incurred and benefits achieved.

The analysis of the information is the concluding part of any evaluation programme. The analysis of data should be summarized and then compared with the data of other training programmes similar nature.

On the basis of these comparisons, problems and strength should be identified which would help the trainer in this future training programmes, to stop short of completion of the training systems design methodology, by avoiding the evaluation, our training effectiveness is reneging on our commitment to our students.

The future requires more precise, reliable evaluation strategies, we like to think of training effectiveness evaluation in the same way that we think of surveillance tests in the plant, we perform training effectiveness evaluations to ensure our programmes work effectively.

Keywords: Training Programme, On –the-Job-Training, Off-the-Job-Training, Training Techniques, Evaluation Methods.

Introduction

In the modern computer era training has gained the reputation of dynamic concept which needs to be understood in that perspective most of the modern organization which do not respond to the dynamic change that are seen in changed environment may well fail to respond to the needs of organization and people. Hence organization virtually needs to aspire to respond to the change in the environment.
These changes may be concerned with organizational or individual behavior may be concerned with the structural change. Training is one of most important and effective means of bringing about change in an organization.

Training is system which feed the needs. Skills. And knowledge of the people working in the organization... these skills and knowledge are acquired to fulfill a specify purpose or goal.

**Concept of Training**
Training has been defined by a number of scholars and trainers like

Change agents. Some of the definitions are as follows:

According to Flilippo:” the act of increasing the skills of an employee for doing a particular Job” can be termed as training.

Similarly Steinmetz has observed.

“Training is a term process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non-personnel learns technical knowledge and skills for a definite purpose”.

From the above definitions it can asserted training is a technique concerned with the development of skills and knowledge in particular actor discipline. Training enhances and improves person’s skills. Imparts knowledge to change person’s attitudes and values towards a particular direction.

William G. Torpey has defined training as “the process of developing skills. Habits. Knowledge and attitudes in employees for the purpose of increasing effectiveness of employees in their present government positions as well as preparing employees for future government positions”.

The above definition of training is based on assumption that all training is not necessary and all training is not beneficial. Training is a technique which properly focuses and direct towards the achievement of particular goals and objectives of the organization. Hence identification of training needs is first and probably the most important step towards the identification of training techniques. The process of identifying training needs is carefully thought out programme that needs to be carried out with sensitivity because success of a training programme may be crucial for the survival of the organization.

Objectives of training must be determined to pave way for the assertion of proper techniques of training. Training is imparted to people in organization with certain defined objectives and goals. However it must be remembered that the goals and objectives of organization differ to a great extent. Hence the defined objectives of a training programme should be assessed in the light of the goals of that organization. In 1944. Assheton Committee stated the objectives of training in the following manner:

(a) It endeavors to produce a civil servant whose precision and clarity in the transaction of business can be taken for granted.
(b) It helps attuning the civil servant to the task he is called upon to perform in a changing world. It in other words helps him to adjust his outlook and methods to the changing needs of new times.
(c) It saves the civil servant from becoming a robot like mechanically perfect civil servant. He is made aware of his work and the service that he is required to render to his community.
(d) It not only enables an individual to perform his current work more efficiently but also fits him for other duties. It develops in him capacity for higher work and greater responsibilities.
(e) It pays substantial regard to staff moral as latter have to perform tasks of a routine character throughout their lives.

Bhagwan and Bhushan have also identified the following objectives of training:

(a) For the performance certain peculiar activities pertaining to the government training plays a significant part.
(b) Training helps the employees to become people oriented and inculcates in them respect and regard for general public.
(c) It broadens the vision and widens the outlook of the employees by explaining to them to make substantial contribution towards realization.
(d) It is vital to a career service. It lists them for advancement which is assured to the employees when they join the government service at young age.
(e) It improves the lone and adds to the quality of organization. Since it enhances the efficiency of the employees and develops their capacities. The efficiency and prestige of the department goes up.
(f) It fosters homogeneity of outlook and esprit de corps in the employees.

Identification of Training Needs
Training is a specialized function. Hence trainer must know exactly what is required from the training programme in accordance to the identified tools framework techniques processes are identified in designing and implementing efficient effective timely and productive training programmes for those who require it. Training needs also determine the nature of training program. Formulation of training program includes those factors that are related to the evaluation of the program in terms of techniques and skills can be properly considered.

Any training program must take into consideration three fundamental behavioral aspects: Organization, people, and environment as far as organization are concerned their survival rests on a certain minimum achievement of goals and objectives which are pre defined to customers owners. Employees. etc. all these factors are continuously interacting with the organization whose objectives and goals have been formulated so to benefit the members of the organization intermittently.

The second assumption that needs to taken into consideration is the fact that these objectives can be achieved only through harnessing the abilities of its people. Releasing potential and maximizing opportunities for development. In others words. The achievement of objectives and goals can be effectively and effectively achieved only if people within the organization possess adequate skills and abilities. If they do not possess the skills and abilities required. the objectives and goals cannot be achieved effectively and effectively achieved only if they do not possess the skills and abilities. if they do not possess the skills and abilities required. The objectives and goals cannot be achieved effectively and efficiently. Hence proper assessment of the abilities and skills of the employees must be considered before any training programme is be formulated.

The third assumption is to assess the capability potential of the employees. The people who are engaged in the accomplishment of goals and objectives. In the new perspective, are capable of new learning. If the employees do not possess the required potential to adapt themselves to the new environment. The chances of training programs being a success will be doubtful.

The fourth assumption about people is concerned with the level of ability and the desire to learn. Training is all about learning. learning organization basically involves people who make or break organization. the organization should be able to provide adequate opportunities and resources where people are able to learn through training new concepts. and techniques of management. the assumption is also concerned with matching of achieving organizational goals on one hand and on the other providing attractive learning opportunities. the third assumption basically requires that the programmers of training should be so designed so as to provide learning opportunities that are effective and efficient. the objective of training is fulfill the individual needs of the employees and that of the organization as well.

The fifth assumption is concerned with the environment variable. In a dynamic situation. Environment continues to put new pressures and demands upon the system even if it is for survival only. Because of liberalization, competition has become severe and public sector as well private sector has to compete with each other in order to stay a viable entity. Hence changes in the environment can
no more be overlooked but need to understood and adapted to. The need for training, therefore, becomes inevitable.

Once it is established that need for training is a necessity. The question arises what type of training is required to meet the three challenges. Another important question that comes to mind is whether the training programmed is able to change the pattern of behavior for which it was trained and how effectiveness is will be measured. Before discussing venous types of techniques of evaluation. A close look at various types of training methods will be locked into.

With regard to people working in the organization needs and aspiration of the people must be properly evaluated. Specification of training needs means translating the needs of people into specific needs and achieving those aspirations by training programmers. Basic idea behind this evaluation is to make organization learning organization. According to Senge.

Where people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire. Where new and expansive paupers are nurtured. Where collective aspiration is set free. And where people are continually learning how to learn together.6

Factors Influencing Training Needs

Organizations are complex and dynamic in nature and their effectiveness depends on number of factors. Complexity of organization is again a multifaceted implication of various factors being determined by various environmental factors. Hence the nature of complexity of a given organization needs to be evaluated before determining its training needs.

Some of the factors that increase complexity are being discussed keeping in view that all are not determinants of complexity for all organization.

Technology in the computer age is being upgraded frequently and hence is the most important factors in increasing the complexity of an organization .. structurally as well as behaviorally. According of Frances and Bee.

Technology is changing an ever increasing rate. Today’s state--of-the-art computer is tomorrows junk. Robot assembly pants. Laser printers.

“Transplant and genetic surgery--- wherever the workplace--- whatever the task. There appears to be a technological solution for everything”.7

The technological changes are influencing the basic settings of organization. The technological changes are not only concerned with the structure or gadgets of an organization but these changes also influence the behavioral aspect of the very people who are working in the organization.

However people do not usually change in technology and its environment. Change can be brought about in a smooth manner only through training techniques.

Another important factor that needs to be taken into consideration is concerned with social changes that are taking place in the new social environment. For most organization internal compilations are bound to change in the computer age. People from different backgrounds, women. People from diverse nations will from the workforce of modern organizations. With increasing diversity in the culture. The organizations are bound to receive culture shock. Organization with their exiting format will not be in position to absorb this culture shock. The change agent will be playing an important role in providing appropriate training to absorb culture shock.

The third factor that has influenced training needs is related the new role that the government are being asked to play. The governments are being asked to play sensitive role of controlling the business ethical activities on one hand and safeguarding the interests of consumer on the other. In the era of privatization and globalization. The governments are formulating legislation to facilitate business activity both public and private as well as safeguarding the consumer interest. Thus managers and CEOs need to be acquainted to the new legislation that are being enacted from time to time.

The fourth factor that has influenced the training needs is the emerging competitive market Conditions. It may be asserted that the public and private sector, even in monopolistic conditions. Have to face competition. The pertinent question is whether the new market situation will force the
organization to go in for training as they are going to face new marketing situations in the times to come. Will the new emerging conditions give rise to pressure groups that have henceforth not been seen in the business world. Basically organizations are going to face situations that are the result of competitive markets and development of consumerism. Many of the managers in the public and private sector could not possibly have been oriented towards these new situations. Hence need f training is unavoidable.

The fifth factor influencing the training needs related to internal management of an organization. Internally organizations are going to face new dilemmas and problems. Business needs are fulfilled by the human resources that exist within the framework of internal structure. Any strategic plan which does not take this fact into account is bound to face numerous problems. There will be a continuous pressure on the organization to improve performance. Human resources, like managers, workers, staff, and others, have to be kept up to date in expertise and at the same times need to be motivated to perform better. This is a difficult task which cannot be handled by the staff of the organization. Experts called change agents are required to fulfill the task. Training needs cannot be overlooked because it is an ongoing process. In addition. Training is now considered a specialized function to be performed by the experts.

Techniques of Training
The object of this paper is not to discuss various techniques of training. Hence training techniques are being short listed for the purpose of their identification for evaluation purpose. However we would like to throw light on some of modern techniques of training. Some of the training techniques that are often used for reeducation purpose are:

1. On –the-job- training.
2. Demonstration.
3. Job instruction training.
4. Vestibule training.
5. Apprenticeship.
7. Job rotation.
8. Lectures and conferences.
10. Simulation training.
11. Role playing.
12. In-basket exercise.
15. Transactional analysis.

A detailed discussion of these techniques can be referred to many text books. 8 Here we would like to discuss some of the training techniques that are considered by the experts as essential for improving the performance of organization in competitive situations.

Diversity training is becoming extremely important for the organizations that are complex in nature. The work force of these enterprises is divers in nature. Various diverse group from different cultural and social background join one institution and thus submerging various cultural into one. The diverse work force has to be trained so as to provide some from of commonality. Various methods are adopted to provide diversity training. According to Fred Luthans one method of divers training involves putting trainees into groups based on ethnic origin. Then each group is asked to describe the others and listen to the way its own group is described. 9 Another methods of diversity training has been stated in the following manner.
Another widely used approach is diversity board games. Which require the participants to answer questions related to areas such as gender. Race cultural differences. Age issues. Sexual orientation. And disabilities. On the basis of the response, the games players are able to advance on the board or are forced to back up. 10

The objectives of these types of games are to acquaint the players in a non-threatening manner with legal rules and restrictions regarding how to manage members of the diverse groups. The third method of divers training concerned with participant focus on cultural issues such how to interact with personal from other countries. It may be added that many of the training programmers related to diver’s work force also use other training programmes. 11

Methods of Evaluation of Training Programmes

It is extremely important to assess the result of any training programme. The participant must be made aware of the goals and objectives of the training program and on completion of the training program, they should be asked about the impact of the concerned training programme.

Evaluation of any program is a difficult task and more so of a training program. The first step toward evaluation of a training program is to define the goals and objectives of the training program. These goals and objectives should be stated in such format so that they can be measured statistically. Also both the trainer and the trainees must be well acquainted with their role in the training programme. In the evaluation of any training program. The first requirement is to collect valid and reliable data.

The required data can be collected by using the following techniques. 12

1. Self assessments answer sheets.
2. Question confronted by the trainees.
3. Assessing the collected information and observation.
4. Final result based on earlier information plus the new data

Each method of data collection has its advantages and disadvantages. Which need to taken into consideration. The merits and demerits of each method are as follows.

Merits of Self Assessment

1. The cost factor is quite low.
2. Data can easily collected.
3. Time consumption of the trainer and trainee is negligible.
4. Outside interference is completely avoided.
5. Effective relationships develop between the trainee.
6. Well designed answer sheet can produce healthy results.

Demerits of Self Assessment

1. Self assessment is basically self evaluation which can be based on biased responses. The assessment must have enough reliability so as to draw right conclusion in regard to individual assessment.
2. The responses given by the trainees can be based on misrepresentation or misinterpretation of the questions asked. Thus self assessment questions should be small and easy to understand in addition. No information should be sleeked which will embarrass the trainees.
3. The information provided by the trainees cannot be evaluated in terms of their correctness. All the trainees do not prefer to give the required information lest it may be used against at any point of time.

All these problems can be easily solved. Self assessment is basically adhered to by all the training programs. However what is important to consider is to make proper effective use of this
technique as the trainees provide valuable information which the trainer can use to formulate training strategy.

The second requirement for evaluating a training programme is concerned with the evaluation of the training programme when part of the training programme has been completed. The time factor must be decided before the programme is initiated and the evaluation criteria must be determined before the training programme begins. The first evaluation will give adequate information to the trainers whether the programme moving toward right direction. At the same time trainees will be able to assess the value of the program in terms of its needs and usefulness. It is extremely important to realize whether the trainees have understood the need and importance of the training programme. As this stage adequate data should be collected from the trainees to make proper evaluation of the training programme.

The collect data, interview and questionnaire methods can be most effective. Interviews can be conducted by seeking information face to face, by means of telephone, or by other strategies like group discussions etc. Each of these methods has its own merits and demerits.

**Merits of Interviews**

1. Face to face interviews ensures some response. If any responses need to be clarified. The trainer can do so instantly. Similarly if the trainees want any clarification, the same can do immediately. This helps in ensuring correct information.
2. As far telephone interviews are concerned though there is lack of personnel touch. The trainee does not feel the pressure of the interviewer to give answers that suit the trainer. The trainer can answer all those question that are complex in nature. These answers have far more validity as the responses are without any pressure.

**Demerits of Interviews**

1. The interview is a lengthy and costly process as it requires trained and skilled personal to get results that are reliable.
2. Another important drawback is the possibility of the trainer being involved in the interview.
3. Data collected through interview methods may be out of date and hence difficult to interpret.

**Merits and Demerits of Questionnaire**

Questionnaires in one form or another do appear in all kinds of research and surveys. Hence it is extremely vital that the questionnaire is framed with utmost care so that it measures the variable in exactly the way it has been designed for. Once the initial design has been properly framed, a pre-test must be conducted to find out whether the questions mean the same thing to the trainer and the trainee. If found inappropriate, the questionnaire should be redesigned and a pilot survey should be conducted. If found appropriate. Full survey should be conducted and if found inappropriate the questionnaire should be redesigned again. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire should be properly evaluated before going in for full survey.

In regard to collection of data. It may be observed,“As with any method of data collection it is vital to plan how the data is to be collected. However with this method, since it does not usually involve the design of some sort of formal survey instrument such as questionnaire. It is all to easy to leap straight in without a plan. This can lead to a considerable waste of time and without a plan. This can lead to a considerable waste of time and even worse the wrong data being collected-so the message is plan and design your desk research in the same way as you would any more formal survey.”

Thus whatever technique or method we adopt, the validity and reliability of data must be determined. As a matter of fact the trainer must look at three factors to determine the reliability and validity of the collected data. According to Frances and bee, three key aspects must be considered in any evaluation study. These key aspects are as follows.
The first factor is concerned with the internal stability of an evaluation study. It is concerned with how well the study measures what we want or are aiming to find out. This usually involves the adequacy and appropriateness of the measuring tool. The instrument, used. What needs to be considered is that whatever instruments we use for the purpose of collecting data, we must make sure that the terminology being used actually measures the variable that we intend to measure. Whether the instrument be interview or questionnaire, the terms must elicit the kind of information that is required.

The second factor is concerned with the external validity. It is concerned with the extent that the findings can be applied beyond the group involved in the study. The conclusions drawn on the basis of collected should not be applicable only to the group that was the basis of collection of data. On the contrary, the collected data should have the reliability and validity to the extent that its conclusions are applicable to other similar situations.

The third factor that needs to be considered is concerned with reliability. The reliability of an evaluation study is the extent to which the results can be replicated, i.e. if the study was repeated the results would be the same. The obvious approach to dealing with this issue is to repeat tests and observations. Also techniques, such as including the same question but in different forms, using multiple observers, etc. can be helpful.

The fourth factor that needs to be taken to evaluate training programme is to conduct and determine reaction level of the trainees in respect of the training programme. The reaction criteria is to be determined in terms of open discussion between the trainers, the trainees, and the management. This will give ample opportunity to the management to ascertain whether or not the training programme is achieving the objectives for which it was organized. This evaluation should be conducted half way of the training period.

The reaction criteria tends to inform the trainers whether the training programme is achieving the goals as perceived by the trainers. In other words the trainers come to know the level of happiness and satisfaction of the trainees in regard to the training programme. To ascertain and collect this kind of information, the trainees may be asked to fill a self-complete questionnaire in which the trainees have to choose between a range of alternatives and answer some of the open ended questions.

The self-fulfilled questionnaire seeks information in regard to entry briefing; whether the objectives of the training programme were achievable and how far have they been useful; whether the trainers performance has been satisfactory; and the training methods utility; the mid term evaluation clears the way of the trainers to reframe the training methodology and cater according to the needs of the trainees.

Two fundamental problem need to be assessed in this evaluation process. The first problem is whether information seeked should or should not be collected in the name of trainee. The evaluation as far as possible be anonymous could give, probably, more accurate information than the information collected in the name of the participant. The second related issue is concerned with the venue where the information questionnaire is filled up by the trainee. It is indeed desirable that the trainee provide information away from the course environment.

This mid evaluation can be very helpful in providing a lot of information that is reliable and valid. As a matter of fact mid term evaluation can be very helpful and the cost of collecting such information is not only very low but it also helps the trainees to reframe their training programs accordingly the approach of mid term evaluation allows the trainer to make comparisons between different training programs that were conducted in other organization or that were conducted by the trainer himself. However reaction criteria of mid term evaluation does generate an enormous amount of data analysis. How much of this data is used by the trainer for readjusting the structure of the training program depends on the management, trainer, and the participants.

The final step in respect of evaluation of training programmes is to assess whether the basic objectives of the training programme have been achieved or not. In this step cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit techniques need to be utilized to measure the performance. This assessment will demonstrate whether the expected learning that was determined before the training programme was conducted has taken place after the conclusion of the training programme or not.
Some of the scholars suggest that before going in for final evaluation, if feasible, one or two, in between, evaluation, can also be conducted. However too many evaluation questionnaires can disrupt the training program and can create doubts in the minds of trainees towards the effectiveness of the program in the minds of the trainees can be created. Evaluation of the training program should be undertaken only for the purpose of feedback and restructuring of the programmes to fulfill the goals and objectives of the training program.

The basic purpose of any training programme is to improve organizational performance i.e. to assess whether the training program has been able to achieve change that it desired from the training program. The final evaluation program must take into factors that might have affected the final outcome, for example, competitor initiatives, general economic conditions. Etc. performance of an organization must be evaluative in terms of the whole unit and not parts of it.

Hence any evaluation of the training programme may not result in perfect achievement of the goals. We should identify the key factors and indicators that can influence the final results of the training programme. The assessment of these factors will help in the analysis of the needs of the concerned organization. In this respect a comparative study should be made in regard to the information collected before the training programme was initiated and after the training program where changes need to be visualized and thereupon assessed. If possible a comparative study can also be made of the similar training programme conducted in other organization and analyzes the differences in the final results. At the time of collecting the final data, proper monitoring should be assured. All the required data should be collected to make elaborate analysis.

In the final analysis it can be stated that the final evaluation is the most important aspect of the training programme aspect of the training programme in order to find and determine the effectiveness of the training programme. This assessment gives a clear picture of the impact of the training program. As indicated earlier, a clear cut indicators of organizational performance determined before the start of the program will make measurement of desired change in terms of evaluation much easier to measure.

**Conclusion**

The Evaluation of any training programme has certain aims to fulfill. These are concerned with the determination of change in the organizational behavior and the change needed in the organizational structure. Hence evaluation of any training program must inform us whether the training programme has been able to deliver the goals and objectives in terms of cost incurred and benefits achieved.

The analysis of the information is the concluding part of any evaluation programme. The analysis of data should be summarized and then compared with the data of other training programmes similar nature. On the basis of these comparisons, problems and strength should be identified which would help the trainer in his future training programmes.
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