Benefits and strategies of human resource development (hrd)

Introduction

Human resource development coordinates the functions of training and development experiences in the organizations. In recent years the scope of human resource development (HRD) has expanded from simply providing training programmes to facilitating learning throughout the organization in a wide variety of ways. There is an increasing recognition that empoloyees can and should learn continuously, and they should learn from experience, from each other as well as from formally structured training programmes. Nevertheless, formal training is still essential for most organizations.

1. 1 Training Defined.

It is a systematic modification of behaviour through learning which occurs as a result education, instruction, development and planned experience. It is a learning experience in that it seeks a relatively permanent change in an individual that will improve the ability of performance on the job.

Employee training is present-day oriented focuses on individuals, current jobs, enhancing specific skills and abilities to immediately perform their jobs.

Learning is a relatively permanent change in behaviour as a result of practice or experience.

Development – focuses on future jobs in the organization. It seeks to improve a person's overall career prospect. It comprises series of planned training activities and experiences designed to improve manager's performance.

Activities include attending short courses, job rotation, understudying senior mangers, attachments, completion of long-term academic qualification in the management field.

Education refers to activities that are aimed at developing the knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required in all aspects of life. Its purpose is to provide the conditions essential to people to understand their environment and make a contribution to it.

1. 2 SCOPE OF TRAINING

Organizations provide training for many reasons:

- To orient new hires/employees
- To improve current performance for workers who are not performing well
- To prepare employees for future promotions, changes in design, processes, or technology in their present job
- To help organization achieve its purpose by adding value to its key resources (people). It means investing in people to enable them perform better and to empower them to make the best use of their natural abilities.
- To reduce the learning time for employees.

Competitive pressures change the way organizations operate and skills that employees need.

1. 3 Training as Related to Other HR Functions

HRP identifies the skills and number of employees needed.

Recruitment and selection function locates individuals with these skills in the labour market. Information on projected HR needs and probable qualifications helps determine amount and level of training to be provided.

Performance evaluation specifies whether employees are performing to the desired standards and if not the employer discrepancies identified may signal the need for additional training.

Performance evaluation may be used as criteria for evaluating training effectiveness.

Training is pivotal in implementing organization-wide culture change efforts, e. g. developing a commitment to customer service, adopting total quality management etc.

1. 4 Training benefits

Minimizes learning costs

Improves individual, team, and corporate performance in terms of output, quality, speed and overall productivity.

Improves operational flexibility (multi-skilling)

Attracts high quality of staff by developing their competences

Increases commitment of staff.

Help to manage change by increasing the understanding reasons to change

Help to develop positive culture in the organization

Help to provide high levels of service to customer.

2. 0 Strategy and HRD

Training can help an organization succeed in a number of ways. Ultimately it is employee knowledge and skills that produce the organization's products and services. Training facilitates the implementation of strategy in the following ways:

Providing employees with the capability to perform their jobs in the manner dictated by strategy.

Assisting in solving immediate business problems such as when managers in an action learning programme studies a real problem faced by their organization and recommend the solution.

Helping the organization to keep ahead in a highly competitive and turbulent environment.

The training function therefore, must foster a continuous learning culture and stimulate managers to reinvent their organization.

Recent changes in the environment of business have made the HRD function even more important in helping organizations maintain competitiveness and prepare for the future. Technological innovations and the pressure of global competition have changed the ways organizations operate and the skills that their employees need. The tight labour market of the lat 2000s has increased the the importance of training in several ways:

First, higher employee turnover means that more new employees need training. Second, it has been suggested tha frequent and relevant and relevant development experiences are an effective way to gain to gain employee royalty and enhance retention of top quality staff.

Training must be tailored to fit an organization's strategy and structure. For instance, an organization whose strategy involves providing exceptional service through a committed, long -service cadre of a well – qualified employees will need more complex training and career development systems than an organization that competes on the basis of simple, low-cost services provided by transcient, unskilled employees. The later will need a highly efficient orientation and basic training.

Team- based high involvement organizations find that extensive training in team skills, as well as in individual job skills is necessary to make an innovative organization structure function as in tended. When strategy changes, training is needed to equip employees with the skills to meet new demands

Training is seen as pivotal in implementing organization-wide culture - change efforts such developing a commitment to customer serviced, adopting a total quality management, or making a transition to self-directed work teams.

PLANNED TRAINING

A deliberate intervention aimed at achieving the learning necessary for improved job performance.

Purposes:

To identify and define training needs – involves analyzing corporate, team, occupational, and individual needs to acquire skills knowledge or to improve competencies.

Define the learning required

Define the objectives of the learning – learning objectives should be set which define not only what should be learnt but also what trainees must be able to do after their training programme.

Plan training programmes – these must be developed to meet the needs and objectives by using the right combination of training techniques and locations.

Decide who provides the programme – either from within or from outside the organization

Implement the training – ensure that the most appropriate methods are used o enable to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need.

Identification of Training Needs (Training Needs Assessment)

It is an investigation that is undertaken to determine the nature of performance problems in order to establish underlying causes and how these can be addressed trough training.

It can be undertaken to identify and justify developmental needs – trying to prepare people to take extra responsibilities in future.

Purpose and Methods of TNA

The choice of methods and sources of information depends partly on the purpose of the training. If it is to improve employees' performance and identifying performance deficiencies in the present job, the trainer must begin by looking at present performance to identify the performance deficiencies. Sources of information for this include supervisors' and clients' complaints,

performance appraisal data, objective measures of output or quality or even conducting special performance tests to determine current knowledge and skill levels of employees. Individual or group interviews with superiors, incumbents or even clients.

Once performance deficiencies have been identified, next step is to determine whether these deficiencies can be addressed by training. In some cases motivation, constraints, or poor task design can be the cause.

If training is planned for current employee destined for promotion or transfer, needs assessment is more complex. The training specialist must measure the demands of the future job and then attempt to assess the ability of employees to meet those demands.

If training is destined for new hires, the method must be slightly different. Training is designed on the basis of careful analysis of job content and the assumed characteristics of the trainees.

Three Levels of Needs Assessment.

Company level:

Involves organizational analysis looking at how the training fits within the context of company strategy.

Concern should be at issues pertaining to changes that have occurred in the organization e. g. organizational structure, process technology, production problems, human resource plans reputation with competitors, personnel statistics, customer complaints, employee behaviour, retention and motivation strategies

Job/Task Analysis:

use of job description

job specification

kind of skills, and knowledge required to perform the job be clearly established

Individual levels:

identify who should be trained

current level of individual skills, knowledge and abilities

performance standard of individuals

training programme attended.

IDENTIFY TRAINING OBJECTIVES

Translate the needs identified at those levels into measurable objectives that can guide the training effort.

PLAN TRAINING PROGMME

It should contain objectives of the training programme

Objectives should be the " criterion behaviour" i. e. the standards or changes

of behaviour on the job to be achieved after training.

It should have clear contents of what to be covered

Length of the programme

Where it will take place

Techniques to be used

Who will provide the training

TRAINING METHODS

On -the-job training: conducted at the work site and in the context of actual

job.

Learning by trial and error

Sitting next to experienced worker

Coaching: Experienced managers guide the actions of of junior or less

experienced mangers.

Job rotation-involves moving employees to various positions in the

organization in an effort to expand their skills, knowledge, and abilities. It

can be either horizontal or vertical (promoting employee to new position). It

is a good method for broadening individual's exposure to company

operations and for turning a specialist into a generalist. Job rotation provides

an opportunity for a comprehensive evaluation of the employee by his/her supervisors

Assistant to positions: Employees with potential are sometimes given opportunity to work under seasoned and successful managers in different areas in the organization. It helps to get exposure to a wide variety of management activities and are groomed for assuming duties of the next higher level.

Committee assignment: It provides an opportunity for the employee to share in decision making, to learn by watching others, and to investigate specific problems. Committees can either task forces (which are temporary in nature), or permanent one.

Advantages:
- the transfer of training to the job is maximized.
- costs of separating training facility and full- time trainer is avoided
- trainee motivation remains high because what they learn is job related.

OFF-THE JOB TRAINING
It is a formal method considered as an incentive, mostly organized in exotic places or in colleges and universities. This approach may not provide as much transfer to actual job as do on -the – job programs.

Methods include:

Lectures and seminars: The traditional form of instruction revolves around formal lecture courses and seminars. They help individuals to acquire knowledge and develop their conceptual and analytical abilities.

Simulations: Training technique using exercises based on actual work

experiences. Exercises include

case study analysis, role playing, business games etc.

Team Building:

It is the process of enhancing the effectiveness of teams.

It helps employees develop capacity of work groups to interact more

effectively and develop skills.

LEARNING THEORIES

They attempt to explain how learning occurs.

Stimulus- Response school

Cognitive School

The Stimulus -Response School (Behaviourial school)

Learning is the development of links between stimulus and response.

Theorists interested in demonstrating how links can be encouraged, and the

way in which experience of other stimuli can change bonds.

Specifically, people must be stimulated by learning by the learning process.

This school is based on conditioning theories

Classical conditioning by Pavlov(1941)

Operant conditioning by Skinner, 1953)

Classical conditioning

Behaviour is learned by repetitive association between a stimuli and a response.

Stimulus – observable condition that can give rise to behaviour.

Response – objective manifestation of behaviour

Conditioning – a process whereby an association is formed between a stimulus and a response

Pavlov did an experiment with a dog using an unconditioned stimulus (meat) and a conditioned stimulus (bell).

Experiment

Before conditioning:

Meat(unconditioned stimulus) Dog salivates(un Res)

During conditioning:

Meat + Bell (cond. Stimulus) Dog salivates (cond. Res.)

After conditioning:

Bell ringing (cond. Resp Dog salivates

Implications: the experiment shows that learning can be transferred to higher order conditioned stimulus other than those used in original

conditioning. However, it is difficult to trace exactly the cause – effect relationship of the such behaviour.

Operant Conditioning (Skinner- 1953)

A type of learning that involves an increase in the probability of a response occurring as a function of reinforcement.

Suggests that people emit response that are rewarded

Human beings learn behaviours that are rewarded and they will engage in those behaviours.

Implications: In organizations, behaviours are learned, controlled , and altered by consequences managers use. Operant conditioning is used to influence behaviours by designing suitable reward systems.

Cognitive Learning Theory

It involves gaining knowledge and understanding by absorbing information in the form of principles, concepts and facts, and then internalizing it. Learners are regarded as powerful information processing machines

Social Learning Theory

It states that effective learning requires interaction. People participate in " groups of people with shared expertise, and these are the primary sources of learning.

Principles of Learning

Goal Setting

Individual behaviour is influenced by their conscious goals

Hard goals result in better performance

Learning objectives must be clearly conveyed to trainees

Goals must be difficult enough to challenge individuals but not to discourage them

Finishing the programme must be supplemented with evaluations, tests, quizzes or any reward.

Reinforcement

It consists of giving reward following performance of activity that increases the likelihood to perform the activity again.

Trainee should know what specific behaviours are expected of him/her

Reinforcement be related to these behaviours

Reinforcement be prompt and continuous when trainee begins to learn new behaviour.

Reinforcements must be effective and should very from individual to individual.

Principles of Learning

Feedback (Knowledge of Results):

Feedback with a directional function provides information about behaviour necessary to improve performance

Feedback with motivational function provides information about outcome of behaviour that needs to rewarded

Behaviour Modeling:

People tend to pattern their behaviour with that of their associates, parents, friends, and acquitances etc.

Much of the human behaviour is learned by observing others.

EVALUATION:

It is an attempt to obtain information (feedback) on the effects of a training programme, and to assess the value of the training in light of that information.

Evaluation helps to know whether the progamme was worthwhile in terms of cost-benefit terms.

It is difficult because it is difficult to set measurable objectives and to collect results the information on the results.

Evaluation levels:

Reactions: the reactions of participants to the training experience

Learning: At this level it requires the measurement of how trainees have learnt as a result of their training – new knowledge and skills acquired.

Job behaviour: measuring the extent to which participants have applied their learning on the job. Assessing the amount of transfer of learning that has taken place from off the job courses.

Organization: attempting to measure the effect of changes in the job behaviour of trainees on the functioning of the organization. E. g. improvements in output, productivity, quality, turnover.

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PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Designing appraisal system

Should reflect the needs of those concerned (organization) to collect information for personnel decision making and distribution of rewards.

Should be related to longer- term needs of the organization e. g. kind of staff and how they will be developed.

Should act as a consultation process: There should be a degree of compromise between the people involved in pursuit of the commitment to the system.

Organizational structure and culture dynamically related and should be considered in designing of the system. E. g. a highly structured bureaucratic company will have a different system as compared to a company with a decentralized flat structure.

WHO SHOULD BE APPRAISED?

Self Appraisal:

Reduces defensiveness

Individual becomes motivated and committed

Disadvantage: Leniency error.

Peer Evaluation:

May be accurate

Appropriate for developmental purposes

Useful when supervisor has no chance to observe the employee

Can work well in teamwork.

Disadvantage: Friendship bias.

Immediate superior:

Has knowledge of the tasks performed by individual

Superior's Superior:

He can countersign supervisor's appraisal of the employee in approval

indicating the process is fair

He may directly carry out the appraisal

360- Degree appraisal:

An appraisal device that seeks performance feedback from such sources as

oneself, bosses, team members, customers and suppliers. It has more

accurate feedback, empowering employees, and reduces the subjective factors in the evaluation process

Assessment Centres:

Assessment centers are most often used in appraising potential superiors and managers.

Assessment centres use tests, group exercises and interviews to appraise potentials.

MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES (MBO)

It is an approach to performance appraisal which emphasizes the need to assess performance with reference: agreed output, tasks to be accomplished or standards of performance.

It involves three steps:

The employee meets the supervisor and agrees on a set of goals and standards to be achieved during a specific period of time.

Goals should be quantifiable and agreed targets.

Monitoring progress : employee left free to determine how to achieve the goals

At the end of the set period, supervisor and employee meet to evaluate whether goals were achieved and decide together for the new set of goals.

Feedback of Results (PA Interview)

Before employees are told to improve their performance after appraisal, they must know how they are currently doing.

Feedback Interview is a discussion between the supervisor and the employee concerning the employees past performance and how it wiil be improved in the future.

Approaches to Feedback Interview

Tell and Sell:

-The supervisor tells the employee how good or bad the employee's performance has been. He attempts to persuade the employee to accept his judgement.

The employee has no input in the evaluation

The discussion is directive and one sided.

Problems

Can lead to defensiveness, resentment, and frustration. Subordinate may not accept results and not be committed to achieving goals.

Tell and Listen:

Supervisor tells the employee what has been right or wrong, and gives him/her a chance to react.

Employee participates in the interview by reacting to supervisor's statement.

Problem Solving:

The employee has much more control over the interview

He evaluates his/ her performance and sets own goals for future

performance

Supervisor is helper rather than judge

There is an open dialogue in which goals for improvement are established

mutually

Advantages:

It can lead to employee commitment to established goals