

Study on training needs assessement



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Ethiopian Roads Authority has gone through a number of reforms and several internal re-structuring activities since its establishment. As a result, parallel with the BPR initiative a decision has been made to split the two major responsibilities of the authority (regulatory and operation) to be managed by two respective independent public organizations.

Accordingly, Ethiopian Road Construction Corporation is established under regulation number 248/2011 with the aim of managing roads construction and maintenance projects and hence play its role by strategically addressing the prevailing gap of local construction industry road delivery capacity. To this end, the corporation (ERCC) has the reengineered work processes with a view to bring about dramatic improvements in its performances.

To energize the move and make it realistic, the recognition of human resource as a valuable asset and looking after the human element issues with the aim of excelling performance at a team and individual level by devising various HR intervention strategies is crucial. To optimize team and individual performance assignment of the right person with the right knowledge, skills and abilities with the right job is therefore, critical.

This requires identifying the different categories of jobs requirements in terms of the person qualification to be possessed by the job incumbent. Besides, beyond the task performance of each jobs requirement, a number of them require contextual performance to be exhibited by the job holders for the successful accomplishment of the Corporation's goals and objectives. This is possible through analyzing the fitness of employees' with their job's task and contextual performance requirement.

Especially, since the corporation is going to join the business environment after so many years of insulation from the competitive environment and expected to become both profit oriented and market leader in the road construction sector, analyzing employees' KSAO's (Knowledge, skill, attitude and other) and taking corrective intervention through training has paramount importance for both the corporation and employees' through successful completion of road maintenance and construction projects and enhanced employees' job satisfaction, respectively.

Training needs analysis is therefore, helps to indicate the actual or possible training needs. The necessary human resource's training needs should be carefully identified either to narrow the performance gap or to more equip with state-of-the-art skills and knowledge's so as to achieve the best performance. Accordingly, this cross sectional study tries to identify perception of the corporation's professional employees, team leaders and managers on the prevailing performance gap and their recommendation of training intervention.

Given the large expenditures for training in the corporation, it is important to develop business intelligence tools to provide a methodology as to how training should be provided. Besides, information should be collected to determine whether training is assisting the corporation to improve performance. In line with this, the fundamental purpose of this study is to provide information as to the presence of performance gaps on corporation's employees attributed to skill, knowledge and attitude.

This would in turn serve as an input for further task based analyses to be undertaken. Thus, more specifically the study tries: • To analyze the

collected data and prepare a report detailing findings, recommendations and conclusions, • To help the HRM division accomplish its strategic purpose of improving individual, team and organizational performance. • To enable the corporation design and conduct effective training interventions and hence help to increase the corporation's effectiveness through planned learning.

A training needs assessment is determining the gap between what an employees must be able to do and what he or she can or is currently doing.

A training needs assessment (also called a " training needs analysis") therefore identifies the gap between what the job expects an employee to do, on the one hand, and what the employee is actually doing, on the other hand. This shows that a training needs analysis discovers whether there is a discrepancy or conflict between what an employee ought to be doing and that which he or she can do.

The gap analysis is then employed by asking the two questions:

- 1) What skills are currently held?
- 2) What are the actual skills that are needed?

This basic process identifies the skills that are in deficit and need to be obtained by the corporation. Therefore any job requires a person to meet certain standards. Standards are levels of expertise or skills one has to comply with to do a job properly. Whenever one does not meet the required standards, the need for training arises. Training based on such a need (or needs) will then aim to address that need, and it will supply the employee with the skills to do the job properly.

Employee training and development is seen as a key factor in meeting the corporation's business as well as operational goals. International competition, corporate reorganization and technological advances, along with social and economic pressures, increase the importance of employee education, training and development in workplaces. The specific questions facing organizations are: which employees should be trained, in what areas, by what methods, by whom, when or how often, what outcomes should be expected and what will be the cost? Will people, after the completion of the training or obtaining of a qualification, have the ability to put into practice in the relevant context the learning outcomes they have acquired?

Training happens within the overall framework of the corporation's general endeavors to build and develop capacity through a variety of means. The case for training as a key strategy needs to be examined and justified in each situation with its particular background of organizational culture, systems and processes, etc. While employee development (through formal education, skills training and continuous development initiatives) generally means the enhancement of employees' applied competence in their jobs by improving their knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes. Therefore through training needs analysis the corporation identify an overall group based performance gaps and recommend what general training need programs will make a difference in the corporation and ultimately prescribe solutions thereafter. Furthermore, in this study basic steps required in undertaking the training need analysis are deployed (see annex).

This study was conducted based on micro level analysis of the response of employees to identify performance gaps prevailed in Ethiopian Road

Construction Corporation. The study was carried out in the corporate head office and in 3 maintenance and 2 construction projects which accounts for 15 managers, 50 team leaders and 95 professionals and skilled employees that formed the target group. The findings of the study can be extended to other working units (divisions and projects) as there is significant similarity among the different work units. The assessment of training needs was limited to the performance gaps prevailed in the sample projects during the survey period. Furthermore, the projects are assumed be homogeneous in their nature, workforce skill mix and demand as well.