

# Training Design and Methods

## ASSIGNMENT 5: TRAINING DESIGN

Read this assignment. Then read pages 153–207 in your textbook.

### Organizational Constraints

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Now that you've completed the training needs analysis, it's time to actually design the training that will help to close the performance gaps caused by KSA deficiencies. In theory, training design is a fairly simple task. In reality, you'll have to overcome numerous constraints throughout the training design process. The most challenging restraint you'll face is a limited budget. Even if your organization has allocated you a generous training budget, it will still seem as if there isn't enough money. You'll always feel underfunded because there's a constant push in business to do more with less. The next big constraint you'll face will be deciding who gets the training and how much training each person gets. This constraint also ties to your limited budget. In a perfect world, you would give everyone all of the training they need and want, but because of your limited resources, you'll have to make decisions. Having a budget will force you to decide how training can be used most effectively and most efficiently throughout the organization. You'll also have to prioritize the types of training you'll deliver. For example, you may have legally mandated training that must supersede any productivity-based training or management training you would like to offer. Another obstacle you'll face is the varying KSA level of your trainees. You'll have to design the training to be effective for all these different trainees and still work within your budget.



## Developing Objectives

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The first thing you should do in the training design process is write learning objectives. These objectives should address the specific KSAs the training is designed for. Training objectives are an integral part of the training design process because they essentially create an outline for the entire training program.

A learning objective has three basic parts. You must include all three of these parts in each objective so your training is specific enough to deal with the trainees' KSA deficiencies. The first part of the learning objective is the *desired outcome*. The desired outcome describes what trainees must do to demonstrate they've actually learned the KSA. The second part of the learning objective is the *conditions*. Conditions outline the specific parameters under which the trainees must perform the desired outcome. The third part of the learning objective is the *standards*. Standards describe the parameters for success used to determine whether or not the trainees have performed the desired outcome under the specified conditions.

## Why Use Training Objectives?

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Training objectives are a tool that will be used by many different parties throughout the training process. Trainees will use the objectives to focus their attention on what they should be learning. The training designer will use the objectives to communicate the specific outcomes of the training. It's especially important to have clearly defined training objectives if the training designer and the trainer aren't in communication with each other. The trainer will use the learning objectives to focus the facilitation on the KSA deficiencies. Using training objectives ensures that the training time is used efficiently and effectively. Finally, the evaluator will use the objectives to determine whether or not the training accomplished the objectives it was designed to accomplish.

## Facilitation of Learning: Focus on the Trainee

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After the learning objectives are established, you must design your training activities around those objectives. There are some factors you'll need to consider when designing your training:

1. *Differences in KSAs among the trainees.* Although most trainees will have the same basic KSAs, there will be some differences that will pose a challenge during the training design stage. You'll need to consider all of these possible differences when designing your training so the final product will be useful for all trainees.
2. *Differences in motivation levels among the trainees.* As a training designer, you'll need to develop a training program that keeps the trainees motivated to learn. One of the biggest aspects you should focus on is job relevance. Motivated trainees can lose motivation quickly if they think the training isn't relevant to their jobs.
3. *Goal setting among the trainees.* Individual goal setting can help a trainee get more out of training, which will lead to better results for the organization. Learning objectives help trainees set goals because they prompt the trainees as to what they should be getting out of the program.

## Facilitation of Learning: Focus on Training Design

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To effectively design a training course, you must understand how people actually learn. The most common theory on learning is known as *social learning theory*. The first part of social learning theory deals with the learner's attention. You should design your training in a way that will keep the learner engaged in the material that's being taught. You've probably sat through a class in school or a presentation at work you found absolutely boring. As a training designer, you should keep those instances in mind and design your training course in a way that will help the learners focus on their

task. The next second part of social learning is retention. You should develop a training program that focuses on the retention of material. Presenting material to a trainee doesn't necessarily mean the trainee will be able to retain the information. The next part of social learning theory is *behavioral reproduction*, which occurs when the trainee transforms the learned material into actions. Behavioral reproduction should be used throughout the training to ensure that trainees are learning the desired material. The final part of social learning theory is *reinforcement*. Reinforcement actually occurs outside the training arena, but training managers should be fully aware of reinforcement, or lack of reinforcement, in the workplace. A lack of reinforcement in the workplace could negate all of the work you put into the training program.

## Facilitation of Transfer: Focus on Training

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As a training designer, you'll need to focus on ensuring the information trainees learn gets transferred to the workplace. Learning without transfer is the same thing as not learning at all. Learning transfer is the entire point of committing resources to training in the first place. Your goal is to have the outcome of *positive transfer*, which means that trainees have a higher level of job performance due to the training that they received.

## Facilitation of Transfer: Focus on Organizational Intervention

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For your training to be effective, it has to be promoted and accepted throughout the entire organization. Getting approval for your training program can be a challenging effort, especially in organizations that don't have a substantial history of effective training programs. As a training manager, you'll need to keep your eye on the general attitude towards training within your organization. You should ensure that all supervisors of the trainees support and encourage training. A negative word about training from a supervisor can quickly render any training that you provide completely worthless. You must

also solicit support from the trainees' peers. Trainees don't want to be singled out as being different from their peers because of the training they receive. Ultimately, you want all employees to view training as beneficial. As a trainer, you should make yourself available to employees long after the training has been completed. Many employees will seek you out later if they have questions or if they need a refresher on certain lessons. Finally, you should create an organizational culture that's supportive of training. This type of environment can be created effectively through senior management. If senior management is supportive of the training function, then that support will eventually trickle down through the ranks of the organization.

Now that you've studied the material for Assignment 5, please take a moment to complete *Self-Check 5*.



## Self-Check 5

1. What decisions need to be made after the training needs analysis has been conducted?

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2. What are the four types of training objectives?

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(Continued)



## Self-Check 5

3. Describe the three components of a learning objective.

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4. According to social learning theory, what are the four stages through which learners progress before they retain information?

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5. Why is positive transfer of learning desired over zero transfer or negative transfer?

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**Check your answers with those on page 79.**

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# ASSIGNMENT 6: TRAINING METHODS

Read this assignment. Then read pages 208–260 in your textbook.

## Lectures and Demonstrations

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### Lectures

The use of a *lecture* is one of the most common forms of training. Many trainers and trainees feel comfortable with the lecture because the format is familiar to them from their school days. Training through the use of lectures has its strengths as well as limitations.

The following list outlines the strengths of lecture-based training:

- Trainees are able to ask for clarification and receive immediate feedback if they don't understand something.
- The resources needed (room, table, chairs, flipcharts, overheads) are relatively inexpensive and easy to obtain.
- Lectures provide a more intimate and human feel that's not always present when technology is used for training.
- The human interaction can keep trainees interested and focused on learning.

The following list outlines the limitations of lecture-based training:

- The training might lack consistency if more than one trainer is used for delivery.
- Employees might fear classroom learning if they had a bad experience while learning in a classroom in school.
- The training isn't cost effective if employees are in numerous geographic locations.
- The training might not be effective if employees, instead of professional trainers, are delivering the training.
- A poor delivery from an unskilled trainer can inhibit the learning process.

## Demonstrations

*Demonstrations* are effective training tools when used in conjunction with lectures. Demonstrations allow the trainees to get hands-on experience while remaining in a controlled environment. It's much easier to fix a trainee's mistakes during a demonstration than it is to fix his or her mistake in the workplace. If trainees are allowed to try a process or piece of equipment during a demonstration, they'll feel much more confident about their work when it comes time for them to perform in the workplace. Demonstrations can be used for such tasks as truck loading. It's always a good idea to demonstrate tasks and skills in a training environment before allowing an employee to try something new.

## Games and Simulations

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Numerous types of games and simulations can be used to train employees. Each game and simulation can be an effective training tool if used in appropriate situations.

An *equipment simulation* is used to train an operator to use a particular mechanical device. This can be for something as basic as a cash register or as complex as a fighter jet. An equipment simulator is an excellent training tool because it allows trainees to get hands-on experience without having to worry about making expensive or fatal errors. For example, employees can practice ringing up orders on a cash register without worrying about a hurried customer. Trainees can also practice landing a fighter jet on an aircraft carrier without worrying about missing their target. The one major factor that holds companies back from using equipment simulators is the cost. An extra cash register might cost only a few hundred dollars, but something like an aircraft simulator can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars! If your organization can't find the funds to purchase an equipment simulator, then you may want to consider allowing employees to train on equipment that's not being used or is down for maintenance.

A *business game* is a training tool used to train businesspeople in the art and skill of decision making in a particular industry or department. Business games are also heavily used in undergraduate and graduate business programs. A business game



consists of a simulation of an industry, a company, or a department based on real-world situations. Trainees must interact with their mock environments and make decisions very similar to the decisions they'll be making in their jobs. Business games can be relatively inexpensive, and the trainees can usually work on the training at their own pace.

A *case study* is similar to a business game but not nearly as interactive. Case studies focus on a single interaction rather than on an evolving environment. Just like business games, case studies are also heavily used in undergraduate and graduate programs. Case studies are extremely inexpensive (there are many free ones that you can legally download from the Internet) and can be completed in a short period of time. They're an excellent tool for ongoing management training because of their low cost and relatively short completion time.

A *role-play* is an interactive simulation of a particular situation that might be encountered in the workplace. A role-play is generally limited to an interactive situation since it allows trainees to act out their parts in predetermined situations. Role-plays are much more interactive than are case studies but can be effectively used to train employees in the same situations. Role-plays are excellent for training employees in selling skills, negotiations, conflict resolution, interviewing, and performance evaluations.

## On-the-Job Training

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*On-the-job training (OJT)* is the most widely used form of training in existence. OJT can consist of anything from an informal network of senior employees who train new employees to a complex process of certified trainers and certifications. Many smaller organizations that don't have the funding for a complex training program use the informal method of having skilled employees teach new employees the skills they'll need to be productive. Although informal OJT is an inexpensive way to train employees in the workplace, it can be inefficient at times. An informal OJT program won't be consistent for every employee, so you could wind up with gaps in your training. Seasoned employees may also train employees in the shortcuts they've developed over the years rather than training

them the correct way to do something. Senior employees may be highly skilled at their jobs but not skilled at training. A senior employee's ineffective training could lead to frustration for both the trainer and the trainee. Even if you're in a smaller organization, it's still possible to develop a formal OJT program without incurring too much cost. The money you invest in a program like this will return itself numerous times over in the form of higher-quality products, happier employees, and more satisfied customers.

## Audiovisual Enhancements to Training

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Audiovisual enhancements to training are imperative because not all people can learn something by just hearing a trainer or watching a demonstration. There are many different types of audiovisual materials you can use, and each has its own set of unique strengths and limitations. *Handouts* are the most effective visuals you can use. Handouts allow trainees to take their learning with them. Instead of trying to memorize everything they've learned, handouts allow trainees to review the training information at a later time. Many trainers use *flipcharts* to present the material. They can write the training information on the chart as it's covered in class and then hang the pages on the wall for later reference. Handouts and flipcharts are great because they're effective and very inexpensive. *Videos* are also a common training tool. Videos can easily be purchased to cover nearly any training need. Keep in mind that industrial training videos can get very expensive (up to \$200 each), and they can quickly become outdated in the ever-changing business world. You can also consider producing your own training videos in-house. Producing your own training videos may seem expensive, but it really isn't. All you need is a digital video camera, a computer, video editing software, and a little creativity. If you choose to produce your own videos, you can custom tailor them to your organization, and you can easily update them when needed.

Now that you've studied the material for Assignment 6, please take a moment to complete *Self-Check 6*.



# Self-Check 6

1. How is a *lecture/demonstration* different from a *lecture/discussion*?

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2. What type of question is used to solicit a simple "yes" or "no" answer?

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3. What types of games and simulations can be used to facilitate training?

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4. What are the four stages of the learning sequence in a job instruction technique?

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5. What are some of the benefits of apprenticeship training?

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**Check your answers with those on page 79.**

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