

address relevant business issues.

Training for Professional Development

TRAINING is the process of acquiring specific skills to perform a job better. Usually an organization facilitates the employees' learning through training so that their modified behaviour contributes to the attainment of organization goals. According to Halim and Ali (1997), there are three approaches to training. In the *traditional approach*, the training staff designs the objectives, contents, teaching methods etc. The focus is in the intervention by the training staff. In the *experimental approach*, the goals and other elements of training are jointly determined by the trainers and trainees, or their organizations. It emphasizes real or simulated situations in which the trainees shall eventually operate. The trainers primarily serve as facilitators, catalysts, or resource persons. In *performance-based approach* to training, goals are measured through attainment of a given level of proficiency. Emphasis is given to acquiring specific observable skills for a task, as in agricultural extension.

Preservice training

It is a process through which individuals are made ready to enter a certain kind of professional job, as in agriculture, medicine or engineering. The prerequisite to this, is to attend regular classes in a formal institution and need to complete a definite curriculum and courses successfully, and receive a formal degree or diploma.

Inservice training

Inservice training is a process of staff development for the purpose of improving the performance of an incumbent holding a position with assigned job responsibilities. It promotes the professional growth of individuals. Inservice training is a problem-centered, learner-oriented, and time-bound series of activities which provide the opportunity to develop a sense of purpose, broaden perception of the participants, and

increase their capacity to gain knowledge and mastery of techniques. Inservice training may broadly be categorized into five different types.

Induction or Orientation training. Induction training is given immediately after employment to introduce the new entrant to the job. This helps in moulding the individuals as per requirements of the organization.

Foundation training. This training is usually provided at an early stage of service life. Every staff member needs some professional knowledge about various rules, regulations, and procedures of the organization, financial transactions, administrative capability, communication skills, leadership ability, coordination and cooperation among institutions and their linkage mechanism, report writing and so on. This training is made available to the employees to strengthen the foundation of their service career.

Maintenance or Refresher training. This training is offered to update and maintain the specialized subject-matter knowledge of the incumbents. This deals with new information and new methods, as well as review of older materials. This type of training is given to the employees to keep them at their peak performance level and also to prevent them from getting into a rut.

On-the-Job training. This is periodical or *ad hoc* training on the job, and is generally provided by the superior officer or specialists to the subordinate field staff. This training is problem or technology oriented and may include formal presentations, informal discussion, and opportunities to try out new skills and knowledge in the field.

Career or Development training. This type of training is designed to upgrade the knowledge, skills and ability of employees to help them assume greater responsibility in higher positions. This training may lead to the acquisition of higher degree or diploma by the employees, and motivate them to move up in the higher levels of administrative hierarchy.

Phases of training

Broadly, there are three phases of a training process. These are planning, implementation and evaluation.

Planning phase. It encompasses several activities of which—training needs identification and curriculum development—are very important. The process of identifying training needs involves job analysis, task analysis, and knowledge and skill-gap analysis. The curriculum development specifies what will be taught, the training content; and how it will be taught, the training methods.

The training organization should develop the training programme jointly with the organization from which the trainees shall come.

Implementation phase. This is the process of putting a training programme into operation. Information about training courses are made available to the intending persons well in time. All efforts should be made to enroll participants to full capacity of the training organization. Trainers, trainees, training materials and facilities need to be well managed and coordinated to run the programme smoothly.

Evaluation phase. Evaluation is a process of determining the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of a training in relation to its objectives. Kirkpatrick (1976) suggested four criteria to evaluate training programmes. Each criterion is used to measure the different aspects of a training programme.

Reaction measures how the trainees liked the programme in terms of content, methods, duration, trainers, facilities, and management.

Learning measures the trainees' skills and knowledge which they were able to absorb during training.

Behaviour is concerned with the extent to which the trainees were able to change their behaviour *i.e.* apply their knowledge in real life situations.

Results are concerned with the tangible impact of the training programme on individuals, their job environment and the organization as a whole.

The results of evaluation should be utilized by both the trainers' and trainees' organizations to improve subsequent training programmes.