Orientation and Employee Training

Chapter 8

Chapter Overview

- Orientation
- Training Employees
- Methods of Training
- Evaluation Training
- Principles of Learning
- Summary of Learning Objectives

Orientation

- Introduction of new employees to the organization, their work units, and their jobs
  - Employees receive orientation from coworkers and organization
  - Orientation from coworkers
    - Usually unplanned and unofficial
    - Often provides new employee with misleading and inaccurate information
  - Official, effective orientation programs have an immediate and lasting impact on new employees
  - Job applicants get some orientation even before they are hired through organization’s reputation for
    - Type of employer it is
    - Types of products or services it provides

Orientation

- During the selection process, the new employee learns
  - General aspects of organization
  - Duties, working conditions, and pay
- Organization begins with a formal orientation program, after hiring the employee
  - Regardless of type of organization, orientation should usually be conducted at two distinct levels:
    - Organizational orientation
    - Departmental and job orientation

Relationships among Human Resource Functions Necessary for Effective Performance

- Organization
- Job analysis
- Job description
- Job specification
- Recruitment
- Selection
- Orientation
- Training
- Performance appraisal
- Compensation
- Benefits
- Employee relations

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Shared Responsibility

- Human resource department and new employee's immediate manager normally share responsibility for orientation
- Human resource department is responsible for:
  - Initiating and coordinating both levels of orientation
  - Training line managers in procedures for conducting the departmental and job orientation
  - Conducting general company orientation
- The new employee's manager is usually responsible for conducting departmental and job orientation
- Buddy system – Coworker of the new employee conducts the job orientation
  - To work successfully, employee chosen for the role must be carefully selected and properly trained

Organizational Orientation

- General orientation that presents topics of relevance and interest to all employees
- Topics presented should be based on needs of both organization and employee
- Usually, the organization is interested in:
  - Making a profit
  - Providing good service to customers and clients
  - Satisfying employee needs and wellbeing
  - Being socially responsible
- New employees are generally more interested in:
  - Pay
  - Benefits
  - Specific terms and conditions of employment
  - A good balance is essential

Possible Topics for Organizational Orientation Programs

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Departmental and Job Orientation

- Specific orientation that describes topics unique to new employee’s specific department and job
- Content depends on:
  - Specific needs of department
  - Skills and experience of new employee
- Experienced employees are likely to need less job orientation
- Even experienced employees usually need some basic orientation
- Both experienced and inexperienced employees should receive a thorough orientation concerning departmental matters

Orientation Kit

- Supplemental packet of written information for new employees
  - Each new employee should receive it
  - Normally prepared by the human resource department, it can provide a wide variety of materials
  - Care should be taken in the design
    - To ensure it offers essential information
    - It does not give too much information
  - Many organizations require employees to sign a form indicating they have received and read the orientation kit
  - Required in unionized organizations to protect against grievances
  - Equally important for nonunionized organizations, especially due to increase in wrongful discharge litigation
  - Whether signing a document actually encourages new employees to read the orientation kit is questionable

Orientation Kit

- Materials that might be included in an orientation kit include:
  - Company organization chart
  - Map of the company’s facilities
  - Copy of policy and procedures handbook
  - List of holidays and fringe benefits
  - Copies of performance appraisal forms, dates, and procedures
  - Copies of other required forms (e.g., expense reimbursement form)
  - Emergency and accident prevention procedures
  - Sample copy of company newsletter or magazine
  - Telephone numbers and locations of key company personnel (e.g., security personnel)
  - Copies of insurance plans
Orientation Length and Timing
- Brief sessions increase likelihood that new employee will understand and retain information presented
- Not exceeding two hours, spread over several days
- Orientation program lasting for a half day or full day are common
- These can result in a negative attitude on an employee’s part
- Similar results produced in many departmental and job orientation programs
  - New employees are given a departmental procedures manual and told to read it and ask any questions that they have
  - Another method used is to give new employees menial tasks to perform
  - Both of these methods are likely to produce poor results
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Follow-Up and Evaluation
- Formal and systematic follow-up to initial orientation is essential
- New employee should not be told to drop by if any problems occur
- Manager should regularly check on how well new employee is doing and answer any questions that may have arisen after training
- Human resource department should conduct a scheduled follow-up after employee has been on the job for a month
- Human resource department should also conduct an annual evaluation of total orientation program
- Purpose of this evaluation is to
  - Determine whether current orientation program is meeting company’s and new employees’ needs
  - Ascertain ways to improve present program

Follow-Up and Evaluation
- Feedback – One method of evaluating effectiveness of orientation program
- Can be obtained using:
  - Unsigned questionnaires completed by all new employees
  - In-depth interviews of randomly selected new employees
  - Group discussion sessions with new employees settled comfortably into their jobs
  - Enables an organization to adapt its orientation program to specific suggestions of actual participants
  - Organizations should realize that new employees will receive an orientation that has an impact on their performance—either from coworkers or from the company
  - Important to have a well-planned, well-executed orientation program

Training Employees
- Learning process that involves acquisition of skills, concepts, rules, or attitudes to enhance employee performance
- Reasons why training needs to conducted:
  - Economic, social, technological, and government changes can make skills learned today obsolete in future
  - Planned organizational changes (such as introduction of new equipment) can make it necessary for employees to update their skills or acquire new ones
  - Performance problems within an organization such as low productivity or large scrap problems can be reduced by training
  - Regulatory, contractual, professional, or certification issues can require an employer to provide training for its employees
  - Normally, primary responsibility of training falls on new employee’s manager
  - Sometimes delegated to a senior employee in the department

Training Employees
- Steps to a successful training program include:
  - Perform job analysis
  - Perform needs assessment
  - Establish training objectives
  - Conduct training program
  - Evaluate training outcomes
  - Job analysis identifies the KSA of a job
  - Training programs to be designed that improve participant’s KSA

Needs Assessment
- Systematic analysis of specific training activities organization requires to achieve its objectives
  - Organization should commit its resources only to those training activities that can best help in achieving its objectives
  - Five methods can be used to gather needs assessment information:
    - Interviews
    - Surveys/questionnaires
    - Observations
    - Focus groups
    - Document examination
  - Interviews with employees can be conducted by specialists in human resource department or by outside experts
Needs Assessment

• Basic questions that should usually be asked:
  • What problems is employee having in his or her job?
  • What additional skills and/or knowledge does employee need to better perform the job?
  • What training does employee believe is needed?
  • Several additional questions about specific issues will arise
    • In addition, employees must believe their input will be valued and not be used against them
  • Surveys and/or questionnaires are also frequently used
    • It involves
      • Developing a list of skills required to perform particular jobs effectively
      • Asking employees to check those skills in which they believe they need training

• Employee attitude surveys can be used to uncover training needs
  • Most organizations bring in an outside party or organization to conduct and analyze employee attitude surveys
  • Customer surveys can indicate problem areas that may not be obvious to employees of organization
    • Responses may indicate areas of training for organization as a whole or for particular functional units
  • To be effective, observations for determining training needs must be conducted by individuals
    • Trained in observing employee behavior
    • Trained in translating observed behavior into specific training needs
  • Human resource specialists (trained in performing job analyses) should be particularly adept at observing to identify training needs

• Focus groups are composed of employees from various departments and various levels within the organization
  • Sessions can be conducted by human resource department specialists or outside experts
  • Focus group topics should address issues such as:
    • What skills/knowledge will our employees need for our organization to stay competitive over the next five years?
    • What problems does our organization have that can be solved through training?

• Document examination involves examining organizational records to
  • Determine if problems exist
  • Determine if any identified problems can be addressed through training
  • Organizational records include
    • Absenteeism
    • Turnover
    • Accident rates
  • Another source to examine is performance appraisal information gathered
    • Performance problems common to many employees are likely areas to address through training
  • Regardless of the method employed, a systematic and accurate needs assessment should be undertaken before any training is conducted

Needs Assessment Questionnaire with Selected Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Assessment Questions with Selected Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How to effectively manage my time? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How to effectively communicate? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How to improve my interpersonal communication skills? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How to improve my interpersonal skills? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How to improve my interpersonal skills? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How to improve my personal productivity? No? Yes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Establishing Training Objectives

• Objectives must be established for meeting established training needs
  • Many organizational training programs have no objectives
    • “Training for training’s sake” appears to be the maxim
      • Makes it virtually impossible to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of a training program
    • Effective training objectives should state what will result for the organization, department, or individual after training is completed
      • Outcomes should be described in writing
        • Impossible to evaluate a program efficiently if clearly defined objectives are lacking
          • There is also no basis for selecting appropriate materials, content, or instructional methods
Establishing Training Objectives

- Training objectives can be categorized as follows:
  - Instructional objectives
    - What principles, facts, and concepts are to be learned?
    - Who is to be taught?
    - When are they to be taught?
  - Organizational and departmental objectives
    - What impact will training have on organizational and departmental outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover, reduced costs, and improved productivity?
    - Individual performance and growth objectives
    - What impact will training have on behavioral and attitudinal outcomes of the individual trainee?
    - What impact will training have on personal growth of the individual trainee?

Methods Of Training

- Several methods can be used to satisfy an organization’s training needs and accomplish its objectives
- Some of the more commonly used methods include
  - On-the-job training
  - Job rotation
  - Apprenticeship training
  - Classroom training

On-the-Job Training and Job Rotation

- On-the-job training – Shows employee how to perform the job and allows him or her to do it under trainer’s supervision
- Normally given by a senior employee or a manager
- Job rotation (cross training) – Requires an individual to learn several different jobs in a work unit or department and perform each job for a specified time period
- Advantage – Makes flexibility possible in the department
- Disadvantage – No special facilities are required
- New employee does productive work during learning process
- Found to be more effective than classroom training that may seldom be used when the person returns to the job

Steps Leading to Effective On-the-Job Training

1. Identify the training objective and determine the training pace.
2. Establish the learning plan and learning experience.
3. Provide suitable training materials and equipment.
4. Ensure that the learner is motivated and interested in the training.
5. Provide feedback to the learner.
6. Evaluate the learner’s progress.

Apprenticeship Training

- Giving instruction, both on and off the job, in practical and theoretical aspects of work required in a highly skilled occupation
- Combines on-the-job and classroom training to prepare workers for more than 800 skilled occupations such as:
  - Bricklayer
  - Machinist worker
  - Computer operator
  - Laboratory technician
- About two-thirds of apprenticeable occupations are in construction and manufacturing trades
- Apprentices also work in such diverse fields as:
  - Electronics
  - Service industries
  - Public administration
  - Medical and health care

Length of Selected Apprenticeship Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Length of Course (years)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airplane mechanic</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>3-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boeing</td>
<td>3-3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Building</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Machinist</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiologic technologist</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled laborer</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>
Apprenticeship Training
- On-the-job training during apprenticeship period is conducted by a skilled and experienced employee.
- Its purpose is to learn practical skills of the job.
- Apprentices learn theoretical side of their job.
- Subjects that might be covered in classroom training include:
  - Mathematics
  - Blueprint reading
  - Technical courses required for specific occupations
- Wages paid apprentices usually begin at half those paid fully trained employees.
- Generally advanced rapidly at six-month intervals.
- U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services (OATELS) is responsible for:
  - Providing services to existing apprenticeship programs.
  - Technical assistance to organizations wishing to establish programs.

Classroom Training
- Useful for quickly imparting information to large groups with little or no knowledge of subject.
- Most familiar training method.
- Conducted off the job.
- Useful for teaching:
  - Factual material
  - Concepts
  - Principles
  - Theories
- Portions of orientation programs, some aspects of apprenticeship training, and safety programs are usually presented utilizing some form of classroom instruction.
- More frequently, classroom instruction is used for technical, professional, and managerial employees.

Virtual Classroom
- Virtual classroom – Online teaching and learning environment that integrates the following into a typical lecture-based system:
  - Chat rooms
  - Desktop
  - Video conferencing
  - Web sites
  - E-mail distribution
- Offer training in either self-paced courses, real-time courses through intranets, or real-time video conferencing.
- A professor lectures to a local class and a remote class that may be thousands of miles away.
- Students at local and remote classes can ask questions of the professor.
- Advancing technology is likely to bring other changes in the training of employees.

Evaluating Training
- Number of benefits accrued after evaluation of results of training programs:
  - Less effective programs can be withdrawn to save time and effort.
  - Weaknesses within established programs can be identified and remedied.
- Evaluation of training can be broken down into four areas:
  - Reaction: How much did the trainees like the program?
  - Learning: What principles, facts, and concepts were learned in the training program?
  - Behavior: Did the job behavior of the trainees change because of the program?
  - Results: What were the results of the program in terms of factors such as reduced costs or reduction in turnover?
- Difficult to determine exact effects of training on learning, behavior, and results – Evaluation often limited and superficial.

Reaction
- Should consider a wide range of topics, including:
  - Program content
  - Program structure and format
  - Instructional techniques
  - Instructor abilities and style
  - Quality of the learning environment
  - Extent to which training objectives were achieved
  - Recommendations for improvement
- Reaction evaluation questionnaires normally administered immediately following training.
- They can be administered several weeks later.
- Drawback in using only reaction evaluation:
  - Enthusiasm of trainees cannot necessarily be taken as evidence of improved ability and performance.
Learning

- Learning evaluation concerns how well trainees understood and absorbed principles, facts, and skills taught
- In teaching skills
  - Classroom demonstrations by trainees – Fairly objective way to determine how much learning is occurring
- In teaching principles and facts
  - Paper-and-pencil tests can be used
  - Standardized tests
    - Can be purchased to measure learning in many areas
    - In other areas, the trainers must develop their own tests
- To obtain an accurate picture of what was learned, trainees should be tested both before and after the program

Behavior

- Deals with nature of change in job behavior of trainee – Much more difficult than reaction or learning evaluation
- Following guidelines can help evaluate behavioral change
  - Systematic appraisal should be made of on-the-job performance on a before-and-after basis
  - Appraisal of performance should be made by one or more of the following groups (the more the better):
    - Trainee
    - Trainee’s superior or superiors
    - Trainee’s subordinates
    - Trainee’s peers or others totally familiar with trainee’s performance
  - Statistical analysis to be made to compare performance before and after training and to relate changes to training program
  - Post-training appraisal to be made several months after training so that trainees have an opportunity to put into practice what they learn
  - Control group (one not receiving the training) should be used

Results

- Results evaluation attempts to measure changes in variables such as
  - Reduced turnover
  - Reduced costs
  - Improved efficiency
  - Reduction in grievances
  - Increases in quantity and quality of production
  - As with behavior evaluation, pretests, posttests, and control groups are required in performing an accurate results evaluation

Principles of Learning

- Use of sound learning principles during development and implementation of these programs helps to ensure that programs will succeed
- Following are several principles of learning
  - Motivation to Achieve Personal Goals
  - Knowledge of Results
  - Reinforcement
  - Flow of the Training Program
  - Practice and Repetition
  - Spacing of Sessions
  - Whole or Part Training

Motivation to Achieve Personal Goals

- The most frequently identified objectives of employees are
  - Job security
  - Financially and intellectually rewarding work
  - Recognition
  - Status
  - Responsibility
  - Achievement
- If a training program helps employees achieve some of these objectives, the learning process is greatly facilitated
- For example, unskilled employees who are given opportunity to learn a skilled trade may be highly motivated because they can see that more money and job security will probably result
Knowledge of Results

- Knowledge of results (feedback) influences the learning process
  - Progress feedback as measured against some standard helps in setting goals for what remains to be learned
  - Continuous process of analyzing progress and establishing new objectives greatly enhances learning
  - Care to be taken to ensure employees do not become discouraged by goals that seem unachievable
- Frequently used for providing feedback to both trainee and trainer
  - Oral explanations
  - Demonstrations by trainee
  - Written examinations
- Learning curve—Chart for plotting progress of an
  - Primary purpose—Provide feedback on trainee’s progress
  - Helps in deciding when to increase or decrease training and when to change methods

Sample Learning Curves

- Reinforcement and Flow of the Training Program
  - Reinforcement
    - Behavior that appears to lead to a positive consequence tends to be repeated, while behavior that appears to lead to a negative consequence tends not to be repeated
    - Positive consequence is a reward
      - Praise and recognition are two typical rewards that can be used
  - Flow of the Training Program
    - Each segment of training should be organized so that an individual can see
      - Its purpose
      - How it fits in with other parts of program
    - Later segments should build on those presented earlier
    - Gaps and inconsistencies in material not conducive to effective learning

Practice and Repetition, Spacing of Sessions

- Practice and repetition
  - Having trainees perform a particular operation helps them concentrate on subject
  - Repeating a task several times develops facility in performing it
  - Practice and repetition almost always enhance effective learning
- Spacing of sessions
  - Managers often want to get an employee out of training and into productive work
  - Trade-offs involved in deciding whether training should be given on consecutive days or at longer intervals
  - Spacing out training over a period of time facilitates learning process
  - Interval most conducive to learning depends on type of training

Whole or Part Training

- Decision to train for a job at one go, or to train employee separately for each job component should be based on
  - Content of specific job
  - Material being taught
  - Needs of those being trained
  - Often successful method includes
    - First giving trainees a brief overview of the job as a whole
    - Dividing it into portions for in-depth instruction

Summary of Learning Objectives

- Define orientation
- Describe an orientation kit
- Define training
- Describe needs assessment
- Outline three categories of training objectives
- Describe job rotation
- Explain apprenticeship training
- Define virtual classroom
- Outline the seven principles of learning
- List the four areas of training evaluation