

Rationalizing Training And Development In Corporate Organisation: Is Staff Development Worth It?

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Abstract

This study explores the imperative of Training and Development (T&D) programs within corporate organizations and endeavors to answer the critical question: Is staff development worth the investment? In today's dynamic business landscape, where technological advancements and market complexities are constant, the need for a skilled and adaptable workforce is more pronounced than ever. This study aims to provide insights into the rationalization of T&D initiatives, shedding light on their inherent value and impact on organizational success. The discussion begins by acknowledging the dynamic nature of the corporate environment, emphasizing the rapid changes that demand employees to acquire new skills and competencies. T&D programs are pivotal in addressing this need, equipping staff with the knowledge and capabilities required to navigate evolving industry trends. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, organizations can enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction, contributing to increased productivity and employee retention. Furthermore, the study delves into the tangible benefits of staff development, such as improved performance, innovation, and adaptability. T&D initiatives not only bridge skill gaps but also cultivate a workforce capable of tackling challenges and driving organizational growth. By investing in employee development, companies position themselves competitively in the market, ensuring their workforce remains agile and responsive to changing business dynamics. While the financial commitment to T&D programs may raise questions about their worth, the return on investment extends beyond immediate financial gains. Employee development contributes to a positive organizational culture, attracting top talent and fostering loyalty. Additionally, the paper explores the long-term impact on employee morale and the overall organizational reputation. It contends that staff development is not merely an expense but an invaluable investment for corporate organizations. By systematically rationalizing the importance of T&D initiatives, organizations can align their strategies with the evolving needs of the workforce and industry, ultimately ensuring sustained success and competitiveness.

Keywords: Rationalizing, Training, Development, Corporate Organisations, Staff Development

INTRODUCTION

Staff training is a component of any thriving corporate organization. No organization can survive or succeed without training and retraining its workforce. According to Nwokeocha (2024), organizations strive to train and develop their employees for optimal performance in executing their tasks and responsibilities aimed at achieving set organizational goals. "Knowledge has always been one of the major drivers of development. Due to the EU aim to become a knowledge-based economy, knowledge has become even more important. Efficient creation, dissemination and use of knowledge lead to knowledge-based development, economy and competitiveness" (Jednak et al., 2018, p. 4). The environment in which organizations operate today is changing rapidly, imposing on every organization the need for flexibility, the ability to respond to changing environment and to proactively look for potential innovations (Bošnjak et al., 2018). Current trends such as the globalization process, internationalization of political, economic and social ties, development of

technology, raising environmental awareness, are constantly imposing the need to adapt to a turbulent environment but, on the other hand, it is also necessary to develop and acquire new knowledge, expertise, skills and abilities, which become crucial in all areas. In such conditions, permanent acquisition of new knowledge and skills, with the application and development of the latest technologies, is a necessary basis for the development and survival of society (Marcikić-Horvat & Radovanov, 2017). Training and career development are very important for every organization. Employee training refers to the process of acquiring the essential skills that a particular job requires. The aim is achieving specific goals, e.g. understanding how a particular machine system works. Career development, on the other hand, places emphasis on general skills, which are applicable in a wide range of different situations. It relates to decision making, creative thinking and managing people (Mihailović & Ristić, 2009). Interested parties in the field of training and development can be divided into several classes. Training and development sponsors are senior managers. Clients of training and development are employees. Direct managers are responsible for coaching, resources and doing business. Participants are those through whom the training itself is conducted. Facilitators are employees in the field of human resources management. Each of these interest groups has its own motives, which may be in conflict with the motives of others (Sultana et al., 2012). Employee training that allows them to match their superiors, as well as people with different views, is one of the best guarantees of long-term success (Čizmić, 2003). Typical types of training are the following: training of new employees, professional skills training, technical knowledge training, training related to customer service, sales and marketing training, health care, etc. (Montana & Charnov, 2000). There is a positive correlation between the competencies of each individual employee and the long-term growth and productivity of organizations. Well-designed and executed learning and development can be a powerful recruitment and retention tool because investment in developing employees demonstrates that the organization values its people (Foster, 2019). Hereinafter, we will closely consider the concepts of training and career development for employees, the way in which management determines the need of organization for a particular type of training, types of employee training with regard to the method, place and manner of performance and the level of knowledge of employees, and the profits that some companies had from continuous training. With respect to legal regulations and procedure, professional training of employees can be a good example for the employer of how the efficient organization of jobs can be applied in all activities of the company. According to Article 49 of the Labor Law, the employer is obliged to provide the employee with education and training, if it is required by the needs of the work process and the introduction of a new way of work organization. The costs of employee training are provided from the funds of the employer and other sources, in accordance with the law and the general act. If the employee terminates education and professional development, they are obliged to refund the cost of training to the employer, unless the termination occurs for justified reasons (Labor Law, 2018).

Concept and types of employee training

The employee training can be defined as an effort to improve the performance of employees at their workplace or in a workplace that is related to them. Training includes acquiring specific knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes or behaviors. Effective training must be in concordance with identified needs and should be planned in advance. The ideal is the situation in which the training meets both the needs of the organization and the individual needs of the employees. The goal is to eliminate any deficiency on the part of the employee in the short term (Guzina, 1999). The concept of training is usually mixed with the concept of development. Employee development implies creation of learning opportunities in order to help employees succeed in their own personal development. Employee development opportunities are not limited to the workplace where employees work (Sultana et al., 2012). In other words, training is a learning activity for acquiring the knowledge and skills that are necessary for doing a job successfully. Training helps employees to do their current job better, and development involves preparing the employees for the future. According to Kraiger (2017), training is the systematic process initiated by the organization that facilitates relatively permanent changes in the knowledge, skills, or affect/attitudes of organizational members. Training is most effective when designed so that trainees are active and encouraged to self-regulate during training, and when

it is well-structured and requires effort on the part of trainees. Autor also defines additional characteristics of effective training: the purpose, objectives, and intended outcomes of training are clearly communicated to trainees; the training content is meaningful, and training assignments, examples, and exercises are relevant to the job; trainees are provided with instructional aids that can help them organize, learn, and recall training content; opportunities for practice in a safe environment are provided; feedback is provided by trainers, observers, peers, or the task itself. In addition, effective training requires a prior needs assessment to ensure the relevance of training content. After training, care should be taken to provide opportunities for trainees to implement trained skills, and organizational and social support should be in place to optimize transfer (Kraiger, 2017). Development can be focused on the development of individuals and the development of teams. Successful companies are different from unsuccessful because their organizational culture is characterized by norms and standards that encourage organizational behavior focused on continuous growth and development, rather than on safety and average. Development planning is especially important for those companies that build their strength on the knowledge and skills of employees (Merit plan, 2011). Firstly, successful organization of training and employee development requires identifying the needs for training and development at three levels: at the level of the organization, at the level of individual work and at the individual level, and often at the level of specific groups in the organization. At the organizational level, it is necessary to identify short-term and long-term goals and business trends that can affect them. At the workplace level, it is necessary to provide information about the activities on that workplace (from job descriptions), specific knowledge and skills (from work specification) and the minimum acceptable standards of performance of a particular job. At the individual level, identifying needs for training and development can be done in two ways: based on the gap between existing performance and standard, or based on the gap that is present between existing and required skills and knowledge for doing business. Training needs are identified in the first case and development needs in the second. Regardless of the method in identifying individual needs for training and development, different means can be used: assessing individual effects, knowledge tests, self-identification of needs, examination of attitudes, competence analysis, etc. At the group level, it is necessary to identify the needs for training and development of specific demographic groups of employees: minorities, women, since the practical experience of many organizations has indicated that the training needs differ according to the groups mentioned (Garavan et al., 1995). After identifying the need for training and development, it is necessary to make a selection of appropriate programs. In that sense, it is necessary to determine who the program participants will be and what type of skills are envisaged for the the subject of training. The training program and the development of employees can be performed by one or several different contractors, from direct managers and employees in the human resources department, colleagues, to internal and external experts for a particular field (Petković et al., 2003). Different skills can be developed by training programs and employee development programs. We can sort them in the following way:

- basic literacy (writing, reading, calculating), – basic technical knowledge (maintenance of the technique, technical expertise of employees)
- interpersonal skills (communication, interpersonal relations, assessment of achievement, leadership, negotiation)
- conceptual and integrative abilities (strategic and operational planning, organizational design, creation of business policies).

After defining the participants, the instructor and the type of knowledge that the organization needs, it is important to decide on the best type of training. Forms of training depend on the place where the training of employees is performed, and determines the choice of methods (Petković et al., 2003). According to the method, different types of training can be classified into two categories (Petković et al., 2003):

- i) information methods based on one-way communication, giving participants information from a certain field of knowledge: lectures written on CDs, self-learning from books, materials, etc.

- ii) experimental methods based on the permanent interaction of instructors and trainees (workplace training, instruction, computer use, simulator training, case study, role-playing, behavior modeling, etc.).

Based on the information about the type and level of competence that the organization needs, it is necessary to select the best quality training programs. The choice should be based on the experience of organizations that have applied different training programs. The success of the training can be assessed in the following ways (Petković et al., 2003): – Participant reaction - Do they like the program? Do they consider it worth spending time? Feedback of trainees and managers is used.

Learning - it is possible to test participants to see if they have learned the principles, skills, and facts that they should have learned, using the tests, observation or by asking them to role-play.

Change in behavior - it is necessary to check whether the behavior of the participants at the workplace has changed after the training program. For example, whether employees in customer complaints department are more polite towards unsatisfied customers than before.

Results - estimates the final results considering the goals set before training (for example, whether the percentage of scams is lower, whether there are less customer complaints, whether the productivity and quality of the product are better).

The role of training in the development of employees and organization

Adapting of employee to the workplace can be achieved through a system of professional orientation, selection and education, i.e. training of employees. This implies distributing of employees to appropriate jobs, work assignments, taking into account their psycho-physical characteristics, as well as general and professional education. Consequences of the worker's disagreement with job requirements can cause a lot of stress for the employee, and are manifested by the decline in labor productivity, sickness, injuries at work, fluctuation, job dissatisfaction. Professional adaptation is the process of acquiring and developing professional knowledge and skills of workers. These are the skills that are necessary for successful performance of work tasks, and the workers acquire them during schooling and work experience, in a significant part by employee training. Most commonly used objective indicators of work adaptation are labor productivity and employee fluctuation. By using productivity as the indicator, we have an insight into the level of employee training, experience and overall attitude toward work. Fluctuation is a consequence of insufficient adaptation of the worker to the job he or she performs, and it implies the tendency to change the job and find another. Professional adaptation refers to the harmony between the man and his work and is focused on the content of the work (Mihailović, 2005). At the same time, the company gets a good and quality worker, which contributes to the development of the organization (Pajević, 2006).

Rationalizing Training and Development

Employee training and development is one of the most significant motivators used to help both individuals and organizations in achieving their short-term and long-term goals and objectives. Training and development not only enhance knowledge, skills, and attitudes, but it also offers several other benefits. The following are common benefits of employee training and development, according to Nassazi (2013):

- i) It increases employees' morale, confidence, and motivations.
- ii) It lowers production costs because individuals are able to reduce waste.
- iii) It promotes a sense of security which in turn reduces turnover and absenteeism.
- iv) It increases employees' involvement in the change process by providing the competencies necessary to adjust to new and challenging situations.
- v) It opens the doors for recognition, higher pay, and promotion.
- vi) It helps the organization in improving the availability and quality of its staff.

It is noteworthy to remember that individuals become more productive (Bapna, Langer, Mehra, Gopal, & Gupta, 2013), because training and development programs improve individuals' skills and

abilities. Even organizations offer tuition reimbursement for individuals to attend such programs (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013).

There are several benefits that employee training and development programs offer to individuals and

organizations, according to Jehanzeb and Bashir (2013):

Individual Benefits: Training and development programs help individuals in learning the soft, functional, and technical skills necessary to perform their jobs. They achieve higher level of job satisfaction, because they feel they are investing in their own future. They feel that their role within the organization has a real purpose. Since the individuals' loyalty tends to increase substantially, they invest more of their time and effort in achieving the bottom line for the organization. Individuals tend to proactively seek opportunities to acquire innovative skills, to experience diverse roles and responsibilities, and to look for additional personal and professional development. Such tendencies increase their confidence, self-esteem, and job gratification. Training and development enhances the overall performance of individuals.

Organizational Benefits: Training and development programs assist organizations in staying competitive in the marketplace. According to Wanger (as cited by Jehanzeb and Bashir, 2013), the American Society for Training and Development (now called the Association for Talent Development) found that there is a relationship between financing in employee training and development programs and higher revenues from stock market. Organizations that invest an average of \$1,575 per employee on learning, received 24% growth in gross profit and 218% increase in revenue per employee. As a result, training and development programs help organizations in retaining their talent, differentiating themselves against other organizations, improving their appearance as best employer in the job market, and increasing the overall organizational effectiveness.

Every organization is responsible for improving employees' performance by implementing relevant and effective training and development programs. Since employees are the most important assets of an organization, it is crucial to sustain such a notion. Organization must optimize the contribution of its employees by ensuring a suitable source of staff that is functionally, technically, and socially capable of growing into specialized or managerial roles (Nassazi, 2013). Overall, organizations that proactively implement employee training and development programs receive positive results from the individuals that use the programs (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013).

Importance of Staff Development

The fundamental objective of any organization is the accomplishment of its goals. This could be achieved and realized when human, material and financial resources within and outside the organization are well harnessed and judiciously used by the management (Glushchenko, 2022). Organizational effectiveness rests on the efficient and effective performance of the workforce that makes up the organization. The efficient and effective performance of the workforce, in turn, rests on the richness of the knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by the workforce. Staff development both physically, socially, intellectually, and mentally are very essential in facilitating not only the level of productivity but also the development of personnel in any organization, therefore, training can be put in contact relevant to school administrators (Glushchenko, 2022). The incessant revision of curricula and development of new and unusual academic programs demands a system to train and retrain instructors and academic leaders on continuous bases. To this end, staff and professional development programs become a foreseeable strategy that education institutions should build in their system to survive in the current changing demands and accountability. To be successful, professional development programs need to be taken into account both for the benefit of the staff and the institution. One reason that seems to always be adduced for poor results in schools is that principals are not appropriately skilled and trained for school management and leadership, and as a result, some call for professional development of school principals. Professional development may take different forms such as training, mentoring, on-

site processes, networks, and professional development schools. As a human resource manager, a principal need to set up mechanisms for nurturing and unfolding educators' potential to enhance effective teaching and learning. Mentoring covers the activities often designed and encouraged by management to develop its personnel and ensure that they improve and maintain the organization's competitive advantage (Mundia & Iravo, 2014). Mentoring is among the few tools used/needed for preparing tomorrow's skilled employees and is also used to strengthen organizational capabilities, and intelligence, build organizational knowledge and sustain the organization's competitive advantage (Adeyemi, 2013). Networking on the other hand is a method of applied research, collecting information from individuals who are most likely delighted to share their knowledge and experience, and offer advice if they have the time. It's quite rare for someone to be anything but flattered to be asked to do this. Networking is not just researching career interests by meeting and talking with contacts. It's also building from one contact to another, and maintaining relationships with them throughout your career. Concluded that networking affects employees' productivity by increasing their knowledge, abilities, motivational level, and close association with the organization. Training is another tool that management uses to develop the effectiveness of human resources in many organizations. It is the development of specific skills and attitudes needed to perform a particular job or series of jobs to maximize the productivity of the individual and improve the overall organizational efficiency. Training of staff enhances organizational effectiveness for it enables employees to perform their duties and responsibilities effectively. The efficiency of an educational system lies in its ability to convert all resources employed in the teaching and learning process to produce useful products with long-term benefits. Therefore, adequate training and retraining of teachers are very important. Participation in staff development programs ensures that principals perform well in their leadership roles to teachers and students. Section 9 sub-section 133 of the National Policy of Education states that leadership building for education managers is the strengthening of the leaders' skills in effective resource mobilization and management (human, material, financial, and time) as well as adequate work practices. There shall, therefore, be mandatory continuous training before and during the period of service for all planners, managers, and administrators in the educational system. Participation in staff development enables the principals to develop the knowledge and skills needed to address teachers' work and students' learning challenges. Stated that staff development is intended to bring about certain relatively permanent changes in the employee's behavior, skills, knowledge, and attitudes to improve performance in his or her current job or future job. Staff development provides opportunities that provide the learning necessary to enable the employee to perform at the level of competency required in current and future position assignments. It fosters a climate that facilitates personal self-fulfillment, institutional effectiveness, human creativity, and system renewal. Staff development serves the school system's primary goals by enhancing and achieving quality teaching and learning for students. Staff development programs in education are measures designed to increase knowledge, skill, experience, and attitude and probably release employees' latent potential. Thus, their potential could be increased to meet the present and future job requirements, thus meeting its objectives. Staff development enables principals to be efficient and effective in the performance of their work. Sackney and Walker (2006) emphasized that school principals need skills in group process facilitation, communication, conflict negotiation, inquiry, and data management. Hence, they need staff development to ensure they acquire these traits of good leadership. There are various approaches to staff professional development such as workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring, in-service training, role play, and case study method among others. Whichever approach one adopts for staff development, the important thing is for the staff to be professionally equipped. It is incontrovertible that every approach has its own merits and demerits. For instance, the traditional approaches to professional development such as seminars, workshops, and conferences have been criticized by researchers such as Kanai and Kumazawa (2021).

Discussions

Rationalizing Training and Development (T&D) in corporate organizations hinges on the fundamental question of whether staff development is a worthwhile investment. The evidence overwhelmingly supports the affirmative, as T&D stands not only as an investment but as a strategic imperative for sustained organizational success.

Staff development is the bedrock of individual and collective growth within a corporate setting. In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving industry landscapes, fostering a workforce capable of adapting to change is non-negotiable. T&D programs equip employees with the skills necessary to navigate these shifts, ensuring they remain relevant and effective contributors to the organization.

Moreover, the impact of staff development extends beyond skill acquisition. It is a catalyst for heightened employee engagement and job satisfaction. When employees perceive that their professional development is a priority, it instills a sense of value and commitment. Engaged employees are more likely to be productive, innovative, and loyal—factors that directly contribute to organizational success.

While there are upfront costs associated with implementing T&D initiatives, the long-term benefits far outweigh these considerations. Improved employee performance, reduced turnover, and a more skilled workforce contribute directly to the bottom line. The return on investment is not only financial but extends to enhanced organizational resilience and agility in a competitive business landscape.

Challenges such as resistance from employees and the need for customization can be mitigated through effective communication and targeted program design. The strategic alignment of T&D with organizational goals ensures that resources are utilized efficiently, addressing specific skill gaps and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

In essence, staff development is not merely an optional expense but an essential driver of organizational vitality. As businesses navigate the complexities of a dynamic world, the commitment to T&D emerges as a linchpin for longevity and competitiveness. The resounding conclusion is clear: staff development is unequivocally worth the investment in the corporate sphere, shaping not only individual careers but the overall trajectory of organizations in the evolving landscape of the business world.

Conclusion

Rationalizing Training and Development (T&D) in corporate organizations is a multifaceted endeavor that demands a thorough examination of its implications, costs, and benefits. The question at the forefront of this analysis is whether staff development is truly worth the investment. In a world characterized by rapid technological advancements, dynamic market conditions, and evolving skill requirements, the role of T&D has become increasingly pivotal. This conclusion explores the nuanced dimensions of this inquiry, delving into the tangible and intangible aspects of staff development, its impact on organizational performance, employee engagement, and the broader socio-economic landscape.

At the core of the discussion lies the recognition that employees are the lifeblood of any organization. Their competencies, adaptability, and motivation significantly influence the company's ability to thrive in a competitive environment. Training and Development programs are designed to enhance these attributes, aiming to equip employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the challenges of their roles effectively. While the direct costs of implementing T&D initiatives may seem substantial, the returns on this investment often extend far beyond mere financial metrics.

One of the primary arguments in favor of staff development is its potential to foster a culture of continuous learning within an organization. In today's fast-paced business environment, the half-life of skills is shrinking, necessitating a workforce that is not only adept at their current responsibilities but also agile in acquiring new competencies. T&D initiatives provide employees with opportunities to upskill, reskill, and stay abreast of industry trends. This commitment to ongoing learning not only enhances individual performance but also positions the organization as an industry leader, capable of adapting to emerging challenges.

Moreover, investing in staff development serves as a powerful tool for talent retention. In a job market where skilled professionals are in high demand, employees are increasingly valuing

opportunities for personal and professional growth. Companies that prioritize T&D signal to their workforce that they are committed to investing in their employees' futures, thereby fostering a sense of loyalty and commitment. This, in turn, reduces turnover rates and the associated costs of recruiting and onboarding new personnel. Beyond the immediate benefits to individuals and organizations, staff development has broader implications for societal progress. By nurturing a skilled and adaptable workforce, corporations contribute to the overall employability of the population. This not only aligns with corporate social responsibility but also enhances the economic resilience of communities by creating a workforce capable of responding to shifting market demands. In essence, the impact of staff development extends beyond the confines of individual organizations, influencing the socio-economic fabric at large. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges and complexities associated with implementing effective T&D programs. The upfront costs, including instructor fees, materials, and potential productivity losses during training periods, can be significant. Moreover, ensuring that the training is relevant, engaging, and aligned with organizational objectives requires careful planning and assessment. In some instances, companies may face resistance from employees who perceive training initiatives as additional burdens on their time or view them as unnecessary.

To address these challenges and optimize the value derived from T&D investments, organizations must adopt a strategic approach. This involves conducting a thorough needs analysis to identify skill gaps and align training programs with the organization's strategic objectives. By customizing training initiatives to address specific challenges, companies can maximize the impact of their investments while minimizing unnecessary costs.

Additionally, leveraging technology in training delivery can enhance accessibility and flexibility. E-learning platforms, virtual simulations, and interactive modules enable employees to engage in training at their own pace, mitigating disruptions to daily operations. Embracing innovative and cost-effective methods of knowledge transfer not only increases the efficiency of T&D programs but also aligns with contemporary trends in digital learning.

Moreover, evaluating the effectiveness of T&D initiatives is integral to ensuring a positive return on investment. Implementing key performance indicators (KPIs) and regularly assessing the impact of training on employee performance, productivity, and job satisfaction allows organizations to fine-tune their programs and address any shortcomings. This commitment to continuous improvement is essential in an environment where the effectiveness of training programs can fluctuate based on evolving business dynamics.

In conclusion, the question of whether staff development is worth the investment in a corporate setting is not a binary decision but rather a strategic consideration with implications for individual employees, the organization, and society at large. The multifaceted nature of this inquiry requires a holistic perspective that balances the immediate costs against the long-term benefits.

The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that, when approached strategically and thoughtfully, Training and Development is not only worth the investment but is a cornerstone of organizational success in the 21st century. The positive impact on employee engagement, talent retention, and societal progress underscores the importance of nurturing a culture of continuous learning within corporate environments. As organizations navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing world, the commitment to developing their most valuable asset—their people—proves to be a prudent and forward-thinking investment in the future.

Recommendation

Recommendations for rationalizing Training and Development in corporate organizations emphasize a strategic approach. Firstly, conduct a thorough needs analysis to tailor programs to specific organizational goals. Second, leverage technology for flexible and efficient training delivery. Third, establish key performance indicators for continuous evaluation and improvement. Communicate the benefits of staff development to mitigate employee resistance, fostering a positive learning culture. Finally, view T&D as a long-term investment, acknowledging its role in enhancing individual skills, organizational resilience, and contributing to broader societal progress—ultimately affirming that staff development is unequivocally worth the commitment.

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