

Linking Training Programs with Organizational Goals

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It is the practice in many organizations to conduct training programs periodically for their employees. Often, these training programs are conducted to enhance on the job skills and to enable the employees to pick up valuable soft skills. Further, the training programs can be technical/job oriented or human resource skills oriented. For instance, it is common in technology companies and especially the big companies to provide a mandatory portion of training measured in hours per quarter for each employee. What these points add up to is the fact that organizational training is taken seriously in many companies. However, an aspect that is often sidelined is the effectiveness of the training programs and their linkage to organizational goals. This aspect makes the training programs lose their purpose and drains precious resources as well as waste of employee time that could have been used productively. **To surmount this, organizations need to link training programs to Specific, Measurable, and Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound goals or the so-called SMART goals that is a proven method for ensuring that organizational goals are met.**

To explain, training programs have to be aimed at specific goals like training on a particular skill (technical or soft skill). Conducting trainings on omnibus topics like leadership without focus on specific goals would render them useless. Next, the outputs from the training programs have to be measurable meaning that an exit test must be held at the end of the training program to assess the impact of the training program on employees. Further, the training programs have to have realistic goals like quantum jumps in skills and not aim for drastic improvements to the skill levels of the employee. The point here is that this focused approach to training pays off better than conducting trainings where the employees think more about what to do when they head back to their desks or are distracted by too many concepts being thrown at them.

Finally, training programs are time bound as mentioned earlier. This means that employees have to be trained periodically so that they retain their competitiveness and their edge and not become obtuse or blunted in their job. The reason for alluding to the SMART goals is that this tool has been proved to be effective in ensuring that organizational goals are linked to training programs and that the training programs are not vague or unconnected to the big picture. In some companies, it is common for employees to be trained offsite on experiential and exercise based training which involves physical activity. However, one should not miss the forest for the trees (literally as many of these experiential trainings happen in resorts in wooded and outskirts) and lose track of the larger goals for which the employees are being trained. **The point here is that the SMART goals must be applied here as well with emphasis on focused approach to organizational goals to be derived from the training.**

In conclusion, trainings that are done without purpose or focus end up wasting the employees' time as well as drain of organizational resources. Hence, the aim that the HRD must strive for is to maximize the effectiveness of the training programs and increase the gains from such training.