

also prepares employees for dealing with emergencies and, in some cases, even saving lives. Let's examine a few of these types and the issues organizations need to consider.

Training and Equity

In the section on diversity training, we deal with ways the organization can improve the ability of a diverse group of employees to work together effectively. **Training equity** means providing equal access to training for all employees. Like hiring and promotion, training is a personnel decision that is subject to legal proscriptions and prescriptions. Even though we hope that the ethics of treating everyone equitably is the norm in the business world, unfortunately, many lawsuits are filed each year because an individual or group feels that it has been treated inequitably. Many of these suits are based on an employee not being selected for a particular position. It might seem like a selection issue, but many times, the organization's training practices played an important part in the outcome of the suit.

The majority of selection decisions within an organization involve current employees (transfers and promotions). Even if the promotion or transfer is based on who has the best set of KSAs for the new job, the company can be found guilty of unfair discrimination. This situation happens when one group of employees (e.g., minorities) is not provided with the same opportunities for training as another group (e.g., nonminorities).

Consider the female technician who worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC).¹⁰³ She wanted to go on remote-location assignments, but was refused because many of these assignments took place at night and were not considered safe. When promotions came up at the CBC, she was not considered because one of the qualifications was a broad-based understanding of the types of assignments technicians go on. She never received the on-the-job training that going on remote assignments provided. The CBC's good intentions, which were meant to protect her, prevented her from developing important KSAs. This, in turn,

PRINTED

BY: arita38118@att.net. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

389

390

inhibited her advancement. Training is an important part of the development of employees, whether they want transfers, promotions, or improved skills. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that all employees are given opportunities to improve themselves and prepare for advancement.

In addition to the traditional performance review for the purpose of compensation and promotion decisions, many companies conduct a separate **developmental review**. This review provides the opportunity for the employee and supervisor to discuss career goals, areas of strength and weakness, and the opportunities for development that are open to the employee. This discussion benefits the organization because it helps develop employees for higher-level positions in the company. It benefits the employee because it provides opportunities to grow and develop. In addition to traditional types of training programs, development plans may include off-site seminars, on-the-job training, participation on a task force, a temporary assignment, or other ways the employee can develop the appropriate KSAs. The key is making sure that all supervisors understand the importance of providing all employees with opportunities on the basis of their current capabilities and developmental readiness, not on their gender, race, age, or other irrelevant criteria. **Training in Action 10-5** provides an excellent example of an organization doing everything possible to provide opportunities for employees.

THE GLASS CEILING

The **glass ceiling** is a metaphor for an invisible barrier that prevents minorities and women from moving up the corporate ladder. It is an example of how training and development opportunities can limit the ability of employees to advance in the company. Let's examine the glass ceiling for women. In the late 1980s, only about 2 percent of the corporate offices of the *Fortune* 500 companies were filled by women.¹⁰⁴ That has improved and was around 16 percent in 2005,¹⁰⁵ but considering the number of females in the workforce, it still seems rather low, especially in light of what Kraft Foods has accomplished. As one of the *Fortune* 500 companies, Kraft Foods takes equity seriously, with more than 26 percent of its corporate positions filled by women.¹⁰⁶ What is the difference between Kraft Foods and many others? One difference seems to be in the area of training. One of the main points, suggested by Kraft Foods executive vice president

Mary Kay Haben, is the company's commitment to personal development and career advancement, both of which focus on training.

10-5 Training in Action Providing Training for Success¹⁰⁷

Many women at Bell Telephone wanted to transfer from the operator's job to the more interesting and lucrative installation and repair jobs. When they applied, however, they failed to pass one of the required tests. Bell Telephone and the Communication Workers of Canada got together to work out a way the women could be more successful.

When women applied to the installation and repair department, they often were not accepted because they did not pass the electronics test. It was an important criterion for acceptance, because much of the work involved understanding and working on the components of a telephone and its accessories. Women did poorly on the test because they usually did not take such courses in high school or follow it as a hobby as men seemed to do. Management and the union worked out an agreement in which operators could apply for a limited number of special training slots created in installation and repair. Successful candidates were required to be able to climb a ladder, have a valid driver's license, and pass a color vision test. Those who were successful were chosen on the basis of their seniority as operators.

Once accepted into a training slot, the operators received six months of on-the-job training in installation and repair. After training, they returned to their operator job until an opening became available. Then they applied like anyone else. The training the women received prepared them for the test and resulted in many operators being selected into the position.

PRINTED

BY: arita38118@att.net. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

390

391

At Kraft Foods, employees meet with their supervisor once a year (formally) to discuss performance, developmental progress, and career aspirations. They meet again (informally) six months later to review how things are going. At Kraft Foods, executives seldom hire from the outside for management positions, so opportunities for moving up are available. When they do lose a senior manager to the competition, they are able to fill the position within minutes.¹⁰⁸ To accomplish this level of preparedness, Kraft Foods developed an extensive human resource planning process with a heavy focus on preparing (training) employees for promotion. Part of this program takes place through an extensive mentoring program. Kraft Foods also formed a high-level committee that monitors how the company is doing regarding women and minorities at each level in the organization. When the committee identifies a problem in any area, it goes about solving it immediately. This example illustrates how a company can tie training to changes in the organizational environment to ensure equitable treatment for all employees.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Legislation in North America makes it unlawful, when hiring or training, to discriminate on the basis of a person's disability, whether physical or mental, if it does not prevent the person from doing the job. Basically, a job analysis describes the critical KSAs. On the basis of that information, it is possible to assess whether the disability will negatively affect job performance. If not, then the candidate must be provided with the same opportunity to be hired, promoted, or trained as anyone else.

Consider Mary, who is hearing impaired but able to speak and read lips. She applies for the job of accounting clerk. The job analysis identifies all the critical tasks and KSAs, and she meets all of them. However, although not a critical task, the job requires using the phone from time to time. Can the employer refuse to hire her on the basis of her inability to use a phone? Although each case needs to be examined on its merit, it would seem that such a refusal to hire her for the job would be illegal. According to the law, the company faces a **duty to accommodate**. It would require the company to purchase a special phone used by the hearing impaired.

Duty to accommodate requires the employer to help people with disabilities do their job. Remember, these employees possess the necessary KSAs to do the job but require some help in certain areas. Accommodation may come in the form of special desks for wheelchairs, large computer monitors for the visually impaired, removal of an unimportant task from a job (that the employee with a disability is not able to do), and so forth. Whether an employer needs to accommodate a person with a disability depends on whether it will result in **undue hardship** for the employer. Undue hardship is determined by factors such as cost of the accommodation, financial resources of the organization, number of employees, and effect of the accommodations on the operation of the company.

Irrespective of the legislation, there are about 36 million workers in the United States who have some type of disability, and only 28 percent of them are employed.¹⁰⁹ This leaves a huge untapped resource of potential talent. Just ask the owner of Habitat International, a supplier of artificial-grass-putting greens, indoor/outdoor carpet, and accent rugs to large retailers such as Home Depot and Meijers. Most of his workforce has some type of disability, yet he pays standard, or slightly above standard market rate for wages. This is not, as he says, because he is altruistic. He has practically no absenteeism or turnover. The defect rate is less than one-half of 1 percent. None of his disabled employees has been involved in an accident at work. The really good news is that his company routinely outperforms the competition two to one, and the profitability continues to grow.¹¹⁰

Many forget, before ruling out anyone, to conduct a job analysis to determine exactly what KSAs are needed. If the job analysis indicates that the job of operator requires answering phones and directing calls, someone who is legally blind can be considered. The main accommodation required in this situation is a phone in Braille. Training, however, may also require some changes to accommodate the special needs of someone who is blind. We return to that issue later.

So let us return to Mary, the hearing-impaired accounting clerk. She moved up to the highest level in nonmanagement accounting. Six years later, when she applies for the accounting

manager position, she is turned down because she does not possess the requisite KSAs. Frank does demonstrate the required KSAs and gets the job, even though he has worked there three years less. However, Frank got those skills through training courses offered by the company. Mary was never told about those training opportunities. If the skills Mary is lacking were available through training and she was not told, the company failed to provide her with the same opportunities as other employees in the company were offered. This failure puts the company in a vulnerable legal position. Perhaps more important, the organization potentially missed out on a competent supervisor and instead faces an extremely angry accounting clerk.

The Training Dimension

For people with disabilities, accommodation on the job is necessary, and so is accommodation in training. Treating someone with special needs equitably in your training requires preparation. Consider, for example, proper furniture and accessibility to the training facility. The trainer might require additional training to talk to someone who is hearing impaired. Perhaps the organization could provide a certified sign-language interpreter. The best way to deal with this issue is to meet with those who have disabilities and ask them what they need.

SUMMING UP TRAINING AND EQUITY

Whether it involves not promoting a female to the job of technician, a minority or female to an executive position, or a hearing-impaired person to supervisor, the issue is the same: The organization is losing out on potential. The career and personal development of everyone in the organization needs to be a top priority. Although this point seems intuitive, a recent survey of organizations noted that about one-third provided no mentoring or coaching for employees, and 16 percent did not provide personal or developmental planning.¹¹¹ How many of the remaining companies are just “going through the motions” rather than doing it properly is also unknown. It is clear, however, that effort needs to go into helping all employees do their best if a company is going to compete. It makes good economic sense. To be sure that it happens, organizations need to consider the following:

- Obtain support from the top that identifies the importance of the issue of equity for all employees.
- Write clear descriptions of job requirements, and make them the focus of decisions personnel.
- Focus part of every manager's appraisal on the equitable treatment of employees.
- Assemble a steering committee that examines the issue and reports on progress each year.
- Establish a liaison and reporting procedure for dealing with issues of inequity.
- Provide extensive training to managers on issues related to equity at all levels.

Consider the implementation of an equity program as an intervention that will require training and changes in policies and procedures to ensure that the forces pushing in the direction of equity for all are stronger than those pushing against.

Basic Skills Training

Literacy training generally includes training in reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. The functionally illiterate cannot use those skills even at the most basic level (reading instructions, writing a report, balancing a checkbook, etc.). The problem may be getting worse as a result of the following factors:

- Lower standards in many high schools today
- More minorities and non-English-speaking immigrants entering the workforce
- The skill requirements for most jobs are increasing

In the United States, about 20 percent of the workforce is functionally illiterate.¹¹² This translates into a loss of about \$60 billion a year in productivity, as measured by mistakes, accidents, and damage to equipment.¹¹³

As far back as 1983, a presidential report, *A Nation at Risk*, identified an inferior education system that would make it difficult for the United States to compete in an international marketplace.¹¹⁴ Organizations find that, even when hiring high school graduates, they need to provide remedial skills training to get them ready for the job. One study indicated that of the new employees classified as requiring training in the basic skills, 67 percent did graduate from high school.¹¹⁵ In addition to issues within the school system, immigration from non-English-speaking countries continues to increase. So new employees with English as a second language will be more prevalent, making reading and writing in English more problematic.

At the same time as skill levels were dropping, most jobs began to require more skills. A machinist now needs computer skills to operate the computerized machinery, and truck drivers need to understand logistics, inventory control, and flow analysis from the computer in their truck. Even parcel delivery requires data entry into a computer. Furthermore, many organizations are becoming ISO certified, thus requiring a new list of skills for the shop floor. Teamwork, which for years was the purview of management, is now also down on the shop floor, demanding that workers understand charts and know how to interact effectively with others.

It is necessary, then, for organizations to upgrade their employees' skills. Before they can, however, employees need to possess the basics. Just providing the basics can result in a positive financial impact. A survey of workplaces where literacy programs were installed revealed a drop in error rate in employees' work, an improvement in morale, and a general improvement in health and safety.¹¹⁶ Another positive outcome of such training is the improvement of employees' self-efficacy. Recall the importance of self-efficacy for training. Those with poor literacy skills will likely show a low self-efficacy. Providing employees with these skills will definitely lead to positive effects.

Developing basic skills (or literacy) training is similar to developing any other training program. The first step is a TNA. Here, more than in other TNAs, the need to ensure confidentiality is critical.¹¹⁷ Workers who are illiterate generally take great pains to hide it out of embarrassment and shame. It might be advisable to use an outside vendor in this case to ensure that few in the organization would know who requires literacy skills

training. One company hired a consultant to provide outside assessment over a long period of time, to encourage everyone who thought that they might have a problem to go for assessment outside the workplace.

Outside vendors need not be the answer. Sea World succeeded via internal resources, through the use of company tutors. Trainees are given the option of a noncompany tutor, but most preferred someone from within the company. As with most things, no single way is always best.¹¹⁸ The key is to keep the training relevant by using material that the employee uses every day. So for reading, use the memos received and typical instructions. This tie-in to actual work makes the success and value immediate. Some tips for improving employees' self-efficacy in literacy training are shown in **Table 10-8**.

Safety Training

In 2009, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 3.3 million job-related injuries and illnesses.¹¹⁹ Although these injuries and illnesses have been declining for a number of years, the number is still very high. With all the technology and information available in North America, you might ask, "Why it is so high?" The answer is partly because safety training is often something the organization *has* to do (by law) rather than something it *wants* to do. These organizations see safety efforts as a cost rather than as an investment. For example, an employee at Nu-Gro died because a forklift had its three safety devices bypassed, so they were not working. Why was this allowed to occur? Well, clearly, safety was not a priority, and likely it was seen as an obstacle to performance.

For many other organizations, a culture of safety is a requirement to be competitive in a global marketplace. In a survey of organizations considered to be on the cutting edge of safety training, it was noted that they developed this "culture of safety" rather than a number of different training courses on safety.¹²⁰ In such an organization, safety training is not considered a cost, but an investment. This distinction may seem minor, but it changes the focus by looking at the benefits of safety training—it is viewed as a cost savings—rather than seeing it as forced compliance with health and

PRINTED BY:

arita38118@att.net. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

393

safety legislation. Evaluating training at the “results” level and identifying the cost savings in fewer accidents, less machine wear, lower compensation costs, and so forth, provide continued support for this proactive approach to safety. An example of this is Schneider Electric, a manufacturer of industrial controls in North America. It recently decided to focus on safety and make safe working habits a “condition of employment.” An evaluation of the results proved enlightening. Medical incidents for its 15,000 employees dropped by 33 percent in one year, translating into a drop in workers’ compensation premiums of \$1 million.¹²²

394

TABLE 10-8 Improving Self-Efficacy in Literacy Training Participants¹²¹

- Reduce anxiety in trainees
 - Let trainees know they are valued by the company and the training shows the company is willing to invest in them.
 - Let trainees know there are many others who have the same problems and they have successfully completed these types of programs.
- Use a non-pejorative title for the training.
 - Titles such as “Personal Skill Development” or “Individual Growth Training” don’t convey negative stereotypes associated with low literacy skills.
- Schedule training on company time. When it’s on the employee’s own time you punish the employee instead of rewarding her for attending the training.
- Phrase your comments around “improving reading and writing skills” rather than learning how to read and write.
- Remember that enactive mastery (successful practice) is the best way to improve self-efficacy.
 - Design the training to create early and frequent success. Highlight the successes.
- Make sure the training meaningful, easier to learn, and immediately useful by using materials and examples from the company.

During years of consulting and training in organizations, we noted that most discussions with employees reveal how boring safety training can be. From what has been presented so far, it is safe to conclude that this impression does not bode well for learning. Valerie Overheul, president of Summit Training Source, suggests several ways to make training interesting.¹²³ She indicates that in many years of training employees in various safety skills, the one comment consistently made over the years is how interesting employees find the training, which is not like previous safety training. Valerie's recipe for increasing trainee motivation in safety training is to "jazz it up." Get trainees' attention through the use of humor, familiar music, action clips, and dynamic graphics. Be sure that the trainer is upbeat and interested in the topic. In a recent survey of the pulp and paper industry, where safety is a critical component of the job, one of the questions dealt with "obstacles to effective training." Fifty-two percent of the respondents indicated "boredom." The next closest response was scheduling, and only 22 percent indicated that it was an obstacle. These statistics reiterate a common theme in the text: Motivate trainees by making training interesting.

Training Workers from Different Cultures

Increased globalization and new technologies available for training have resulted in more training for more people in more countries. As noted in **Chapter 7**, there are many types of distance learning methods available to provide organizational training. Consequently, the question arises: Do you simply send North American-style training abroad, or do you need to be sensitive to cultural differences?

Training in North America often contains the following:

- Games, exercises, and role-plays to make it interesting
- A large interactive component that requires trainee participation through questioning and describing their experiences related to the training topic

PRINTED

BY: arita38118@att.net. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

394

395

These two design aspects of North American training can be problematic for some cultures. In Russia, for example, trainees see training as an opportunity to get ahead, and they are already motivated to learn.¹²⁴ Maintaining interest is not important, and games are unheard of. In Europe, trainees want the training, not things such as games and exercises that could be seen as a waste of time.¹²⁵

A trainer in Norway noted that trainees were reluctant to become involved in discussions during the training. They preferred a highly structured training atmosphere.¹²⁶ In Russia, trainees respond better to self-study, especially if it is structured.¹²⁷ Chinese trainees expect a very formal lecture, with little interaction or questioning by trainees.¹²⁸

Earlier in the chapter, we discussed the need for expatriates to understand the culture of the host country and operate effectively within it. To prepare the expatriate for her role in the host country, some type of training is advisable. But, if you've developed training in North America on company practices, interpersonal skills, and so on, do you need to adapt those programs when training employees from different cultures? The answer seems to be yes and no. First, according to Mike Davis, general manager of Oracle Corporation, North American training does have too much of an entertainment component, and toning it down may be beneficial. He says his European clients just want the nuts and bolts of training, not the flash.¹²⁹ They are already highly motivated to learn the material. This is particularly true of sales training, where cheerleading and giving prizes to trainees like a game show takes place.

What about involvement? In Asia, Alan Chute, the chief learning strategist for Lucent Technologies, says he asks the senior management for questions. If others have a question, they send it to the senior manager so he can ask it. This ensures that a junior person does not ask a better question than a senior manager.¹³⁰

But, as we have emphasized in this text, involvement by trainees ensures understanding and improves retention. So what to do? It seems that those who do try to include a high level of interaction in their training abroad are successful. In Russia, for example, discussions are received positively, but they need to be highly structured. Even icebreakers, role-plays, and exercises, which are viewed as taboo, seem to be enjoyed once they are tried, and trainees expect them in the future.¹³¹ In China, questioning of

instructors is simply not done. When Chuck Greenwood, from Drake University in Iowa, was teaching students in China, he suggested that they “act¹³² like Americans” for the class and ask lots of questions. He found them eager to participate. A trainer from England asked a student in Korea if the training he was attending might not be Americanizing him. He answered: Of course, that is the whole point.¹³³ It seems that prolonged exposure to trainers who have an interactive style is infectious; and given the advantages of the interactive style for adult learning, that is a positive thing.

So it would seem that more entertaining training methods might initially be more difficult to sell abroad. Note, however, that we do not adhere to the idea that entertainment alone is a good thing. We suggest that making training more interesting is a good idea, but it needs to be done in a way that is relevant to the topic. As for the interactive component, given its importance to learning, and given that it seems to be something other cultures can get used to and even enjoy, it should be considered as an important component of any learning. The implementation strategy, however, should be carefully developed to address the cultural issues of the group being trained.

What about training in North America, where organizations have multiple cultures to contend with in their training? Given the preceding information, it seems that games and interactive methods can be effective across many cultures. To increase acceptance, trainers should consider an orientation to training before those from different cultures attend their first regular training session. This would involve trainees learning the value of the novel training methods for retention and transfer back to the job. From the preceding information, this acceptance might not be all that difficult to generate.

So what is the conclusion? First, there are many factors to consider when training is developed by one culture and provided to another. Here we have addressed only two important

components of North American training. There seems to be an acceptance of exercises that make the training interesting and get trainees involved in interactions with the trainer. But culture still needs to be considered in training those in other countries. In China, because it would be embarrassing to have a junior manager ask a better question than the senior manager, it might make sense to train one level in the organization at a time. Also, providing some type of orientation to training methods that are novel for the culture will increase the level of acceptance.

Summary

This chapter examined in depth five of the more prevalent training practices taking place in organizations today: orientation, diversity, sexual harassment, team, and cross-cultural training. For the orientation, we discuss the importance of it and what organizations are doing. We also provide a hypothetical example, following the training model, to assist readers in understanding how to go about developing orientation training. For the other four training types, we again discuss the importance and what organizations are doing. Then, following the training model, we briefly outline the points to consider in developing such training.

Additional issues and training programs were discussed more generally and briefly. Equity was discussed in relationship to employment and training opportunities; employees are more often selected from within the organization than not. Even when promotions and transfers are based on the person's skills and potential, all employees, regardless of their race, gender, or disability, must be provided access to training and development opportunities. The importance of equitable access in preventing costly litigation is understood, but it is more important in terms of fair treatment and obtaining the best employees in all positions.

The need for highly skilled, continually learning employees requires a solid foundation of basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. More and more companies are taking it on themselves to provide these skills. However, employees experiencing functional illiteracy are unlikely to admit it unless organizations take the time to develop and market training that addresses these skills.

Many companies see safety training as a significant cost savings tool. In the past, it was generally presented in an uninteresting manner, leading to poor learning and transfer to the job. If safety training is to achieve its cost avoidance potential, it needs to be designed to arouse the interest of the trainees.

CASE THE COMPETENT EMPLOYEE (CONCLUSION)

Recall that Ms. Conner requested that the personnel manager investigate her complaints, and he found no merit to her complaint. As a result, she filed a civil action against SBI based on the treatment she endured. The judgment was in her favor, awarding her more than \$500,000 in damages.¹³⁴ Clearly, much of this award was based on the hostile environment created by her managers and co-workers. However, consider the costs of simply going to court: time required for managers to get records together, preparations for trial, and legal representation. This potential expense alone is reason enough to motivate organizations to pay attention to such issues and provide appropriate training to see that it does not happen. But even more important are the ethics of fair treatment and the potential loss of a productive employee.

Key Terms

- Developmental review
- Diversity training
- Duty to accommodate
- Glass ceiling
- Hostile work environment
- Literacy training
- Orientation training
- Quid pro quo harassment
- Sexual harassment
- Training equity
- Undue hardship

PRINTED

BY: arita38118@att.net. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

396

397