

Unit IV

Learning and Development, Performance Management, and Appraisal

Unit IV: Learning and Development, Performance Management, and Appraisal

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts presented in this course, the unit lessons will be structured in question-and-answer format. Each slide will provide at least one question based on concepts presented in this unit and an accompanying audio response from a subject matter expert. Review each slide to further enhance your practical knowledge about the field of human resource management.

Unit IV

Meet Marilyn Pike

Marilyn has over 20 years of experience in HR leadership positions in both the public and private sector, large and small businesses, and union and non-union environments. She currently holds both the SPHR and SHRM-SCP.



Click the audio symbol to hear the answer.



Question: What is the difference between training and development?

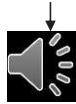
Answer: Good question because we often hear/see those two in combination. Training is designed to build on the general knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) which were identified for a particular position and provide new employees with the specifics they need to succeed in their new job. The business rationale behind training is that it will be put to immediate use by the individual being trained. For example, when I was HR director for a call center, our client (Direct TV) required us to put new employees through an eight-week paid training program before the new employee could take one phone call. Obviously, this made turnover very expensive, and we had to project turnover in order to keep a steady flow of employees coming out of training to replace employees who left, for whatever reason. The purpose of employee development on the other hand is to provide workers with new and/or advanced skill sets to help them either move up in the organization or provide some additional value to the organization. For example, a home health organization might pay the tuition for a registered nurse to become wound certified. This allows the organization to offer more services to patients and gives them a competitive edge. I think the key here is the word "development."

Generally, workforce training includes new employee orientation, which we all know is critical to an employee's success, and is used to provide new employees an introduction to the organization and its culture. And, in addition, give them insights into how to do their job within the organization. Training is also used when an organization has changed processes or procedures or when a performance issue has been identified.

Unit IV

Question: What is reskilling?

Click the audio symbol
to hear the answer.



Glad you asked. Reskilling, also called upskilling or retraining is gaining some traction in these times of low unemployment. It involves companies preparing current workers for jobs that require in-demand technical skills.

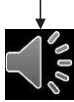
In an April 19, 2019 article in The Wall Street Journal, entitled, “Why Companies Are Failing at Reskilling” by Lauren Weber, reports how while businesses complain about high hiring costs to meet fast changing business needs in a tight labor market, they forget there is a ready pool of talent available, talent that has a work history in their organization. Too often, recruiters look outside the organization to find talent as opposed to offering training opportunities to those already on the payroll. Finding the needed talent externally is especially difficult in a market where the supply of skills like cloud computing and cybersecurity can’t satisfy the immense demand for them. By reskilling, rather laying off (discarding) loyal employees and hiring unknown entities, organizations would be wise to offer their current employees an opportunity to learn a new skill and develop a new career path.

For example, Amazon has offered some warehouse workers a data technician training program that could lead to a doubling of their wages. For others, construction, maintenance and sales jobs offer some alternatives. Bottom line, I think we are discovering that we do not have an endless supply of workers in the United States. Companies need to consider reskilling current employees rather than initiating layoffs, which are costly, only to find that a new fresh pool of workers is not out there.

Unit IV

Question: What are some challenges to the training process?

Click the audio symbol
to hear the answer.

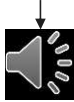


Answer: Exactly. And those challenges can't be minimized whether it is in reskilling or any other type of training. Common challenges to the training process include an unprepared workforce. We are finding that many people we have hired are ill-prepared in educational basics. There is the very real resistance to change and the employee insecurity that goes along with it. Scheduling, timing, training to minimize problems—anyone who has ever done training is probably aware of the resistance the training department gets from managers when you want to take away some of their workers for training. Because obviously, the work still needs to be done. Then there is logistics issues—locations available for training courses. And of course, the very important strategic congruence (justifying training by ensuring it furthers strategic goals). Return on investment/cost justification. Training is time consuming and expensive. If those two are not met, the training will more than likely not meet the company's expectations. And then we have to consider employee readiness, which include employee readiness, capability, and their willingness.

Unit IV

Question: What is the difference between performance management and performance appraisal?

Click the audio symbol
to hear the answer.

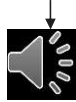


Answer: Performance management is a continual process that identifies, measures, and manages, and develops the performance of people in the organization. It is designed to improve worker performance over time. Performance appraisal is the ongoing process that is part of performance management system. It identifies, measures, and evaluates the employee's performance and then discusses that performance with the individual. This should be an ongoing process. Performance appraisals have three major purposes. Communication is the first purpose. Appraisals need to provide an opportunity for formal two-way communication between management and the employee concerning how the organization feels the employee is performing. The second purpose is to gain information for evaluative decisions. We need good information on how employees are performing so that we can take fair and equitable actions with our workforce, to improve organizational productivity. Providing motivation for development is the last major purpose. Used correctly, appraisals can motivate by providing opportunities for the employees to improve their performance over time.

Unit IV

Question: Why are some companies choosing to do away with performance appraisals?

Click the audio symbol
to hear the answer.



Answer: Let's face it, historically, I don't think anyone likes doing or receiving a performance appraisal. Managers don't like doing them, employees don't like receiving them. In the past few years, there has been a lot of talk about companies which have decided to dump their annual performance appraisals. I think this is a good idea because I think one year is too long a time in between appraisal. They say that there should be no surprises at a performance review. A common problem in appraisals is overpowering an employee during the evaluation debrief with large amounts of negative information that they have not heard during the coaching. This tends to cause the employee to "turn off" or stop listening as the manager explains what is wrong. Employees will just "raise their shields" to ward off all of the negative information.

Employees need more frequent and regular check-ins with their manager in order to make sure they are on track with the manager's expectations. Many companies are choosing to replace performance reviews with more frequent evaluations. The idea is that more frequent and clear performance talks provide better results for both sides. Part of a good performance review is developing a conversation, which helps employees reflect on their accomplishments as well as their challenges and develop a plan/goals to work on until the next review. I like that process, because it is simple, not particularly threatening, and helps keep everyone on track. New ideas for some form of routine or continuous technology-based appraisal and feedback (often called "check-ins" by the firms) have proliferated over the recent past, with dozens, if not hundreds, of tech companies now offering apps or other software solutions to provide companies

with the ability to give all employees constant feedback. There is valuable information that is gained from this process, but the latest online, app-based, and/or social options have not gotten to the point yet where they can provide all of the same valuable information that an in-person face to face appraisal can provide.

Unit IV

This concludes the Unit IV question-and-answer session with subject matter expert, Marilyn Pike. Reflect on this question-and-answer session as you review your readings for this unit.