Importance of Manpower Training to Enhance Productivity of Staff Performance

Felicia Kehinde Akanbi [a]
Adeniyi Temitope Adetunji [b]

Abstract

The importance of training and development, and the growing complexity of the work environment in present-day society cannot be overemphasized. Training and development ensure that organizational staff possesses the knowledge and skills needed to perform their jobs effectively and adapt to ever-changing technology. This paper uses desk research to evaluate work carried out related to training and manpower development, especially debate centered on how to improve the quality of staff performance. The study finds that, although a host of workshops, seminars, and training are available, few are assessed due to the differences between budgetary provisions and actual funds released, for various years, at both federal and state levels.

Author correspondence:
Felicia Kehinde Akanbi,
Department of Management & Accounting Faculty of Management Science Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Ogbomoso,
Email address: niyi.adetunji1@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

There are a number of factors that contribute to the success of any organization, these factors include capital, equipment, manpower, etc. All these factors are important, but the most significant factor is the human factor. Since it is people that put other resources to work, they should be viewed as such by management, giving due attention to human resources, in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Many organizations have come to recognize that training offers a way of developing skills, enhancing productivity and quality of work, and building workers loyalty to the firm. Until recently there was a general resistance to investment in training in the public services, because of the belief that 'employees hired under a merit system must be presumed to be qualified, that they were already trained for their jobs, and that if this was not so it was evident that the initial selection of personnel was at fault' (Okotoni & Erero, 2005). This assumption has been jettisoned as the need for training is obvious, in both the private and public sectors.

---

[a] Department of Management & Accounting Faculty of Management Science Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Ogbomoso
[b] Business Administration Department Bowen University, Iwo Nigeria

In any organization, there are many things that employees have to learn in order to become competent in their jobs. It is within the framework of this cluster of roles and learning processes that the management clearly states responsibilities and provides members of the organization with resources and boundaries within which efficiency is a reasonable expectation (Mukoro, 2004). In an attempt to accomplish these goals, human resources training and development becomes inevitable. Jones, George, and Hill (2000) observe that the importance of training is becoming more obvious given the growing complexity of the work environment, the rapid change in organizations and technological advancement, which necessitate the need for training, and development of personnel to meet new challenges.

Manpower development is a dynamic process, as it is a response to change in the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals so that they can better adapt to new techniques and challenges. Training is a learning process in which learning opportunities are purposefully structured by managerial, human resources and training staff, working in collaboration with one another, or by external agents acting on their behalf (Shaun, 2006). The aim of the process is to develop in the organization's employees, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that have been identified necessary for the effective performance of their work, and hence for the achievement of the organizational aims and objectives, using the most cost-effective means available.

Training in an organization starts with employee orientation, which is a process designed to assist in making a successful transition to work life. It is a time to learn about the organization, its culture and what it stands for, including the composition and structure of the organization. If an organization spends a considerable amount of money recruiting, interviewing and perhaps even relocating employees, it makes good sense to go one step further and make the new employees feel they have made a good decision to come to the organization. This, however, can only be done through adequate and proper training. Human resources development equips employees with relevant professional skills and knowledge to bring about effective and efficient performance.

2. Research Methods

Manpower training and development constitute the dynamics of human resource management. Some scholars have tried to distinguish between manpower training and development, while others believe it is difficult to differentiate between the two concepts. Onah (2003) argues that manpower training and development can occur simultaneously or complement each other, but the two do not necessarily have a direct relation to each other. For Onah, training and development should be separated as concepts. He states, however, that the two concepts should be treated together because they produce the same effect on the staff, which is the improvement of effectiveness and efficiency.

Nwachukwu (1988) defines manpower training as 'an organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the efficient execution of the functions for which he is hired', while development 'deals with activities undertaken to expose an employee to perform additional duties and assume positions of importance in the organizational hierarchy'. Asaju (2008) asserts that it is safer to argue in favor of this considerable overlap because there is little to be said of their differences. In Asaju's view, both training and development are purposefully geared towards the improvement of skills and performance. The principal intention of manpower training, according to Akpan (1988), is to equip people with the knowledge required to qualify them for a particular position of employment, or to improve their skills and efficiency in the position they already hold. Therefore, training is a means of equipping employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to perform their jobs better, and as a way of solving employees' problems of self-improvement, advancement and better placement. This could be formal or informal and either on or off the job training.

Obi and Zakari (2007) define training and development as an attempt to improve an employee's current or future performance by increasing, through learning, the employee's ability to perform, usually by increasing the employee's skills and knowledge. Conroy (1978) sees employee training and development as a purposeful effort intended to strengthen an organization's capability to fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently. He indicates that training and development are necessitated by changes that the technological, economic, legal, political and social environments bring to the organization. According to him, organizations need to prepare to handle and cope with such changes, if they are to remain competitive, maintain their social utility, survive, grow and expand. This, in essence, means that for an organization to be able to cope with future changes, it must invest in its employees through the provision of adequate training and development programmers.

Obi and Zakari (2007) also posit that employee training and development is a process which leads to the formation of values and attitudes, the development of skills and the knowledge of people, thereby contributing to the enhancement

or improvement of the quality of a nation's personnel, on which a nation ultimately depends. Appleby (1994) states that there is a distinction between training and development. For him, training is designed for non-managers, while development is aimed at managerial personnel. Appleby (1994) indicates that training courses are typically designed for the short term and have a stated set purpose, such as the operation of some piece of machinery, etc. while development involves a broader education for long-term purposes. He makes a distinction between training and development, affirming that training relates to the acquisition of knowledge and skills for the purposes of an occupation or task, while development is concerned more with changes in attitude, behavior and employee potential, than with immediate skill. For him, development relates to career development more than job development. It is a learning activity which concentrates on the future needs of the organization.

Jones, George, and Hill (2000) believe that training primarily focuses on teaching organizational members how to perform their current jobs, and helping them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be effective performers. Training relates to the acquisition of knowledge and skill for the purposes of an occupation or task. Its focus is much more narrowly based than education or development, and it is job or task-oriented. Training is a set of activities that provide the opportunity to acquire and improve job-related skills (John et al., 1998). It is also a planned organizational effort to help employees acquire job-related knowledge and skills and to remedy shortfalls in established standards of performance. In other words, training helps to bridge the gap between existing performance ability and desired performance standards.

Development is defined by Armstrong (2005) as 'the growth or realization of a person's ability and potential through the provision of learning and educational experiences'. Chrude and Sherman (2004) argue that the development of employees should be viewed as beginning with orientation, and continuing through a wide variety of activities that are concerned with information, employees of the organization, policies, and procedures, regardless of gender. All the aforementioned researchers buttress the fact that for training to be what it is supposed to be, it should affect three areas of life of an employee, knowledge, skill, and attitude (behavior).

This comprehensive definition, as we can see, focuses attention on the main aim of training, which is effective performance. Without continuous updating of knowledge, skills, and attitude, there may not be effective performance, and this is likely to affect the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives. Helping employees to become effective in their jobs is one of the most fundamentally important tasks in people management that any work organization has to undertake. This is because employers depend on the quality of their employees' performance to achieve organizational aims and objectives.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 Purpose of training

Ijaduola (2007) believes that the need for staff development programmers is to ensure employment mobility of the individual and keep already trained people abreast of new changes in knowledge and technology which are essential to the continued high productivity in their respective fields. Development can be viewed as being broader than training because the skills acquired cannot be tied to a particular task. Development thus refers to the process by which managerial employees acquire the experience, skills, attributes, and attitudes that are needed to become, and remain, successful leaders in their organizations, and such skills are in the area of decision making, planning, directing and coordination.

Organizations are purposeful, with specific goals and objectives, which require human resources to be achieved. Training is, therefore, a systematic process of altering the behavior, knowledge, and motivation of employees in order to increase their effectiveness and organizational goal attainment. The aim of staff development is to enable the employee to reach the top or achieve the best in his career. Such a position could be attained through action, observation, study, reflection, experiment and initiation (Onah, 2003). Cole (2002) says that 'staff development should be seen as any learning activity which is directed towards future needs rather than present needs and which is concerned more with career growth than immediate performance'. The focus of staff development tends to be on the organization's future staff requirements and on the growing needs of individuals in the workplace.

3.2 Types of formal training

a) Induction Training: This involves the introduction of the new entrant to the undertaking and its ways, including the structures, rules, and procedures of the company, to enable him to cope with the new environment.
b) Skill Acquisition: This involves the development of new skills and abilities. This is needed especially when new machines are acquired and training is necessary to gain the required skills for operation.
c) Skill Development: This is needed to update a person's knowledge or skill at a particular stage of their career or whenever changes occur in their work, such as when new technology is introduced.
d) Attitude Change: Training may be undertaken to change the perspective or attitude workers adopt in relation to the organization and their work within it, in a positive way. It can develop employees' trust, commitment to the organization, job involvement, and job satisfaction.

3.3 Aims of training and development

The aims of training and development include changing the job behavior or attitude of employees so that they can perform to defined standards; reducing the 'hibernating time', which is the gap between placement and the point at which an employee starts to perform effectively; improving the productive capacity of individual employees; and improving the effectiveness of the organization. Having understood the importance of manpower training and development, it is important to know what can trigger an organization to train or re-train, their staff, in order to make them productive.

3.4 Factors that trigger training and development

Training may be triggered for many reasons, only a few of which are mentioned in this study. When there is increased labor turnover among workers, training may be required. When there is a decline in productivity among workers, it is important to re-orientate as well as train staff to motivate them and make them more productive. When there is poor job performance among workers, as soon as this problem is spotted, there is a need to organize training for the staff. An increase in complaints from customers, or when there is reduced patronage by customers, is a trigger that management should always keep on top of, because of the general saying that 'the customer is always right', and any complaint from customers can affect the image of the organization and affect sales. Therefore, in such a situation, it is important to organize training, but also worth studying what the cause of the complaints are, in order to know the right training to organize, be that after-sales or customer service training. Other triggers include when new machines are purchased to replace old ones, or when there is a noticeable reduction in job involvement or organizational commitment.

4. Conclusion

Manpower training has been established as an important factor in changing the beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of individuals, in order to increase staff efficiency and productivity. Not only that, investment in employees through adequate training has been shown to be an enabling factor in helping organizations cope with future changes. It is thus recommended that there should be an actual release of funds for every approved training programmer.

References

Akpan, C. A., Hitchcock, P. B., Nixon, J. F., Yoshifuji, M., Niitsu, T., & Inamoto, N. (1988). Different modes of hydrogen migration in reactions of diphosphaallene, ArP□ C□ PAr (Ar= 2, 4, 6-But3C6H2) with [W (CO) 5 (THF)] and [Fe3 (CO) 12]. Crystal and molecular structure of [Fe2 (CO) 6 (ArP□ CHPCH2 (CMe2) C6H2But2)]. *Journal of organometallic chemistry*, *338*(3), C35-C37.

Amadi-Obi, A., Yu, C. R., Liu, X., Mahdi, R. M., Clarke, G. L., Nussenblatt, R. B., ... & Egwuagu, C. E. (2007). T H 17 cells contribute to uveitis and scleritis and are expanded by IL-2 and inhibited by IL-27/STAT1. *Nature medicine*, *13*(6), 711.

Appleby, R. (1994). " Church and Age Unite!"(Book Review). *Theological Studies*, *55*(1), 161.

Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2014). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Asaju, K. (2008). Manpower training and development: An essential for achieving organizational goals. *Journal of management and enterprise development. 5 (2), 1*, 5.

Chrude, A. S. & Sherman, Z. (2004). School Focus In-Service Training. Crown Helm, London

Cole, G. (2004). Management Theory and Practice: Book power.

Conroy, B. (1978). *Library staff development and continuing education: principles and practices* (No. 023.5 C65).

Ijaduola, K. O. (2007). Impact of Staff Development Programmes on Secondary School Teachers' Productivity in Imeko-Afon Local Government Area. *Nigeria International Journal of Labour and Organisational Psychology*, *1*(1), 5-16.

Jones, G. R., George, J. M., & Hill, C. W. L. (2000). Management of organisation.

Mukoro, A. (2009). Building institutions for partnership in local governance in Nigeria. *International NGO Journal*, *4*(5), 216-224.

Nwachukwu, C. C. (1988). *Management: Theory and practice*. Africana-FEP Publishers.

Okotoni, O., & Erero, J. (2005). Manpower training and development in the Nigerian public service. *African journal of public administration and management*, *16*(1), 1-13.

Onah, F. O. (2003). Human Resource Management Enugu.

Shaun, T., & York, A. (2006). Essentials of Human Resource Management.