

Unit 13: Training

Objectives

After going through the Unit, you should be able to :

- Discuss the importance of training
- Suggest a training system
- Identify areas for evaluation of training
- Discuss ways of making training more strategic
- Elaborate dimensions of organizational learning

Structure

- 13.1 A suggested training system
- 13.2 Organising training programmes
- 13.3 Evaluation of training
- 13.4 Some issues in training
- 13.5 The present status of training
- 13.6 Making training a strategic function
- 13.7 Towards learning organisations
- 13.8 Further readings

Training is the most important function that directly contributes to the development of human resources. This also happens to be a neglected function in most of the organisations. Recent surveys on the investments made by Indian organisations on training indicate that a large number of organisations do not even spend 0.1 per cent of their budget on training. Many organisations do not even have a training department. If human resources have to be developed, the organisation should create conditions in which people acquire new knowledge and skills and develop healthy patterns of behaviour and styles. One of the main mechanisms of achieving this environment is institutional training.

Training is essential because technology is developing continuously and at a fast rate. Systems and practices get outdated soon due to new discoveries in technology, including

technical, managerial and behavioural aspects. Organisations that do not develop mechanisms to catch up with and use the growing technology soon become stale. However, developing individuals in the organisation can contribute to its effectiveness of the organisation.

Such development, however, should be monitored so as to be purposeful. Without proper monitoring, development is likely to increase the frustration of employees if when, once their skills are developed, and expectations raised, they are not given opportunities for the application of such skills. A good training sub-system would help greatly in monitoring the directions in which employees should develop in the best interest of the organisation. A good training system also ensures that employees develop in directions congruent with their career plans.

13.1 A Suggested Training System

A good system of training starts with the identification of training needs. The following sources can be used for identifying training needs.

Performance Review Reports

Performance review reports help in identifying directions in which the individuals should be trained and developed. On the basis of the annual appraisal reports, various dimensions of training can be identified. Training needs identified on the basis of performance appraisal, provide good information for organising in-company training, and on-the-job training for a select group of employees.

Potential Appraisal

Training needs identified on the basis of potential appraisal, would become inputs for designing training programmes or work-out training strategies for developing the potential of a selected group of employees who are identified for performing future roles in the organisation.

Job Rotation

Working in the same job continuously for several years without much change may have demotivating effects. Some organisations plan job rotation as a mechanism of maintaining the motivation of people. Training is critical in preparing the employees before placing them in a new job.

Continuing Education

Besides these, most of the training programmes that are organised today, aim at equipping the managers with new technology. These training programmes attempt to help the managers raise their present level of effectiveness.

13.2 Organising Training Programmes

After identifying the training needs, the next step is to design and organise training programmes. In large companies it is possible for the training department to organise several in-company training programmes.

For designing the training programme on the basis of the training needs, the following points may be kept in view:

1. Wherever there are sizeable number of people having the same training needs, it is advisable to organise an in-company programme. The organisation can save a lot of cost. Besides, by having the group of people from the same work place mutuality can be inculcated. The probability of the trainees actually applying what they have learnt is high because of high group support.
2. Whenever new systems have to be introduced training is needed to develop competencies needed to run the systems.
3. It is better to aim at in-company programmes for technical skills wherever possible and outside programmes for managerial and behavioural development.
4. People performing responsible roles in the organisation should be encouraged to go out periodically for training where they would have more opportunities to interact with executives of other organisations and get ideas as well as stimulate their own thinking.
5. The training department should play a dynamic role in monitoring the training activities. It should continuously assess the impact of training and help the trainees in practising whatever they have learnt.
6. Whenever an individual is sponsored for training he should be told categorically the reasons for sponsoring him and the expectations of the organisation from him after he returns from the programme.

Most companies do not inform the employees why they have been sponsored; such a practice reduces learning, as the employees sponsored are more concerned about the reasons for being sponsored than actually getting involved in and benefiting from the training.

13.3 Evaluation of Training

Many organisations, especially industries, have been concerned with the difficult but critical question of evaluation. Training managers or organisers are also concerned with this question. All books on training have dealt with this issue, but no satisfactory and comprehensive accounts of evaluation are available.

For the preparation of a comprehensive conceptual framework of training evaluation and an effective strategy of evaluating training programmes and system, it is necessary to consider several aspects of evaluation. The basic question in this regard relates to the value of evaluation: why evaluate training? Hamblin has discussed this question very well—that evaluation helps in providing feedback for improvement (and better control) of training. When we discuss feedback and improvement, two relevant questions are raised: feedback to whom? Improvement of what? The former question relates to the main client groups, and the latter to the main dimensions and specific areas of evaluation.

Two additional questions are: how should evaluation be done? What specific ways should be adopted for it? These questions relate to the design and techniques of evaluation, respectively.

Main Clients

There are several partners in the training act and process, and all of them are the client of evaluation. Their needs for feedback and use of feedback for improvement (control) will naturally be different with some overlapping. There are four main partners in training (and clients for evaluation):

1. The participants or learners (P)
2. The training organisation or institute (I) including
 - (a) Curriculum planners (CP)
 - (b) Programme designers (PD)
 - (c) Programme managers (PM)
3. The faculty or facilitators or trainers (F)
4. The client organisation, the ultimate user and financier of training (O)

Literature on training evaluation has not paid due attention to this respect.

Dimensions of Evaluation

Attention has been given to the main dimensions of training, and most of the suggested models are based on these. Four main dimensions have usually been suggested: contexts, inputs, outputs, and reaction. The last dimension is not in the same category as the other three. Reaction evaluation can be of contextual factors, training inputs, and outcomes of training.

In all discussions of training evaluation the most neglected aspect has been the training process which cannot be covered by training inputs. The climate of the training organisation, the relationship between participants and trainers, the general attitudes and approaches of the trainers, training methods, etc., are very important aspects determining the effectiveness of training. Evaluation of the training process, therefore, should constitute an important element. We may thus have four main dimensions of evaluation: evaluation of contextual factors (C), evaluation of training inputs (I), evaluation of training process (P), and evaluation of training outcomes (O).

Areas of Evaluation

The various areas of training evaluation need more attention and elaboration. Seven main areas, with some sub-areas under each, are suggested for consideration. These are shown in Exhibit 13.1 in sequential order; the exhibit also shows the conceptual model of training, by relating the areas to the dimensions. This model is based on the following assumptions.

Exhibit 13.1
Coverage of Evaluation

<i>Area of Evaluation</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
1. Pre-training Factors	Context
(a) Preparation	
(b) Learning Motivation	
(c) Expectations	
2. Training	Events
(a) Curriculum Including	

- (b) Specific Events
- (c) Specific Sessions
- 3. Training Management Context
 - (a) Areas of Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction
 - (b) Training Facilities
 - (c) Other Facilities
- 4. Training Process
 - (a) Learning Climate
 - (b) Training Methods (Pedagogy)
 - (c) Trainer Team Effectiveness
- 5. Participant Development Outcome
 - (a) Conceptual Development
 - (b) Learning of Skills
 - (c) Change in Values/Attitudes
 - (d) Change of Behaviour
 - (e) Application
- 6. Organisational Development Outcome
 - (a) Job Effectiveness
 - (b) Team Effectiveness
 - (c) Organisational Effectiveness
- 7. Post-training Factors Context
 - (a) Cost
 - (b) Organisational Support
 - (c) Organisational Factors Hindering
or Facilitating Use of Training

1. Effectiveness of training depends on the synergic relationship and collaborative working amongst the four major partners of training (participants, training organisation, trainers and client organisation). Hence evaluation should provide the necessary feedback to these for contributing to training effectiveness.

2. Training effectiveness depends not only on what happens during training, but also on what happens before the actual training (pre-training factors) and what happens after the training has formally ended (post-training factors). Evaluation cannot neglect these important contextual factors.
3. Various aspects of the training process that are not direct training inputs (for example also contribute to its effectiveness. Evaluation should, therefore, also focus on these factors.
4. The focus or the main task of evaluation should not only be in the nature of auditing (measuring training outcomes in terms of what has been achieved and how much), but should also be diagnostic (why the effectiveness has been low or high), and remedial (how effectiveness can be raised).

Design of Evaluation

The overall design of evaluation helps in planning the evaluation strategy in advance. Evaluation designs can be classified in various ways. Two important dimensions, however, are the time when evaluation is done (or data are collected), and the group, or groups involved in evaluation (or data collection). Data on relevant aspects may either be collected only once after the training is over, or on two (or several) occasions before training interventions, and later again, after the training is over. On the other hand, only one or more group that undergoes training may be involved in evaluation. These methods give us four basic designs of evaluation.

Longitudinal design (L) is one in which data are collected from the same group over a length of time , usually on several occasions, but at least twice, i.e., before and after training. In the latter case, it is called “before-after” design.

In *ex post facto* design (E), data are collected from the group which has been exposed to training only after the training is over. Obviously, this design has inherent limitations in drawing conclusions from evaluation. But in many practical situations this is reality, and is

a challenge for evaluation designers to devise ways of extracting the most in such a design.

Comparative survey design (S) may involve collection of data from many other groups, in addition to the group exposed to training. In this design also there is no control and there are limitations in drawing conclusions.

The design with a great deal of control and sophistication is the matched group design (M). Several variations of this design can be used. Another group, matched on some significant dimensions with the group being exposed to training, can be identified, and data can be collected from both, once (*ex post facto*) or several times (*longitudinal*). Or, matched sampling can be selected for a comparative or cross-sectional survey. The design can be made very sophisticated with several matched groups (one with training “treatment”, another with a different type of treatment, and the third with no treatment, combined with E and L designs, and making it a “blind” study investigators not knowing which group is of what category). Both experimental and quasi-experimental designs can be used.

Enough literature on these designs is available. Hamblin has referred to some of these, but not in a systematic way. He makes a distinction between the “scientific” approach (rigorous evaluation to test hypotheses of change) and the “discovery” approach (evaluation to discover intended and unintended consequences). This distinction does not serve any purpose and is, in fact, misleading. There can be variations in the degree of sophistication and rigour. Also, there may be different objectives of evaluation. Evaluation may be used as part of the training process to provide feedback and plan for using feedback. Evaluation may be made to find out what changes have occurred in terms of scope, substance and sustenance in the latter case, the design will be more complex and more sophisticated. As already discussed, the purpose of evaluation will begin on the main clients of evaluation and what they want to know.

Evaluation Techniques

These can be classified in various ways. One way to classify them into response (reactive) techniques (R). Techniques requiring some kind of response produce some reaction in

those who are responding. The very act of asking people questions (orally or in a written form) may produce change. Since they produce reactions they are called response or reactive techniques.

Other techniques can be called unobtrusive measures or secondary source data technique(s); the word “unobtrusive” being borrowed from Webb *et al.* (1970). These make use of available data or secondary source data. Hamblin calls them “keyhole” techniques, thereby expressing his disapproval of such measures.’ There is no reason to consider such measures as unethical. All indicators, indexes, etc., are such measures. For example, to measure whether general morale has improved in a unit, it may be more useful to use secondary source data like examining figures of absenteeism rather than asking questions. Similarly, an unobtrusive measure or secondary source data may be much more creative and imaginative and need to be discovered and used more often for evaluation. However, if some data are collected about individuals’ behaviour (whether by asking others or unobtrusively) without their knowledge and approval, which may be unethical. This applies as much to responsive techniques as to unobtrusive ones, because collecting information from a third person without the approval or knowledge of the person being studied, is unethical.

Another non-reactive technique, a very old one, is that of observation (O). Observation can also become a reactive technique if persons being observed know that they are being observed.

The method of data collection for response or reaction techniques (R) may include interviews, written reactions (questionnaires, scales, open-ended forms), and projective techniques. One additional method in this category worth mentioning is group discussion and consensus report. In many cases, discussion by a small group consisting of individuals having experience and with a adequate knowledge about it may give better evaluation results than figures calculated from routine responses.

Advances in scaling techniques have made the greatest contribution to the development of evaluation techniques. Techniques based on well-prepared instruments to measure various dimensions are being increasingly used. Various methods of scaling can be used to develop effective evaluation techniques. The three well-known scaling techniques associated with Thurstone, Likert, and Guttman, can be imaginatively used in preparing new evaluation tools. More recent developments have opened new vistas for sophistication in evaluation work.

Hamblin has done an excellent job in discussing the studies in training evaluation to illustrate the techniques used. His book will be found very useful for this. Whitelaw has also cited some studies but has not been able to integrate them. At the end of his book, Hamblin has summarised the various techniques discussed under his five-level model. The

Reaction:Session: Reaction scales, reactions notebooks and participation, observers' records, studies of inter-trainee relationships, end-of-course reaction form, post-reactions questionnaires and interviews, and expectations evaluation.

Learning: Pre-course questionnaires to instructors; programmed instruction; objective tests, essay-type written or oral examinations, assessment by trainees of knowledge changes; skill and task analyses, standardised tests of skill; tailor-made techniques for evaluating skill, assessment by trainees of skill changes; standardised attitude questionnaires; tailor-made attitude questionnaires; semantic differential scales; and group feedback analysis.

Job Behaviour: Activity sampling; SISCO and Wirdenius techniques; observers' diaries; self-diaries with interview and questionnaires; appraisal and self-appraisal; critical incident technique; observation of specific incidents, depth interviews and questionnaires; open-ended depth techniques; and prescription for involving management in the training process.

Organisation: Indexes of productivity, labour turnover, etc., studies of organisational climate; use of job behavioural objectives to study behaviour of non-trainees; and work flow studies.

Ultimate Value: Cost-benefit analysis and human resources accounting.

An Illustration of Systematic Evaluation

A good example of systematic evaluation is available from a study of the State Bank Staff College (SBSC) titled, Training Evaluation System: Branch Manager Programme-A Study on the Impact of Training on Branch Managers. This is one of the several reports the State Bank Staff College is planning to bring out on their programmes. In this report they have taken the branch management programme for evaluation. Management programmes were organised by the State Bank Staff College for rural branches, urban/metropolitan branches, industrial branches, and agricultural development branches. Eight programmes, completed between October 1976 and April 1977, were taken up for evaluation. About 206 branch managers from various circles of the bank had participated in these programmes.

In the study, the framework of evaluation has been stated in the beginning emphasising: pre-training stage (performance gaps); training stage (training design); and post-training stage (assessment whether the gaps were filled). In order to measure the impact of training on various

aspects, key responsibility areas (KRAS) of the branch managers have been identified as follows: business, quality of advances, external service, internal administration, and staff relations. These have been analysed into the performance process and performance results. The objectives of the training programme have been analysed in relation to these areas.

As part of the evaluation study, both participants and the “controlling authorities” were approached. It was very encouraging to note that 92 per cent of the participants and 85 per cent of the controlling authorities responded to the study at the pre-training stage; for the post-training stage the figures were 51 and 56 per cent respectively. Written questionnaires were used and interviews were conducted. In addition to questions on various aspects of the role of branch managers and the KRAS, some psychological measures were also included: working in the organisation; job related items; leadership style (Fiedler’s LPC scale); and interpersonal orientation (FIRO-B). The results have also been discussed in the report which gives details of the findings in relation to various KRAS. The conclusions are drawn at the end with relevant recommendations for improving training. The data are given in the Appendices.

13.4 Some Issues in Training

Improvement of training in organisations requires paying attention to some critical dimensions. The role of training for development of people and organisations has been discussed separately in detail, including pre-training work, curriculum development, selection of methods, building a training establishment and post-training support and follow-up (Lynton and Pareek, 2000). However, a few important dimensions which require special attention in organisations are discussed here.

1. Learning

The main function of training is to facilitate learning. The most effective learning is self-initiated and self-managed learning. Training should help in developing a culture of self-managed learning. In general, learning by discovery is more internalised and is longer-lasting than didactic learning from others.

Below are suggested 15 different conditions to make learning effective. For this purpose, learning has been defined as “the process of acquiring, assimilating, and internalising cognitive, motor or behavioural inputs for their effective and varied use when required, and leading to enhanced capability of further self-monitored learning”.

1. Authentic and open system of training institution or the place of learning.
2. Non-threatening climate.
3. Challenging learning tasks.

4. Collaborative arrangements for mutual support of learners.
5. Organisation of graduated experiences of challenging successes.
6. Mechanisms for supportive and quick feedback.
7. Opportunities to practise the skills learnt.
8. Opportunities to apply learning.
9. Opportunities for and encouragement to self-learning.
10. Opportunities for and support to experimentation.
11. Emphasis on learning through discovery.
12. Indirect and liberating influence by trainer/teacher through minimum guidance.
13. Trainer's/teacher's human values and faith in man.
14. Trainer's/teacher's high expectations from learners, and openness to examine own needs.
15. Trainer's/teacher's competence.

2. Pre-training Work

Unless attention is paid to the following pre-training work, training cannot succeed in developing people, groups, and organisations: proper identification of training needs; developing a strategy of development of people through training, including the rationale and criteria of who (which role occupants) should be sent for training, how many at a time and, in what sequence; the process of helping people to volunteer, and the departments to ask for training; pre-training workshop in some cases to raise the level of motivation of participants and finalise the curriculum; building expectations of prospective participants from training, etc.

3. Post-training Work

Equally important is what is done after the training is over. The training section needs to help the concerned managers to plan to utilise the participants' training, and provide the needed support to them. Post-training work helps in building linkages between the training section and the line departments. Follow-up work by the training section is critical.

4. Expanding the Training Concept

The concept of training has to be widened and training should include not only programmes involving face-to-face classroom work, but should also include other ways of providing information and giving necessary skills to people in an organisation. In fact, getting people together in a group for giving information which can be given in some other form is a waste of resources. Moreover, the organisation cannot afford to provide the necessary information and skills on all aspects to all those who need it, by using the classroom model of training. Self-instructional packages and manuals of various kinds can be very rich and useful resources of training, even without collecting people at one site. For example, all those who join the organisation should know about the budgetary processes and the concept of transfer price. If a self-instructional book is prepared on

this subject, this can be given to anyone who joins the organisation so that he gets familiar with this concept and can understand the whole process of all the negotiations taking place in the company. It may, therefore, be recommended that a list of areas in which such self-instructional material can be prepared should be developed. This may include the new sales tax rules, new environmental changes, basic financial problems, calculating contribution, etc. Similarly, manuals of simple office procedures, leave rules, various personnel practices, etc., may also be prepared. However, the immediate superior officer may help the employees by calling them for dialogue and further clarifications after the employees have learnt through such self-instructional books.

5. Preparation of Training Materials

There is a great need to develop more training materials. Unfortunately, most of the training programmes use only the lecture method. While the lecture method itself needs improvement through use of small group discussions, etc., new training materials need to be developed. These will include simulation exercises and games, role play cases and material, cases and incidents, practical work manuals, tests and instruments, and self-instructional materials. Preparation of such material involves large investment of money, time and energy. But it is still worthwhile, and will have much higher pay-off than the cost of the investment. In some cases an Organisation can get help from outside experts in the preparation of such material, especially simulation exercises and games, role plays, cases, and self-instructional material.

13.5 The Present Status of Training

Training is not fulfilling its proper role in various organisations. There are, at least, the following five reasons for the plight in which training is at present.

1. Call-girl Role

The training unit organises training events on the initiation or suggestion of the persons who matter in the organisation. Training plays a reactive rather than a proactive role. Instead of being a partner in the process of development of the organisation, it merely responds to requests made to it. This essentially reduces its effectiveness. This plight is largely shared by the outside consultants and trainers who are invited to do a particular training programme, or even to give one or more talks on specific topics. But this is also true of the in-company training function. While talking to persons in charge of training in various organisations, one gets the impression that they do not have enough opportunity in the organisation to innovate and suggest ways of developing it.

So far training has been treated either as a feudal wife or as a call-girl rather than a modern housewife. The role of the wife in the feudal society was to decorate the home and bear children, but not necessarily be a life partner in enjoying life, or sharing problems. A call-girl is invited when she is needed and she also does not participate in the vital decisions of a man's life. Similarly,

taking either analogy, training is not able to fulfil the obligation of being really effective in an organisation. Training has to become comparable to a real housewife, by not only responding to the needs of the organisation, but by determining these needs and being a partner in the process of development. Unless training is treated as a partner in decision making, it cannot play the role of contributing to organisational effectiveness.

2. Expectancy of Peripherality

By and large there seems to be a general feeling in the organisation that training is a peripheral activity rather than a central one. In many organisations training is more decorative than functional. Some organisations start a training department in order to look modern, while in some organisations training performs the role of the family priest. This role is enjoyed by the training sub-system also. The family priest mainly helps in the performance of religious rituals appropriate to the caste of the family. He also gives pious advice, often to be merely heard and not necessarily acted upon. He, however, is not involved in any vital decisions taken by the family. Training therefore is often regarded as a useful but not a very essential activity in the organisation. Other functions such as production, marketing, personnel, and finance are very central and important, and compared to these functions training is only of secondary importance. This concept of training as a non-essential or a peripheral activity produces several effects in the organisation. It produces a different sense of priority for training in the organisation. The personnel connected with the training activity have a low self-image, and cannot operate with confidence.

3. Low Status

Since training is regarded as peripheral, and since it is treated as a service department, only responding to the various demands of the organisation, it is unfortunately given rather a low status. This is a vicious circle. No activity can become central in an organisation unless the organisation expects that activity to be important and gives it high enough status. On the other hand, the status is also a function of the activity being central. The low status of training is reflected in the level at which the TM is being recruited in the organisation. In most organisations he is at such a low level that it becomes difficult for to him assert himself and to be heard with respect. Unfortunately, in Indian organisations status and grade play an important part in deciding how much say a person would have in the organisation. Low status of training, therefore, limits its effectiveness considerably.

4. Non-professional Image

Training is becoming a profession. Although it has not been completely professionalised, it has developed its own techniques, and is fast emerging as a profession. However, organisations in India still do not treat training as a profession; in fact, they do not take it seriously. Training is seen as a function which can be managed by anyone who is good in the main activity of the organisation. As a result, people appointed to manage training may not have the necessary professional skills which TMs would be required to have. In some cases those who are found to be less efficient and effective in other functions are transferred to the training function. Such practices reflect the attitude of the management towards training. The example is cited of one organisation in which the training system is fairly large. Discussions with persons in various parts of the organisation revealed that they were recommending or nominating those persons for appointment as trainers whom they did not find very useful. In some cases the transfers of people to the training units and back to operations were very frequent. Those who were not trainers were not given any orientation or training before being made to take up their new roles as trainers.

5. Slow Professionalisation

One factor for which we, those who are in the field of training, are responsible is the slow speed with which we are professionalising training in India. Each profession has its own system of preparation of those persons who want to join it. It develops its own skills of working, its own techniques, and its own standards of ethics. It develops a strong pressure group to ensure that the minimum standards of pre-professional and in-professional training are maintained. The establishment of the Indian Institute of Management and the Indian Society for Training and Development has helped in developing training as a profession. However, the aspirations of training personnel are so low, and their behaviour so different, that they project a weak image of training. They only respond to the needs of the organisation, rather than thinking of ways of transforming their role into a more central one. We need to do a great deal in developing training as a profession.

Because of these and some other factors the role of training has remained rather peripheral. It is necessary that it is transformed into a more active and effective tool for helping the organisation solve some of its problems. Training has to become more proactive.

Training can play a more effective role in the organisation if it is regarded as one intervention in a larger context in which several interventions precede or follow it. Training can either be expanded or formally transformed into organisational development. Even without such transformation training can begin to play a more proactive role. We suggest at least two such important roles: Firstly, training personnel can educate the top management through a series of systematic feedback from the data generated during the training programmes, as successfully done by one organisation. The top management in that organisation have increasingly asked for more advanced programmes for their own education. Secondly, training can be used as an entry point for further organisational work. For example, one organisation hired consultants for a specific programme of achievement-motivation training. After the first programme, the consultants had discussions on their understanding of the problems, and recommended to the top management to look into the various other aspects of the organisation. As a result of this discussion, the top management agreed for a more systematic work of diagnosis and a possible OD effort.

Such a proactive role requires authenticity on the part of the trainers and consultants. If they feel that some intervention other than training may be more useful, it may be helpful to have a dialogue with the management. One of their roles is to confront the senior management with the understanding of the problem and help it to be aware of a variety of interventions for the solution of problems. Training can be a good diagnostic tool also-the first step in a strategy of organisational change.

Training, like any other activity in an organisation, is meant to help in the achievement of the organisational goals. The organisation evaluates the various inputs in terms of cost-benefit ratio. It may be useful for the training unit to increasingly develop evaluation systems in cost-benefit terms. It should be possible to show how training is helping the organisation in reducing various kinds of wastage. Such an evaluation of training in hardware terms will increase its credibility and boost its self-image.

Training has to be professionalised at a faster rate. One of the skills that we lack is the use of rich data generated during training and collected in the follow-up work. To make training an effective intervention or organisational change, the development of skills of collecting and meaningfully using relevant data for decision making and for recording the experience for possible sharing with others is very essential. The increasing professionalisation should reflect in the training of the personnel of the OD units in various

kinds of skills, such as organisational diagnosis, problem solving, innovation for organisational change, data collection, data processing and interpreting the data, etc. In fact, research should be functional for facilitating organisational change and these skills are necessary for the successful implementation of the programme of organisational development.

It may be useful to take help from some agencies for developing such skills. In order to utilise the rare skills in these areas, some agencies should be persuaded to undertake the responsibility of developing strategies of and providing help in data collection, interpretation and feedback for organisational development. All organisations, however, need not have this kind of expertise. One or a few organisations can coordinate and provide this kind of expert help. For example, some institutions can develop a survey and data feedback centre, providing these services at reasonable cost. It can make available meticulously standardised devices for diagnosis and organisational survey, and can analyse data and provide confidential reports on the various aspects of organisational health and effectiveness. Such a centre can serve the Indian organisations in publishing consolidated annual reports on general trends in the country, according to various types of organisations.

The suggestions of transformation of training into organisational development, may imply elitism in training. While we may plead for this transformation, it is equally important that the strategy for supervisory and operational training is streamlined. Such training also needs a wider perspective; attention to the method of receiving and inducting the new employees in the organisation; determining technical and behavioural needs for their effective role performance; ways of enhancing teamwork and inter role support; variety of training inputs and their sequencing to meet the training needs; and evaluation and follow-up plans, including ways of building post-training support for achieving training goals.

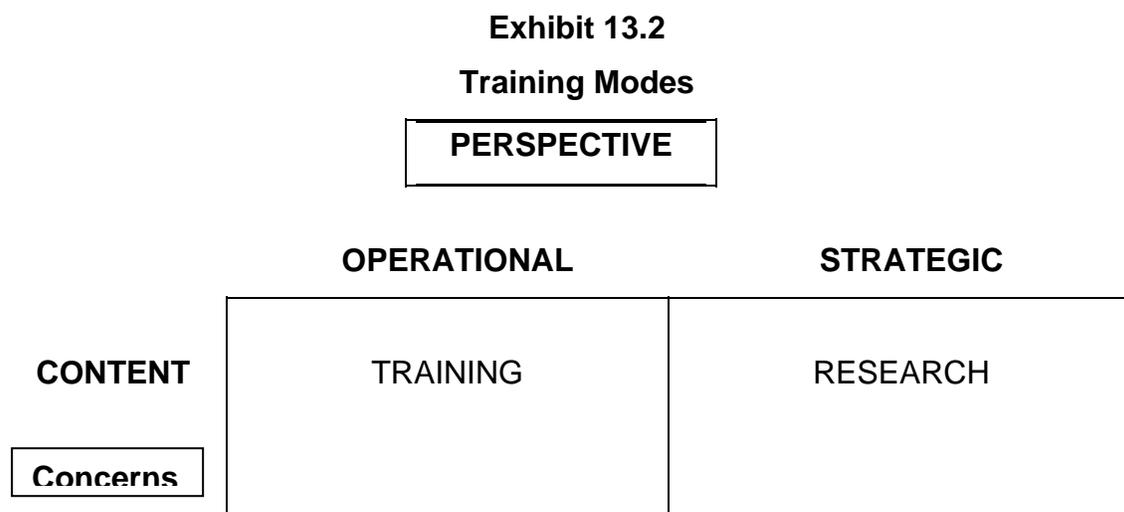
13.6 Making Training a Strategic Function

Turnaround in thinking on training is already evident - that it must move from periphery to the centre, from being a service function to partnership in the main task of the

organisation. In a recent study of HR reengineering at 34 large US companies 69% respondents mentioned "repositioning of HR as a strategic business partner with the management" as a re-engineering goal. The same is true of training.

Training is concerned with increasing organisational effectiveness. So far the approach of training has been to offer/organise training for specific competencies. The movement is in the direction of training becoming more proactive, and contribute to strategic thinking of the organisation. This swing is sometime seen as abandoning the previous position and taking a new one. Repositioning does not mean taking an "either or" position. Repositioning involves expanding the role and emphasising the strategic role, of training. While the strategic role is important, the other roles are not to be neglected.

Training should attend both to the current as well as the future needs. The current perspective is more operational, while the futuristic perspective is strategic. The other dimension relevant for the role of training is that of content vs process. While the former emphasises the development of specific competencies, the latter is concerned with developing learning and empowering capability. If we combine these two dimensions, we get four training modes as shown in Exhibit 13.2.



PROCESS

CONSULTING

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

All the four modes of training are important. However, increasingly training must move towards transformational and strategic roles. Exhibit 13.3 shows the foci, objectives, and postures, for these four training modes. We shall briefly discuss these, taking the four main roles of training.

Exhibit 13.3**Training Modes in Details**

		TRAINING	RESEARCH
Content	Focus	Current Role	Multiple Roles
	Objective	<u>Role Effectiveness</u>	<u>Org. Effectiveness</u>
	Posture	Implement	Provide input
Concern			
		CONSULTING	CHANGE MANAGEMENT
Process	Focus	Teams	Leadership
	Objective	<u>Synergy</u> (Team Building)	<u>Transformation</u>
	Posture	Help	Partner

Training Role: Training system should develop needed competencies for various role occupant. The emphasis is on making the current roles in the organisation more effective by equipping people occupying these roles with the needed competencies. Training takes current strategy and implements it in terms of development of needed competencies. The trainers should deliver good training. And to do this they themselves must have the relevant technical competencies.

Research Role: In order to move in the strategic direction, trainers need to search what competencies are needed and will be needed in the organisation. Training then assumes two more functions: searching future competencies, and developing them. Since the narrow boundaries of roles are breaking down, a person should develop flexibility to perform various roles. Multi-skilled workers is a good example of such effort. This becomes the first essential step for developing autonomous work groups and self-managed teams. The trainers, who function as researchers, need to develop their deep insight into organisational needs and process. Trainers should develop research competencies, especially those of action research.

Consulting Role: Greater emphasis on organisational effectiveness, rather than only on individual role effectiveness, will require more group process-orientation of trainers. Development of effective teams influence both the effectiveness of the individual team members as well as organisational effectiveness. The emphasis is synergy building, thereby enhancing effectiveness of each member. This can be done if the trainers advance with their research competencies into a consulting role - - analyse problems, develop and use interventions involving concerned line people to deal with the problems, help in implementing the agreed action plan, and support it to stabilise the decisions. This is one step further in contributing to the strategic process. Training is then seen as a useful function for developing organisational strategy. Trainers should develop both sharper understanding of the organisational strategy, and consulting competencies to play this role effectively. Training function should be used more frequently for international consulting. Trainers then will also develop more hand-on experience, which will make training more realistic and relevant.

Change Management Role: This is the real strategic partnership role. The focus of training is to develop leadership at all levels in the organisation - the ability of strategic thinking, taking responsibility, creativity to find alternative solutions, and empowering others. The objective is to transform the organisation, to make paradigm shift if needed. Training then becomes a true strategic partner. This is not possible without involvement of the trainers in the main business of the organisation, and gaining relevant business knowledge.

Translating Business Strategy into Training Terms

Successful implementation of the business strategy of an organisation will require some competencies. Business strategy indicates the broad direction for the future movement of an organisation, and preferred ways of doing so. For successful implementation, the organisational tasks must be translated into various functional terms: marketing, financial, technology, human resources, training etc. This helps to make strategy formulation and implementation participative.

The overall organisational or "business" strategy should provide the framework for developing the training strategy to facilitate effective implementation of the strategy. It will include detailed approach to be adopted, competencies to be developed (in what thrust, evaluation etc. Training strategy thus prepared may be reviewed by all the functional leaders preparing the strategies which must be integrated into the main strategy for better synergy.

Another way to translate business strategy into training terms may be to develop strategies for key decisions taken by the organisation. For example, if cost reduction is one of the elements in the business strategy, training may develop ways of advancing this concern and achieving concrete results. In a study of 34 large US companies, for example, 78% HR professionals listed "cost reduction" as a top goal.

Training goals get closely linked with business goals. By maintaining an independent strategy, training may send a signal that is not connected with the other functions. Regarding HR, one participant in the study said "If I had to do it again, I'd build HR strategies directly into business strategies and make them seamless".

Working More Closely with Line Managers

People dealing with training should work more closely with line people. They are already working with line people in the areas of coaching, counseling, training, strategy planning for the departments etc. When cross-functional task forces and implementation teams are set up, training people should join these. Similarly, when teams are set up to discuss training issues etc., line people should be invited as members. Such close working

together may help in integrating training with the various business groups, and making training a strategic partner.

Rosow and Zager have made some recommendations to forge stronger links between training and business strategy (Exhibits 13. 4 & 5)

The partnership in training should be based on value-added partnership of the trainers and training system. As strategic partners training people should raise serious discussion on how organisational strategy should be developed, and how it can implemented faster. Effective partnership comes out of professional competence and credibility.

Exhibit 13. 4

Making Training a Strategic Partner

1. The vice-president responsible for the training function should be actively involved in formulating corporate strategy, to ensure that:
 - Strategic goals are realistically ambitious with respect to the reservoir of skills that will be available to meet them
 - The training function will be able to help top management communicate corporate strategy throughout the organisation and to help managers translate the strategy into training needs.
2. The vice -president for the training function should ensure that all training programs (1) are necessary to the corporate strategy; (2) are recommended by (and, if possible, budgeted to) the managers whose employees are to be trained; and (3) help the trainees progress along the career paths jointly set by them and their managers.
3. The effectiveness of a program should be measured by how fully and how durably the trainees have mastered the subject matter.
4. The most controversial-and potentially the largest-factor in measuring the cost of a program is whether the trainee's time spent in training should be considered a cost. Since training (assuming that its objectives are strategically necessary) is an essential part of every job, we recommend that it not be considered an added cost. On the other hand, management should count as a cost any additional expense incurred to cover the trainee's work while training is in progress.

5. When an employer invites an employee to be retrained, it should ensure that the employee becomes fully acquainted, as early as possible, with the new position, work unit, and supervisor, whether the position is within or outside the firm. Such acquaintance maximizes the trainee's ability to learn and to apply the new skills.

Exhibit 13.5

Aligning Training strategy with Corporate Strategy

1. The Chief executive officer (CEO) and senior associates should include a training plan as a critical component of the corporate strategic plan, to ensure that all levels of the organisation will have the knowledge and skills to carry out the strategic plan. The training plan should distinguish clearly between (1) tactical programs designed to meet current needs, and (2) strategic programs designed to keep up with - and even anticipate-changes in technology, competition, and work-force standards, as well as with the rapid obsolescence of occupations.
2. The CEO should regularly monitor the training function to ascertain that (1) program priorities match those of the corporate strategy, (2) program cost and skill objectives are valid, and (3) program cost and skill objectives are met.
3. Employers should think of their organisations as, in a sense, institutions for continuous learning, and should make them function as such. They should, therefore, aim to involve all employees in all stages of training, from needs analysis through evaluation.
4. Where employees are presented by unions, employers should invite the unions to share in the design and administration of training for their members. Unions should press for and accept such joint programs, but they should be careful to take on responsibility no faster than they acquire the skills and experience to discharge it.
5. To institutionalize continuous learning throughout the organisation, the employer should encourage employees to make special efforts to learn - and/or to help other employees learn - skills valuable to the employer. Encouragement should take such forms as:
 - A clear declaration that continuous learning and helping other employees to learn are

integral parts of every job and every employee's responsibility.

- Favorable structures and mechanisms, for example, learning by objectives, train-the-trainer programs, continuous learning centres, semiautonomous work teams
- Appropriate rewards, for example pay raises, eligibility for promotion, recognition by peers
- Where a union is present, a jointly administered training program and fund
- Training, with focus of competency building amongst various organisational units, requires collaboration amongst several players in the organisation. Partnering by different key persons in the organisation is important for the success of training.

As Sloman (1996, p. 198) says "If training in the organisation is to become more effective, action will be required from trainers, academics, business schools, consultants and Government. While external agencies like management institutions, academics, consultants and the government are important for making training effective, the more critical role has to be played by the internal people in the organisations". Exhibit 13.6 summarises the various roles of external agencies as suggested by Sloman (1996, p.198).

Exhibit 13.6

Ways of Enhancing the Training Function

The role of the training function would be enhanced if

TRAINERS

- developed their own clear model of the role in their own organisation and communicated it accordingly
- participated in appropriate networks to keep abreast of the debate on the changing nature of the function

ACADEMICS, BUSINESS SCHOOLS AND CONSULTANTS

- recognised that the place of training in most organisations does not correspond to best practice, and developed models accordingly
- concentrated efforts on the need to produce practical instruments for translating an

organisation's strategic policy into human resource terms.

GOVERNMENT

- recognised the limitations of public statements on the importance of training
- introduced fiscal measures designed to ensure that employers invest at least a specified amount in the training of their workforce. In Exhibits 13.7 and 13.8 are reproduced several recommendations culled out from Rosow and Zager, (1988) for aligning training with technology strategy and with financial strategy respectively.

Exhibit 13.7

Aligning Training with Technology Strategy

1. The manufacturer of new technology should, in its own self-interest, take responsibility for ensuring that the user becomes capable of operating the new technology profitably.
2. Such a relationship is advantageous to the manufacturer because (1) it binds the user to the manufacturer in goodwill; (2) it gives the manufacturer a competitive edge in acquiring marketable innovations and adaptations developed by the user; (3) it helps the manufacturer develop improvements in current technology and designs for newer technology; and (4) it minimizes the possibility of user disappointment, which acts as a drag on sales.
3. Since formal training is an indispensable part of implementing new technology, manufacturer and user should jointly develop a training strategy that will ensure profitable operation by the user. The manufacturer should act either directly or through a third party for whose performance it accepts responsibility.
4. The manufacturer should adopt a formal business plan that establishes the function of user training as a critical element of long-term business survival and growth.
5. Training needs and costs should be included as an explicit part of the investment in new technology. Hopes of accomplishing training cheaply and by improvisation are doomed to failure.
6. Manufacturer and user should jointly secure that the user's employees learn not only the technical aspects of operating, troubleshooting, and maintaining a system, but also the scientific and technological principles on which it is based. This will enable the user's employees to solve problems on equipment of all kinds.
7. Manufacturer and user should pay early attention to how the new technology will affect

organisation, decision-making patterns, work rules, job design, communications, and learning systems. These issues require advance planning and may determine the success of the organisation. Ad hoc or ex post facto decisions are often too little, too late, and too costly.

8. When an integrated system is assembled from components supplied by multiple vendors, the user should seek the assistance of an organisation whose expertise encompasses both training and most or all of the technologies involved.

Exhibit 13.8

Aligning Training with Financial Strategy

1. Senior management should require training proposals to include clear-cut information related to cost-effectiveness, including need, objectives, content, design, and delivery. Costs should be related to subject matter and performance-involvement goals. Comparative cost data should be required whenever possible.
2. Senior management should evaluate cost-effectiveness in terms of agreed-upon objectives - specifically whether the functional elements are shaped and combined in the manner best suited to the organisation's needs. The key elements include project management, use of in-house versus outside talent, instructional design, course development, and delivery systems.
3. Employers should give serious consideration to the continuous learning/employment security connection as a strategy for the long-term survival and growth of the enterprise.
4. Employers should give as broad a guarantee of employment security as they can manage, to strengthen work-force receptivity to the continuous change and continuous learning that competition demands. At the least, they should guarantee that no program for introducing new technology into the workplace will cause employees to lose employment or income.
5. Employers should evaluate the costs of retraining career employees as compared with the visible and hidden costs of separation and replacement with the new, trained outsiders. Often the costs of retraining (combined with the advantage of stability of the work force) may be lower, and the costs of dismissal or retirement and the hiring of new people may be higher, than appears on the surface.

6. To promote employment security, which is key to high productivity, employers should assign responsibilities and establish routines to (1) anticipate the obsolescence of current jobs and the emergence of new jobs, (2) identify current employees who can be advantageously retrained for the emerging jobs, (3) provide employees with early opportunities to volunteer for education and training, and (4) ensure that employees are ready to enter the new jobs when needed. Where there is a union, it should be involved in these activities insofar as they apply to employees in the bargaining unit.
7. Employers should anticipate unavoidable displacements or forced dismissals as far ahead as possible and use the lead time to develop market-oriented re-training and outplacement programs. Economic supports should be built into the programs to reinforce employment security.

13.7 Towards Learning Organisation

Organisation-wide learning, widespread and as a clear concept, dates only from the 1970s, and that learning had to be continuous only from the 1980s. Continuous learning that also embraces the environment—the organization-in-its-environment—has been the top agenda since the 1990s.

The organisation-wide learning view is already a long way from viewing training as something for individuals, or a class, or a team at work or play. The next step however, and each step after, does not follow at all smoothly. Each calls for reconceiving the change effort and so also the training for it. The very next step makes occasional into permanent effort, and this can usually not be done with merely stretching what is already there but often calls for programming, resources, and integration of a different order, and reorganisation. The next step again then broadens the perspective beyond the organisation to include people outside, and not just as clients, suppliers, or more or less distant regulators or other officials as before and one-by-one, but as essential partners and together.

Turbulence, newly and reluctantly recognised as the now normal state of the environment and fed by instantaneous global information and tremors of all kinds, causes the shift to a continuously learning organisation. It is a basic shift, to a different disposition for the organisation as a whole. It orients and prepares the organisation differently, different even

from the recent past when its people expected and then also buckled down to making a learning effort from time-to-time and here and there in the organisation, and even when lately that exigency occurred ever more frequently. So the shift is not just for more economy of effort and smoothing out interruptions of normal living and working.

Urgent as it is, understanding this move, from spasmodic organisation-wide learning to a continuously learning organisation is essential, and can be achieved by collaborative effort. Exhibits and extracts from major works may serve best for an overview and also for connecting readers with the works themselves for fuller exposition of views of special interest to them.

Exhibit 13.9 contrasts organisational learning with a continuously learning organisation on the six dimensions highlighted in organisational studies since the 1970s. What Chris Argyris calls 'double-loop learning' sets the stage for the rest: not only is something learned that improves task performance (= single-loop learning), but the organisation too takes note and modifies its policies, structure, ways of operating, and whatever else is necessary to support that change and to promote further changes. In both cases, learning only registers when it shows in improved performance.

The key difference lies in the scope of that performance: in single-loop learning, even if it be organisation-wide, the organisational framework remains unchanged; in double-loop learning, the organisation uses the learning for changing its framework as well. Indeed, when that becomes its culture, it expects and is continuously prepared for using innovative inputs for improving performance directly and also improving itself. Basic to this shift is what Harold Bridger, a founder member of the Tavistock Institute in London, calls the 'double-task': learning for improved performance plus learning *how* the improvement is effected, for use next time and also to guide adjusting the framework so it can support further learning.

Exhibit 13.9

Organisation-wide Learning and Learning Organisations

Organisation-

The Learning

<i>wide learning</i>	<i>organisation</i>	
1. Single-loop learning	Double-loop learning	(Argyris, 1977)
2. Incremental	Transformational	(Argyris and Schon, 1978)
3. Lower-level	Higher-level	(Fiol and Lyles, 1985)
4. Adaptive	Generative	(Senge, 1990)
5. Tactical	Strategic	(Dodgson, 1991)
6. Occasional	Continuous	

Training needs to be re-oriented so that it become a strategic function, and contributes notonly to the development of individuals and teams, but is able to help the organization become a learning organization. Training, therefore, deserves rethinking and replanning.

13.8 Suggested Readings

1. A classical book, discussing training in its wider perspective, is *Training for Organisational Transformations* by Rolf P. Lynton and Udai Pareek, New Delhi: Sage, 2000. The book is in two parts, Part 1 is meant for policy makers and change managers (emphasising rethinking training and training policy and resources). Part 2 is meant for trainers, consultants and principals (containing three sections on an overview of position, task and process of training; training in process, and essential infrastructure including evaluation)
2. *A handbook of training strategy.* by Martyn Sloman. Jaico, Bombay,1996.
Discusses training in a strategic framework
3. *Training in Organisations: Needs Assessment, Development and Evaluation* by Irwin L. Goldstein and J. Kevin Ford (4th edition, Wadsworth, 2002) has been a standard book on training, and the fourth edition has made it almost a new book. The presentation and discussion of needs as an organisational intervention is excellent. So is the discussion of formative (rather than summative) evaluation. There are good discussions of instructional approaches and institutional systems.
4. *Every Trainers' Handbook* by Devendra Agochiya, Sage, New Delhi: 2002, provides a step-by-step down to earth approach to plan, organise and deliver training

programmes. It has easy-to-read-use chapters on learning process, an integrated approach to learning in a training programme, preparing a training design, delivering a training programme, training methods and techniques, training group and its dynamics, trainers, roles and functions and evaluation of a training programme.

5. *Training: The Competitive Edge* by J.M. Rosow & R. Zager San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1988. Discusses ways of developing strategic linkages of training with other managerial functions
6. *Evaluation and Control of Training* by A.C.Hamblin ,: McGraw-Hill, London, 1974, discusses the various techniques used in evaluating training with detailed examples.
7. *Evaluation of training* by UdaiPareek , *Vikalpa*, 1978, 4(3), 289–99. Reviews some recent books on training evaluation and suggests one main model and several components of the model to properly understand evaluation studies.