



Learning and Development Sample Material VS-1455

Vskills Certifications

Vskills Reading Material



1. INTRODUCTION TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Learning is considered as the heart of an organization. It has the ability to transform an individual's personality and enables them to fulfill their ambition and personal & collective goals. Through learning one can acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitude, which enables to perform more efficiently, effectively and exercise greater choices in work and personal life as well. Understanding the process of learning is the most vital aspect of professional education, practice and development, together self learning also plays a crucial role in one's professional and intellectual development.

The primary aim of this chapter is to provide an introduction to the concept of learning and development in context of work and organizations. Learning and development is a vertical which in many ways enables professionals to manage their role more efficiently in pursuit of enhanced organizational and individual effectiveness. The first and foremost step is to define the process of learning and thereby distinguishing it from related concepts. We begin with examination of various perspectives on learning and thereafter consider what learning means in relation to concepts such as development, training, etc.

1.1. What is learning?

Learning and development (L&D) as a field of management research and practice is concerned with how individuals (individually or as groups) acquire or create knowledge and skills which enable them to perform and grow in their current or future occupational role.

Learning has been defined across various fields and sub-fields as a “process of gaining knowledge and expertise”; it can be defined as “relatively permanent change in behaviour that results from experience or a systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts or attitudes that result in improved performance in another environment”.

We would now try to understand how learning differs or relates to terms such as education and training, which are also associated with knowledge and skill acquisition. Thereafter the question arises why we combine together ‘learning’ and ‘development’? Many writers have attempted to differentiate the various concepts associated with learning, but most of the authors have concluded that making any such distinction is completely futile.

Since the beginning learning was considered humanistic, positive and essentially an optimistic. Although as Holton stated learning can be seen in a number of ways and not every way can be positive.

- ✓ Learning positively as a humanistic endeavour: Learning enhances human potential individually and collectively, and thereby helps individuals to grow, aspire towards and realize higher-level needs.
- ✓ Learning neutrally as the value-neutral transmission of information and knowledge: This is a narrower technical-rationalist and instrumentalist view of learning which sees it as a means to solve everyday problems through the effective transferring of information and knowledge.

- ✓ Learning negatively as a tool for societal oppression: It has always been assumed that learning is by nature good or at least neutral. But in the year 2000, Holton argued, that learning is also considered as a tool for oppression particularly outside organizational settings

The various assumptions related to learning as a good thing has been questioned by many theorists advocating the critical perspectives of management. But for some learning is the only sustainable source of competitive advantage making it difficult for the positing standing against learning.

1.2. What is Training?

Training is most often equated to learning and development in the traditional view or from a non-L&D perspective. But for employees L&D is considered much broader than the provision of training courses. Training is certainly of value to individuals and organizations, but it cannot run the complete show by any means. Training is considered instrumental and can be described in the terms of its process and effects.

“Human resource management regards training and development as a function concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the job performance of individuals and groups in organizational settings.”

The practitioners of learning and practitioners are concerned with enhancing performance in business and organizational environments that are uncertain, rich and complex. Therefore concerning oneself totally with training would be too narrow, as then the focus too much on learning but ignoring the learning process.

It also overlooks the unplanned, incidental, informal and implicit learning that is inevitable in any organizational or social context. To help organization to stand out or differentiate itself from its competitors, learning is the only way because it provides the ability to engage in learning and to manage learning more effectively and may present a generic competence. For an individual or organization to learn the learning process is very important, because it's easy to acquire content but the process of adopting the process is all the more difficult.

The relationship between training and learning is perceived unidirectional as learning is produced by training which has an effect upon performance; training is often portrayed as serving organizational priorities, and as mechanistic.

Most researchers say that it may be misleading to attribute learning as an outcome of training only.

There are three possible effects of training -

- ✓ Increases employees' effective action capacity
- ✓ No change in employee's capacity for effective action
- ✓ Reducing the effective action capacity of the employees

To some extent this concurs to the views put by Holton (2000), of the potential positive, neutral and negative outcomes of learning.

1.3. Learning vs Training

People often use the terms training and learning and development interchangeably. But they mean different things. Training is a sub-set of learning and development.

The fundamental difference between training and learning and development is that the later takes a multi-dimensional approach to human resource development (HRD). Training, on the other hand, is one-dimensional and based essentially on what has been referred to as the production-centered approach. The person-centered and problem-centered approaches are generally missing from traditional HRD programs based on the production-centered approach. The traditional employment relationship performance orientation is founded almost exclusively on directly developing the skills and competencies of employees.

Yet the unpredictability associated with the contemporary marketplace and the increasing focus on the customer has elevated the importance of being able to solve unique problems and display initiative. To be flexible and enterprising is now a core capability of the modern employee. Apart from displaying appropriate initiative, the dimension of personal development and its impact on overall work performance is now widely understood and accepted. Today's workplace needs a more wide-ranging approach to HRD beyond the reliance on technical training.

Personal development (person-centered approach) stresses an indirect link between the learning experience and work performance. The primary motivation for an organization to invest in personal development learning is to enhance the employees' personal qualities that will have a positive impact on their overall work performance. Unlike the production-centered approach, the person-centered approach has a more tenuous link to performance. It is based on the theory that capable people make capable employees in a variety of contexts.

For example, training programs that improve people's mastery of themselves - such as courses on goal-setting, personal motivation, time management, and emotional intelligence - can have a resultant pay-off in terms of increased productivity.

The problem-centered approach focuses on improving employees' ability to solve problems. This approach improves employees' ability to make more effective decisions on the job. The rationale for this approach is the direct and indirect connection between problem-solving capability and organisational performance.

For example, topics such as creative problem-solving techniques, research skills, or analysis of typical workplace case studies can develop problem-solving capabilities.

Notwithstanding that there are three dimensions to learning and development (production-centered, person-centered, and problem-centered), undoubtedly the most effective way of aligning the changing needs of the individual and organization is by adopting an eclectic approach. A multi-dimensional strategy is a more comprehensive approach to learning and development that brings to light the strengths of each to HRD perspective. Training is a narrow interpretation of learning and development. Managers would do well to keep these distinctions in mind when next planning their learning interventions.

It's important to understand the difference between learning and training. Of course they are inextricably linked, but they are unique aspects of any educational process. *“Training is the giving of information and knowledge, through speech, the written word or other methods of demonstration in a manner that instructs the trainee”*. Where on the other hand *“Learning is the process of absorbing that information in order to increase skills and abilities and make use of it under a variety of contexts”*. Whatever the goals, the quality of the learning will rely largely on the quality of the training, and so the role of trainer is very important as it can have a huge effect on the outcome of a course for the learner.

We now consider the characteristics of each, and see what makes an e-learning environment work.

Characteristics of Learning

As specified earlier, learning is the process of absorbing information and retaining it with the goal of increasing skills and abilities in order to achieve goals - but it's more than that. Learning is what we go through when we want to be equipped for non-specific and unexpected situations and the two are not mutually exclusive. While you do learn to do something specific, you are also inadvertently equipped with the knowledge and/or skills to face future challenges. In essence, learning is all about equipping a person to tackle not just today's issues, but preparing him/her to creatively come up with ways to tackle tomorrow's issues.

Characteristics of Training

Training on the other hand focuses more on the development of new skills or skill sets that will be used. Training is the process each new employee goes through when joining a company to learn how to carry out the day-to-day operations, know how their department works and how job-specific tools operate in order to carry out their responsibilities. In essence, through training, we are not looking to reshape the behavior of an individual rather the point is to teach the employee or learner how things are done so that they can then carry out a process on their own.

Ideally, an e-learning environment will utilize both learning and training principles throughout its curriculum. This allows instructors/trainers to provide their learners with the tools to tackle current issues, develop life-long skills, improve on their problem-solving skills and utilize resources to the best of their ability.

Table illustrating the difference between Training and Learning

Training	Learning
It is considered as conditioning and control of individuals understanding	It is considered as process of broadening and liberating understanding
It is considered as an event	It is an ongoing process
It involves cultural norms of the organization and enforcing the organizations definition and perspective	It involves questioning and experimentation with freedom to learn and unlearn
There is prediction of outcomes	There is unpredictability of outcomes
Consistent with incremental change	Conducive to radical changes

1.4. Development and Education

Formally we can define development as an increase in the overall longer term capacity of an individual to live a more effective and fulfilling professional and personal life as a result of learning and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Development can be considered as a directional shift towards a higher condition or state of being and in this sense is concerned with an outcome.

Development

Development in learning and development is considered distinct from the biological maturing development process. Development can occur in a number of ways for instance through mentoring, teaching, learning, gaining experience, and so forth. Some training programmes are broader and long-term development programme (like team work programme) while some are job specific and particular (for learning to use a specific programme).

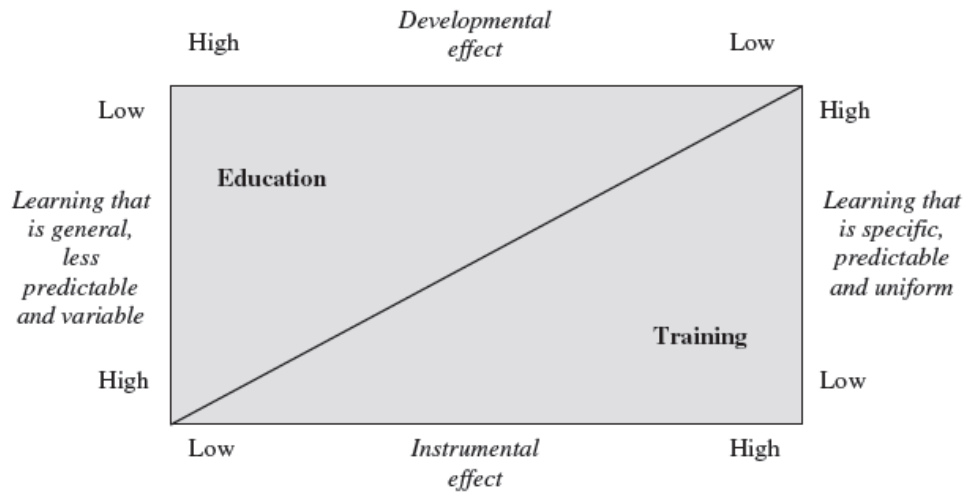
The motivations may differ individually while engaging in the process of learning and development. Then a virtuous cycle may operate where development-oriented individuals maintain or increase their interests in learning activities and projects. In which case self efficacy plays a major role in learning and with time they become more effective learners. The related aspect of self efficacy is to learn how to learn and how to successfully engage in developmental and career planning activities. Learning capacity can be founded by individual's own understanding of their own personal learning preferences, styles and processes.

Managerial decisions are totally dependent on the individual or the organization, for instance whether the development is viewed from the individual's viewpoint, for career purposes or is it from the organisation's perspective, for employment. These things might raise stress in the process of learning and development.

Education

Education is considered an input to the developmental process like training, as it aims to enhance the knowledge and development skills and also the development of the ability to think critically, independently, and systematically. Education has broader aims and effects and deeper than training, as it is concerned with the whole person over a longer period. An employee is expected to bring all these qualities at the time of employment, while the organisations policy is to hire the most suitable candidate for the job and develop job-specific skills to enable the individual to apply their generic abilities to think independently, systematically and critically to workplace issues.

When we talk about management development more comprehensively encapsulates all types of learning to enable an individual to develop their skills and understanding to meet current and future organisational needs. Woodall and Winstanley acknowledged an overlap between management development and human resource development (HRD), but the former is seen as being concerned more with learning and development at the strategic level whereas the latter may have more of a functional and specialist emphasis. They argue that the two concepts overlap in the areas of competence, appraisal, coaching and team-building skills.



The relationship between education, training and development (after Buckley and Caple 1992: 19)

Certifications

► Accounting, Banking & Finance

- Certified AML- KYC Compliance Officer
- Certified Business Accountant
- Certified Commercial Banker
- Certified Equity Research Analyst
- Certified Foreign Exchange Professional
- Certified Hedge Fund Manager
- Certified Merger and Acquisition Analyst
- Certified Tally 9.0 Professional
- Certified Treasury Markets Professional
- Certified Wealth Manager

► Foreign Trade

- Certified Export Import (Foreign Trade) Professional

► Hospitality

- Certified Restaurant Team Member (Hospitality)

► Human Resources

- Certified HR Compensation Manager
- Certified HR Staffing Manager
- Certified Human Resources Manager
- Certified Performance Appraisal Manager

► Logistics & Supply Chain Management

- Certified International Logistics Professional
- Certified Logistics & SCM Professional
- Certified Purchase Manager

► Law

- Certified IPR & Legal Manager

► Life Skills

- Certified Business Communication Specialist
- Certified Public Relations Officer

► Media

- Certified Advertising Manager
- Certified Advertising Sales Professional

► Office Skills

- Certified Data Entry Operator
- Certified Office Administrator

► Project Management

- Certified Project Management Professional

► Real Estate

- Certified Real Estate Consultant

► Information Technology

- Certified Android Apps Developer
- Certified ASP.NET Programmer
- Certified Basic Network Support Professional
- Certified Business Intelligence Professional
- Certified C# Professional
- Certified CAD Professional
- Certified Cloud Computing Professional
- Certified Computer Fundamentals (MS Office) Professional
- Certified Core Java Developer
- Certified CSS Designer
- Certified Data Mining and Warehousing Professional
- Certified DHTML & Javascript Developer
- Certified Django Developer
- Certified DTP operator
- Certified E-commerce Professional
- Certified E-Governance Professional
- Certified Enterprise Applications Integration Specialist (Biztalk)
- Certified Ethical Hacking and Security Professional
- Certified Facebook Apps Developer
- Certified Grid Computing Professional
- Certified Hadoop and Mapreduce Professional
- Certified HTML Designer
- Certified HTML5 Developer
- Certified iPhone Apps Developer
- Certified IT Support Professional
- Certified J2ME Programmer
- Certified Joomla Developer
- Certified Linux Administrator
- Certified Magento Professional
- Certified MySQL DB Administrator
- Certified Network Security Professional
- Certified Open Source CMS (Drupal) Professional
- Certified PHP Professional
- Certified PL/SQL Developer
- Certified Python Professional
- Certified Router Support Professional
- Certified Selenium Professional
- Certified SEO Professional
- Certified Software Quality Assurance Professional
- Certified Software Security Professional
- Certified Software Testing Professional
- Certified SQL Server 2008 Programmer
- Certified WiMax(4G) Professional
- Certified Wordpress Developer
- Certified XML Developer

► Sales, BPO

- Certified Telesales Executive

Contact us at:

V-Skills

011-473 44 723 or info@vskills.in

Intelligent Communication Systems India Limited

DSIIDC Administrative Building,
Okhla Industrial Estate-III, New Delhi-110020

www.vskills.in