

Blood: Water Technical eUpdate Vol. 15 – Effective Training Programs for Organizational & Staff Development

Dear All:

Nearly everyone recognizes the value and benefits of staff training and development. When done properly, training can make staff more efficient and motivated with the impact being felt both internally and externally: Externally through the quality of service delivery and internally with increased staff retention and satisfaction over time.

When managers think about staff training immediately they think about the burdensome cost of external courses, a barrier which almost immediately makes training programs impossible for NGOs working in resource constrained settings. When you consider all the functions within your organization: Administration, finance, human resources, leadership and management, programmatic and technical; The training needs are diverse. They span organization wide processes as well as specific job functions. Training needs are also ongoing at various times and stages of staff and organizational development - onboarding new hires, refreshing long-standing personnel, updating all staff on policy or protocol changes as well as equipping individuals for promotions and role-transitions.

This month's newsletter is dedicated to providing information and resources to help your organizations rethink the internal training programs. ***And it's a long one!*** Perhaps you have some informal internal training approaches already in place, or you need to start from scratch. This newsletter will give you a good overview of what it takes and some supportive resources to help make it happen. This can supplement ongoing work already in place for partners whose IDF Assessment Process identified Human Resources as an area of prioritized strengthening as well- but did not make it into the Improvement Plan for resourced support.

Creating *effective* trainings isn't achievable without deliberate planning and effort. If not done well, they do not deliver the desired results and become a point of wasting valuable and limited resources (time and money). They lose their value and no-longer become a tool to motivate and strengthen. So, how does one create effective workforce training materials? Below is an eight-step road map to help you create more effective training materials. Entire books have been written about each of these steps, so there's far more to say than what's written below. So, I do encourage you to take each step and delve into it with more independent research and reading. However this should be a great starting place to get things going.

Step 1: Perform a Training Needs Assessment: Sounds pretty basic huh! Well, you would be surprised how often we perceive gaps versus actually assessing what they truly are. The basic training needs assessment requires you frame and determine the following:

- ***Identify a clear goal*** that needs to be met and is aligned with your organization's core business: Your mission, charter, values and/or programs.
- Determine the ***tasks*** staff need to perform so your organization ***can reach that goal***
- Identify the activities (learning and practical) that will help the workers learn to perform the tasks
- Determine the ***learning characteristics of the workers*** that will make the training more effective.

Process this information in a format that is easy to read and accessible to all involved.

Step 2: Keep Adult Learning Principles in Mind: The staff you want to train are adults. Adults share certain characteristics that make training more effective for them. Various schools of education and human development have come up with a list of principles which guide how adults learn. According to these principles adult learners:

- Are self-directed
- Come to training with a lifetime of existing knowledge, experience, and opinions
- Are goal-oriented
- Want training that is relevant
- Want training that is task-oriented
- Learn when they see “what’s in it for them”
- Want to be and feel respected

Compare these against the learning characteristics you identified in the needs assessment and you can immediately see how the two relate strongly. And you can imagine how they should affect the design and delivery of internal trainings.

Step 3: Develop Learning Objectives: A learning objective may address skills or methods that your learners should know or be able to perform, such as how to fill internal forms; attitudes that your employees should have representing your organization, or even how to enroll a client into the program.

- ***Make them SMART:*** When you write an objective, it should have five characteristics, known collectively by the acronym SMART. The objective should be specific, meaning it’s very clearly stated and its meaning is equally apparent to everyone. It should be measurable, meaning everyone can agree if the learner satisfies it or not. It should be achievable, meaning the learner truly has a chance to satisfy it. It should be relevant, meaning it’s important for the worker’s job. And it should be time-bound, meaning it will be clear when the learner must be able to satisfy the objective (typically, after training).
- ***Give them four parts (ABCD):*** A learning objective should include four parts, which you can remember with the letters ABCD. It should include an actor who will perform the objective (the employees you’re training). It should include a behavior that the actor must perform (this behavior should be stated as a verb that defines the workers’ behavior, such as “enroll” or “assess”). It should include conditions under which the employees must perform the behavior (for example, “given a register, the employee must...”). And it should include the degree to which the employee must perform the behavior (for example, “90 times an hour”).

Step 4: Design Training Materials: Designing training materials is the “plan before you do” phase of training material development. Its mapping out all the aspects that need to be included given steps 1-3 above. While you’re designing your materials, keep the following points in mind:

- Always focus primarily on the learning needs of your employees, and not on what’s easy for trainers
- Only create training content and assessments that relate directly to your learning objectives
- Remember the adult learning principles

- Include as much hands-on practice or simulation as possible: people learn by doing
- Whenever possible, put the employees in control of the learning process (instead of the trainer)
- Do everything possible to let the employees talk and interact with the trainer and with each other during the training
- Make sure there's plenty of opportunity for feedback during training
- Break your training materials up into small “chunks” that are easier to take in and understand
- Order training materials and sub-topics in a logical manner—one step that builds on top of another, or chronologically, etc.
- Try to use a “**blended learning**” approach that includes training in several different formats (computer-based, instructor-led, field visits etc.).
- Try to appeal to a variety of your workers’ senses during training—sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste (when appropriate). Sight is by far the most important sense for learning, but adding the others when possible does help.

Step 5: Develop Your Training Materials: Once you’ve got your training materials designed, now’s the time to roll up your sleeves and start developing them. It’s like a recipe for something you are going to cook or instructions for something to build/assemble. You may create a variety of training materials using several different tools during this step. Here’s a look at a few options:

- Word, Excel, and similar “Office” programs to create handouts for employees and to create training outlines and notes.
- PowerPoint for in-class projections and/or handouts to deliver to employees.
- Flip-charts, posters, and/or computer-generated graphics for presenting visual materials during training

Step 6: Implement the Training: If developing is like cooking the meal, then this phase is eating the food! It may seem obvious, but one of the most critical things you’ll have to do in this phase is inform the employees that will attend the training. Give them plenty of time in advance so that they can work it into their schedules and complete any necessary pre-training preparation. In addition, you may also have to do things like inform the workers’ supervisor, reserve rooms for training, buy any necessary supplies, work through any scheduling or traveling logistics, and perhaps even have food and drinks available. All these things should have been framed in the design stage, and now is execution!

Moving forward to the actual training, the implementation can take a variety of forms. It may be classroom instruction; practice opportunities such as role-playing exercises, focus groups, case studies, or small group assignments; on-the-job skills-based training; the delivery of paper-based hand-outs for individual reading and study; the completion of e-learning modules on a computer; a combination of some or all of these; or more.

If your training includes an on-the-job skills-based component, make sure you know exactly what the employees must do to demonstrate competence. Define this in advance, when you’re creating your learning objectives, and don’t leave it unstated or vague.

If your training includes a classroom instruction component, there are a number of things you can do to make this more productive. Although the key things involve letting the employees be active participants instead of passive and bored listeners, more mundane things like room temperature, lighting, table and chair set-up, visual aids, and the instructor’s presentation style also play a role. There are a number of good books and

websites that can help you with this; the [American Society for Training & Development's website](#) is a good place to start looking.

Step 7: Evaluate the Training: If your goal is to deliver effective training that changes your worker's behavior on the job—and this SHOULD be your goal—then you need to confirm that the training was effective. The standard way to do this is to use *Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation*:

- Employees' reaction to training: Did the employees like the training? Did they feel like they learned? You can find this out by observing the employees during training, asking their opinions, or handing out surveys. You can hand out paper-based surveys after training if you want, but you may get better results if the survey is online and anonymous. Survey Monkey provides free online tools to help you do this.
- Employees' actual learning: Assessments during the training should evaluate the employees' actual learning of the objectives. This might include simple tests for knowledge issues, or case studies, job simulations, or hands-on exercises for skills and attitudes.
- Employee's post-training job behavior: Are the workers taking the new knowledge/skills/attitudes from training and applying them at work where it counts? Observations of the employees' on-the-job work behavior will determine this, as will other performance-based metrics.
- Quantifiable business results: Did the training result in reaching the desired business goal (i.e., did revenues rise, did costs decrease, was the new product manufactured properly, or were workplace incidents reduced)?

Step 8: Repeat Any Step When Necessary: You may have to return to different parts of this 8-step process in the future for a number of reasons. Now that you know the method, just work your way through. If you made some errors the first time—maybe you misjudged your employee's learning needs, misidentified the learning objectives, provided too much information during training, put too little information into job aids, or held an instructor-led training that was dominated by the instructor—just go back and do it better the next time.

Now that you have read through this mini-dissertation on effective training, you can probably compare to strategies applied in the past and see where and how you were in alignment and perhaps steps that were skipped or not thoroughly applied. Developing internal trainings is not difficult. However, it does require deliberate effort and planning. Once the process is internalized to your organization you may find that it makes a range of technical trainings internally more feasible and thus saves you money in the long-term from having to finance external courses for staff development.

Below are more resources to support building effective and internal trainings for both organizational and technical purposes.

1. The 70:20:10 Framework:

Learning methodologies provide an important context to the above steps. Particularly steps 2-6. *The 70:20:10 Framework* is a learning and development reference model that is backed by a large body of recent research supporting its efficacy. It captures the three types of learning - experiential, social and formal - and explains their relationship to one another. The numbers provide a contextual

indication of the required response of each component of learning while also making it possible to communicate, explain and provide a guide for the frequency of each part. Below are some quick-references to help familiarize yourself with this methodology to build your foundation in understanding adult learning as it influences your in-house training programs.

- **Free webinar** by the *70:20:10 Forum* aiming to demystify the framework and methodology:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAuK9yulaAI>
- **“70:20:10: Where Is the Evidence?”** Is a short article written by the Association of Talent Development (ATD), providing evidence from research on this model and its efficacy. Click this link or see the attached PDF: <https://www.td.org/Publications/Blogs/Science-of-Learning-Blog/2014/07/70-20-10-Where-Is-the-Evidence>
- **“Making Learning Work,”** is an article by the 70:20:10 Institute that presents some deeper insights on how to apply this methodology to make learning more effective in an on-the-job context.
<https://702010institute.com/making-learning-work/>

2. The I-TECH Training Toolkit

The I-TECH Training Toolkit offers over 250 practical resources for trainers. The toolkit leads users through key steps in training program development and offers case studies of successful programs. It contains original and revised resources for developing, delivering, and evaluating training on HIV-related topics and skills for health care providers. The materials are geared for those seeking to educate health care professionals on topics such as preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, antiretroviral therapy, opportunistic infections, and voluntary counseling and testing.

The toolkit is divided into seven primary sections. The first six sections cover the necessary steps in creating a training course:

- **Coordination:** Tools such as sign-in sheets, agendas, checklists for planning training, and clinical preceptorship forms.
- **Needs assessment:** Resources to help identify the training needs of your target participants.
- **Design:** Tools for planning a training curriculum and determining training content.
- **Development:** Tools for creating training manuals, handouts, and exercises.
- **Delivery:** Helpful information on conducting a successful training.
- **Evaluation:** Resources for evaluating training and assessing participant learning.
- Each section includes an "In the Field" example that demonstrates how some of the tools can be used to help create and deliver training.
- The seventh and final section of the toolkit, "Sample Curricula," provides examples of curricula to be used as models for trainers to adapt.

To access the full toolkit online click here:
<http://www.go2itech.org/HTML/TT06/toolkit.html>

3. The Training Evaluation Framework and Tools (TEFT)

The The Training Evaluation Framework and Tools (TEFT) tools were designed to guide you through this planning process. The TEFT is a set of resources designed to help evaluators, implementers, and program managers at all levels plan successful evaluations of in-service training program outcomes. The resources are organized as six steps to guide the planning of a training outcome evaluation. The Training Evaluation Framework illustrates a conceptual link between in-service trainings for health care workers and meaningful outcomes at the individual, facility, and population levels. It also explores the situational factors that might affect an evaluation.

The TEFT also includes tools and resources, to guide the process of evaluation planning and support thoughtful discussions between evaluators, program implementers, and funders.

To access the full toolkit online click here: <http://www.go2itech.org/resources/TEFT>

4. 7 Ways to Improve Employee Development Programs:

This engaging article published by the Harvard Business Review, provides 7 accessible ways to improve on employee development programs. While training is an important component, it is not the singular way and this article provides some evidenced methods for improving the staff development process that consider both employer driven and employee driven approaches.

To download the article: **see the attached PDF below**

More To Come!