Employee Training Template –
A Quick Guide to Training Planning

We live in rapidly changing environment in which business success depends significantly upon our employees' ability to perform their job well. Today every company needs to provide training to its employees to ensure their skills and knowledge are adequate and sufficient. In this Employee Training Template, the three basic steps in staff training are described. This template is a quick guide to help companies understand how to develop and train their personnel. This document is available for free download from www.MyManagementGuide.com. Author: Mary Lawinson.

Introduction

Employee training is a critical driver of success for any business that has employed personnel. Effective development and training of staff makes it easier to reach higher business performance in the long and short term because skilled and trained workers do their job more efficiently. Through investing in employee training programmes and projects an organization gains a long-term perspective for strengthening its competitiveness and profitability. The process of staff development and training allows new and existing employees to understand the company's mission statement, learn efficient ways for reaching desired performance, and develop their skills and abilities. In this **Employee Training Template** I talk about basic steps for managing the training process. The template offers a quick guide to training planning for businesses.

I. Analyze Training Needs

There are many methods to gather data about staff performance. I personally use 3-4 methods in my working environment. Below I give 6 basic methods that help analyze training needs. Note that none of the methods is to be applied alone. They combine each other and hence should ideally be used together.

- ✓ **Observation**. This method of staff training needs analysis lets evaluate a worker's performance through first-hand review and observation. You must perform the role of a non-participating observer to watch the worker and evaluate his/her performance. You need to have certain criteria for measuring performance. The advantage of this method is that direct observation and analysis provides you with real-time and first-hand knowledge so you can better understand all performance problems the worker encounters.

- ✓ **Interviewing**. During an interview you meet your employees face to face and discuss their impressions of performance. Both individual and group interviews will help you explore the employee's responses and vision regarding their performance. You can also request for suggestions and comments. The advantage here is that you gain a full understanding of the employees' performance deficiencies and establish personal relationships with potential trainees.

- ✓ **Questionnaire**. This technique is close to interviewing. A questionnaire includes a list of critical questions about performance and training needs. You share questionnaires among your personnel and gather their responses soon. The advantage is that through questionnaire-based interviews you communicate with each staff member to gain a big picture view of the environment. You obtain a better understanding of what performance problems need to be solved.

✓ **Appraisal Review**. An appraisal review is a periodic interview with a worker to question this worker regarding the duties and training needs the worker thinks are critical to performance. Appraisal reviews help identify the needs, variations and penetrations that your employee training plan should include. The reviews are conducted for every employee individually. In such a way you can to uncover the causes of weaknesses in the individual performance of every worker. These weaknesses represent areas for future staff training.

✓ **Problem Solving Conference**. Through organizing periodic problem solving conferences you can communicate with personnel to analyze their understanding of the working environment. It's recommended to involve an external consultant in such conferences for moderation purposes. During a conference your workers express their feelings about the company and outstanding issues. Current problems highlighted by workers will evolve into potential areas for improvement and training.

✓ **Job Analysis**. One more critical method for identifying training needs is job analysis. Such an analysis lets you perform a detailed examination of 1) performance elements (tasks and activities) that make up an employee job or role, 2) working conditions, and 3) job requirements (skills, behaviors, knowledge). The analysis helps determine the most efficient methods of doing a job, understand how to reach enhancement of the employee's job satisfaction, and figure out how to match job-specifications with the person-specifications.

When the analysis is done, it is recommended to use a needs matrix to record the results. A needs matrix includes names of the needs, their priorities and expected solution(s). The matrix will help you have a better way of storing and displaying the analysis data.

II. Establish Training Objectives

The goals of your employee training programme are specific and based on the needs of your company. Another firm may have other goals. For example, a trading company wants to increase sales and conversion through staff training, while a consulting firm intends to improve its service through improving the quality of knowledge of the consultants. Meanwhile, there are common objectives of the training process for most organizations. Below I list such objectives.

✓ **Improving staff productivity and effectiveness** through training employees so that every worker develops and utilizes their talents, skills and potential.

✓ **Providing development for the management team** to ensure their commitment to the accomplishment of the firm's strategic goals and objectives.

✓ **Reducing staff turnover** through improving employees' engagement and motivation.

I recommend you plan and develop the objectives of your staff training plan template following *SMART criteria*. SMART is a popular goal setting technique. SMART means that every goal is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound. SMART technique is widely used in project and business management. You can enjoy using it in your employee training programme.

III. Select Training Methods

Your next step is to select methods that could help you satisfy the needs and objectives of your staff training template. There are multiple methods; some of them are best but require more effort and resources. Each method may be effective in a particular environment only. You must be careful when choosing between the methods. Please note the listing below is not prioritized. I just list the training methods alphabetically. It is all up to you to decide which method(s) is more important and relevant to your specific training environment.

- ✓ **Delegation** – you consider delegating specific tasks and jobs to groups of workers who are never or rarely involved in doing these jobs. In such a way the workers gain a chance to check and exert their abilities in a new field. The method is best for high-performing environments.

- ✓ **Interdepartmental Teamwork** – you can try to create an expert group and then involve this group in the work of another department they are not concerned with. Interdepartmental teamwork help people from different departments to work as a single team and exchange their experience and knowledge for training purposes.

- ✓ **Temporary Job Transfers** – this method of employee training lets workers gain valued experience from job transfers on a temporary basis. An employee assigned to job transfer collaborates with various specialists from other teams, departments and even companies.

- ✓ **Work Shadowing** – this technique means certain employees follow or "shadow" the work of other employees for a certain period of time. The idea here is that work shadowing helps improve knowledge, skills and expertise through first-hand observation.

- ✓ **Demonstrations** – you may include this mentoring method in your staff training template if your company can and wants to arrange practical demonstrations for training purposes. It is a cheaper mentoring method, so most likely the company will want it.

- ✓ **Orientation** – this technique of employee training entails the process of new personnel assimilation and socialization through 1) gaining employee commitment, 2) reducing employee anxiety, 3) sharing the right understanding of the organization's goals, and 4) providing introductory training exercises. It is a necessary method, and you must have a new employee orientation programme.

- ✓ **External Seminars and Conferences** – leaders of the marketplace, business giants and government agencies like to organize external seminars and conferences to explain attendees best practices of management. You can use this opportunity to develop your staff.

- ✓ **In-house Workshops** – as an alternative to external seminars and conferences you can try to organize in-company training workshops with internal or external trainers and mentors involved. It is a popular technique in organizations that carry out effective HR management.

- ✓ **Distance Learning** – using computers, Internet, e-learning programmes and distance education software your workers are enabled to obtain new education and develop their skills. Note that most distance learning providers give certification.

- ✓ **Learning Manuals** – perhaps it is the cheapest way to train personnel. Just document and share printed copies of user guides, manuals and instructions among your staff.

- ✓ **Self- development** – along with learning manuals, self-development is a cheaper way for your company to get its workers trained. All you have to do is to ensure your staff is motivated to perform training exercises and tasks personally, with high commitment.

- ✓ **Webinars** – it is a kind of online training and distance learning. An employee can register for the participation in a specific webinar. Your company will have to pay for this staff training opportunity.

- ✓ **Training Games** – games are a way of involving workers in solving problems and developing their skills. Through business and team building games in a group you can increase the group's commitment to work and improve their understanding of best practices.

- ✓ **Classroom Sessions** – it is a traditional way to get workers taught and trained. Such sessions can be organized either inside the company or by involving an expert trainer from the outside.

It is important to mention that your choice of training methods is best when it is made under the rules and requirements of your organization's policies. You must be sure that chosen methods never contradict or violate the regulations of the policies. Otherwise your employee training template won't be effective.

Good Luck!