

Training and Performance

T+D magazine has explored employee performance as it relates to training.

Over the years, *T+D* magazine has examined employee performance—from exploring ways to solve performance problems to scrutinizing performance appraisals.

Whether trainers have been asked to analyze performance-related issues or to teach managers or supervisors to conduct performance appraisals, the bottom line has always remained the same: improve employee and organizational performance.



September 2006

In “Training and Performance Appraisal—Are They Related?,” Donald L. Kirkpatrick examines the evolution of performance appraisals and how they fit with workplace training.

It seems to me that workplace training and performance appraisals have the same objective: to improve performance—both behavior and results. And to my knowledge, very few organizations integrate the concepts.

An effective performance appraisal program should do more than set salary and promotion decisions on past performance. It should aid in the development of a performance improvement plan that utilizes coaching from the department supervisor or manager to increase skills development. This puts it in the same category as training, which is all about looking ahead and developing practical programs that result in improved performance.

Yes, training and performance appraisals are close relatives if the performance appraisal projects what can be done to improve employee performance. If you are responsible for performance appraisals, examine how you can use training to improve performance.

One final thought for trainers: Put coaching on your top priority list for management training and tie it to your performance appraisal program. You should also include a training program that teaches managers how to conduct an appraisal interview.

This will solidify the relationship between training and the performance appraisal process.



February 1984

In “How to Prepare for a Performance Appraisal” in the February 1984 issue of *Training and Development Journal*, author Patricia King gives trainers practical tips about how to conduct a performance appraisal.

Preparing for a performance appraisal is like preparing for a trip. Sometimes you can just throw some things in a bag, set out, and have fun. But if you want to make sure you have a good time, you need to prepare.

When you evaluate performance, you must look not only at the outcome, but at the methods. Did this person exceed the objectives by running roughshod over the rest of the staff? Were the work goals accomplished at the expense of others accomplishing theirs? When you appraise performance, you must put an employee's accomplishments in context; otherwise you can breed blind ambition.



July 1994

In “How to Improve Performance,” author Clay Carr writes that training is not always the answer to performance problems.

Businesses increasingly turn to trainers to solve a host of problems. Meanwhile, trainers increasingly recognize that training alone won't solve the problems they are being asked to fix.

After analyzing root causes and before designing an intervention, you have to determine the depth at which you will attack the problem. Most performance problems exist on several levels. The deeper you delve, the greater the potential benefit. But the closer to the core of an organization that you attack a problem, the more trauma you create.

Gain your organization's trust by staking out a well-defined territory and compiling high-quality data on which to base a sound intervention.