

"THE FACT THAT YOUR TRAINING APPROACH IS SIMPLY 'CRISIS TRAINING,' REACTING TO EMERGENCY SITUATIONS, IS A POINT THAT WILL BE APPRECIATED BY TOP MANAGEMENT."

GUIDELINES ON DEVELOPING PROGRAM POLICY

BY KENNETH I. NEWMAN

"Training policy" is often an unstated, "we all know what we're talking about" assumption. Obviously, a training program can exist without a comprehensive statement of policy. A random sampling of calls to four major industries produced only one with a comprehensive training policy, and yet all four had one or more full-time staff members, adequate budget and an ongoing training program. The training program can exist without the policy, but when it does, the Human Resource Development (HRD) department is likely to be running a "seat of the pants" operation, crisis training, if you please.

The result is an approach to training that has no built-in mechanism for evaluation. There is no provision for asking critical questions, such as "How is the training to be evaluated?" "How do humans learn?" "What is the relation of the training to the learner's work and environment?" These types of questions, it seems to me, must be

considered as one develops a training policy for an agency or company. When one takes the time to wrestle with these kinds of questions before developing program policies, then he or she has made significant strides toward establishing the training program on a proactive and professional basis.

I would like to suggest (1) some determinant areas out of which a training program should emerge, (2) some components which ought to be included in policy development and (3) some reasons why this approach to training can be useful to you as a human resource development trainer.

Determinant Areas

The planning and implementation of a training program requires decision making in at least four basic, what I would call "determinant areas." I am defining "determinant areas" as those aspects of a person's life or environment which establish limits and affect the behavior of a person. The four areas I would suggest for consideration are these: philosophical, psychological, sociological and

structure of knowledge. We make decisions every day in these areas as if we knew what we were talking about. The approach to human resource development would be enhanced and strengthened if we would take some time to struggle with questions in these determinant areas and allow the answers to inform our training approach.

Under the heading of "philosophical" I would suggest we need to ask questions about the nature of the human being. How important a role do salary and benefits play in motivating greater productivity? What is the person's value system? And how are these values established? For instance, if a person values off-time highly, then training provided at night, or over the weekend has little chance of success. Overtime and increased benefits may not have any motivational appeal to such a person. If a person is noncompetitive by nature, then all the training in the world may not effect the desired change unless it touches on issues that can alter the person's approach to his or her job.

We may not have final answers

to these types of questions, but I am suggesting that the questions need to be asked and that the person responsible for the training program needs to consider the nature of the human being he is attempting to train.

Under the psychological determinant, I would suggest the trainer needs to ask, "What is learning and when does it take place?" "Is learning changed behavior?" "What motivates learning?" "How long does one have to 'learn' something before one learns it?"

I can recall my high school days when the English teacher taught me about subjects, prepositions, verbs and objects. English grammar came easy for me. I was bored to find that the same subject was taught each year for at least four consecutive years. There was no recognition that a student might have grasped the subject the first time. Repetition . . . Repetition . . . Drill . . . Drill. The psychology seemed to be, "Effective learning is achieved by hitting the student over the head again and again."

An effective trainer will recognize the importance of repetition and reinforcement, but he or she will also recognize when the program is not accomplishing the purpose for which it was designed. The trainer needs to look at this psychological determinant when considering the training approach.

Another determinant area is the sociological environment in which the person works. What is the purpose of the training? Is it preparation for a promotion? Is it job related? What relationship does the training have to the trainee's environment where he or she works? Where he or she lives? What is the company or agency saying to the trainee when it offers — and sometimes requires — attendance at training programs? Are expectations being raised that cannot be met?

More often these days, a training program needs to give some consideration to the employee's environment outside the work area. While one cannot get intimately involved, the trainer does need to have some awareness of how a person's private life may im-

act on the training approach. For instance, what trainer has not scheduled a workshop well in advance only to learn too late that the event falls on the same day as a major sports spectacular — and most of the intended participants are avid fans?

Finally, one needs to give consideration to the nature of the knowledge to be taught in the training program. This determinant area is concerned with the structure of the knowledge. What is the scope and the sequence of the knowledge or skill to be taught?

The trainer needs to have a precise understanding of where this training fits into the total training program. Clear learning objectives for each training event need to be established. Consideration needs to be given to how the style or training approach is related to the nature of the subject to be taught. For instance, if the object is to train clerical help in appropriate telephone answering techniques, then one needs to think twice about the effectiveness of having a lecturer address 30 secretaries for two hours. On the other hand, if the objective is to inform personnel about a new policy, then small group work and role plays may not be at all appropriate.

One need not give definitive answers to the questions in these determinant areas, but neither should one totally ignore the questions. When the person responsible for developing a training curriculum has given prior consideration to these determinant areas, then that person will be more competent in planning an effective training program and in justifying that program to his/her agency or company. In addition, that training coordinator will have established the groundwork for an effective approach to evaluation of the program and policies.

Components to Include in Policies

Program policy refers to a definite course of action which has been adopted for the sake of expediency. When an agency or company has a program policy, then the issues of training, of reim-

PIX Mobile® TABLES



Compare these rugged Pixmobile features.

- Completely assembled.
- All welded steel construction.
- Heavy duty casters.
- Lifetime guarantee.
- UL and CSA listed.
- Wide variety of shapes and sizes to meet your requirements.
- Reduce maintenance and increase equipment usage by mobilizing on a Pixmobile.
- Bristol Beige with Sunburst Orange accessories add a modern sparkle to any room.
- Heavy ribbed rubber padded tops for excellent sound dampening on most models.

Write for additional information:

Advance
PRODUCTS COMPANY, INC.

Central at Wabash
Wichita, Ks 67214

Circle No. 102 on Reader Service Card

bursement for training, of who is eligible for training, of the purpose of training are all placed on a standard and impersonal basis. Policy is useful from this point of view alone. It gives one an adopted, overall approach to resolving most routine type issues.

Effective program policy should include the following components. These 10 components — and there may be more — seem basic to a comprehensive statement of policy. . . .

- **Statement of Mission:** The policy should include up front a statement of mission or purpose for the training function. Such an umbrella statement might sound like this: *The purpose is to provide training and development to enhance productivity and proficiency directed toward the achievement of the company goals and objectives.* The statement of purpose establishes the rationale for whatever else happens in the training function.

- **Goals or General Objectives:** Goals or general objectives are statements which speak to some

aspect of the mission statement and indicate in general the conditions which one desires to achieve at some future point in time. They refer to the directions in which the training function intends to move.

For instance, a goal statement might read as follows: *Training programs shall be developed in response to the identified needs of the persons to be trained.*

- **Objectives:** As the reader already knows, an objective specifies a single result to be achieved within a given period of time which will accomplish all or some aspect of a goal. An appropriate objective might read: *To conduct a needs assessment among mid-level managers by November, at a cost not to exceed 50 man hours.*

- **Statement of Philosophy:** The statement of philosophy should be related to the statement of mission. It may amplify what is intended in the mission statement. For instance, the philosophy might speak to the need for making training available to the handicapped or on an equal employment opportunity basis. It may speak of the

assumption that effective training is designed to alter behavior or that training where possible will be done in-house.

- **System of Management:** Policy statements or guidelines should speak to the issue of organization and authority. There should be policy guidelines on plans for training, on procedures, on scheduling, staffing, directing, controlling, review and evaluation. These are some of the subjects which fall under the category of the system of management.

- **Revisions and Modifications:** Policy statements are not intended to be carved in stone. Provision should be made for revising and modifying the statements in the light of changing needs and conditions. Provision needs to be made for exceptions to the rules. Policies should be an aid, not a burden. They should not be allowed to enslave the training function.


- **Facilities and Equipment:** Policy statements should be included concerning the appropriate use of facilities and equipment. When is off-site training to be preferred to on-the-job experiences?

- **Needs Assessment:** Training experiences and events should be the response of the training function to the expressed needs of the participants. Unless training events are based on valid needs assessment information, then training is a shot in the dark.

- **Costs and Finances:** Budgeting is a critical factor in every training program. Policy statements should be included which clarify how funds will be used to support the training function.

- **Records System:** Some acceptable approach to record keeping needs to be designed and stated. This approach should take into consideration the needs of the agency or company, the appropriate information to include, the right to privacy of the employee and the specific uses to which this information will be put.

These are the 10 basic components which a comprehensive policy statement will need to include. Depending on the size and development of the training function, these components may be brief and simple, or more exten-



A PREMIER SENIOR EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

P.A. 501 Human and Organizational Behavior

A residential program to be held in the Mount Ada Conference Center, Catalina Island. The program will commence on October 5-11, 1980.

Residential faculty will include: Dr. Frank Sherwood, Dr. Warren Schmidt, Professor Neely Gardner, Dr. Robert Biller, Dr. William Crockett, Dr. Houston Flournoy, and Dr. Charles Ferguson.

This program is designed for managers in governmental service to advance and develop theory and skill with regard to the human aspects of public management. Enrollment for credit (4 units) is not required. The design for the week will be centered around small groups of participants and staff, not to exceed 12. For information contact Pauline Arneberg at (213) 741-8111.

Circle No. 109 on Reader Service Card

sive and complicated.

Two words describe the usefulness of policy statements: *proactive* and *professional*. The training coordinator or the director of Human Resource Development who develops program policy along these described lines is working on a proactive approach to training that is highly professional.

A well thought out program policy provides a practical approach to involving key personnel in the training function. Unless top management and others upon whom the success of your training program depends are involved in developing the training function, then you are likely to have difficulty getting support and funds to undergird your program. The person responsible for the training function should involve key personnel in the development of his or her "game plan" for training. This is simply basic homework. The fact that your training approach is not simply "crisis training," reacting to emergency situations, is a point that will be appreciated by top management. Crisis training will occur, but you will be in a better position to work it into the training function.

A "professional" approach to the training function puts the director of training in a professional role. The training events are no longer based on mere opinion or on a hit and miss approach. The dependency of the agency or company on the personality and experience of the training director is greatly reduced. These are desirable results. The director of training increases his or her own expertise and marketability in the training field as a professional. The company benefits from a comprehensive approach to the training function.

Training policy needs to be stated. It is not adequate to assume that "we all know what we are talking about." It is both proactive and professional to develop training policy for your agency or company. The task is well worth your time and effort.

Kenneth I. Newman is a human resource development consultant and vice president of Organizational Development Consultants, Inc., Richmond, VA.



HOW CAN YOU INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY?

Build A More Effective, More Motivated Team.

Your people can learn practical skills and techniques for improving their performance in these professional 1-day workshops.

- How To Become a More Effective Supervisor
- How to Conduct a Lawful Employment Interview
- Improving Morale and Productivity With Performance Reviews
- Seminar for Secretaries and Other Office Personnel
- Seminar for Advanced and Executive Secretaries
- Improving Your People Skills

Choose a location near you. These programs are presented in over 150 cities nationwide.

To maximize the effectiveness of your total team, Schedule in-house training sessions for your staff. In-house seminars are a cost effective training method in a time of rising costs.

Call us *Today!* Use our TOLL-FREE number 800-247-5362 for full details on the seminars.



BATTEN, BATTEN, HUDSON & SWAB, INC.
Management Consultants • Training Professionals • Film Producers

To: Information Services, Dept. 102
Batten, Batten, Hudson & Swab, Inc.
820 Keo Way
Des Moines, IA 50309 515/244-3176

Yes! I want to increase our productivity. Send me information on

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Circle No. 104 on Reader Service Card