**CHAPTER 1**

**Introduction to Employee Training and Development**

This introductory chapter discusses why training is important to help companies successfully compete in today’s business environment. The chapter provides an overview of training practices, the training profession, forces impacting training, and how to design effective training. The chapter begins with a discussion of how a variety of companies use training to improve their competitive advantage. The chapter proceeds to define a number of terms relating to training, followed by an overview of the basic Instructional System Design (ISD) model, the foundation for effective training. Next, forces influencing working and learning are presented, concluding with an overview of training practices.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Discuss the forces influencing the workplace and learning and explain how training can help companies deal with these forces.

2. Draw a figure or diagram and explain how training, development, informal learning, and knowledge management contribute to business success.

3. Discuss various aspects of the training design process.

4. Describe the amount and types of training occurring in U.S. companies.

5. Discuss the key roles for training professionals.

6. Identify appropriate resources (e.g., journals and websites) for learning about training research and practice.

**INTRODUCTION**

Companies are experiencing great change due to new technologies, rapid development of new knowledge, globalization, and e-commerce. To help with such change, companies need to devote significant resources to attract, retain, and motivate their workforces. Human resource management (HRM) refers to the policies, practices, and systems that influence employee behavior, attitudes, and performance. Training is one of the key components of the HRM function. The overarching theme of this text is that training, development, and related learning activities are central to organizations being successful in the marketplace.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT: KEY COMPONENTS OF LEARNING**

It is important to understand what training means in the broader business context. The overall goal of training is learning. Learning refers to employees acquiring knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes, or behaviors. When employees learn, it leads to the development of human capital. Human capital refers to knowledge, advanced skills, system understanding and creativity, and motivation to deliver high-quality products and services. Human capital may be more important than other types of capital in helping a company achieve competitive advantage. Below are a number of key terms related to training, development, and learning.

1. Training refers to a planned effort by a company to facilitate learning of job-related competencies, knowledge, skills, and behaviors. The goal of training is for employees to master the knowledge, skills, and behaviors and then apply them on the job.
2. Development refers to training, formal education, job experiences, relationships, and assessments of personality, skills, and abilities that help employees prepare for future jobs or positions.
3. Formal training and development refers to training and development programs, courses, and events that are developed and organized by the company.
4. Informal learning refers to learning that is learner initiated, involves action and doing, is motivated by an intent to develop, and does not occur in a formal learning setting. Informal learning may be particularly important because it leads to the development of tacit knowledge.
5. Explicit knowledge refers to knowledge that is well documented, easily articulated, and easily transferred from person-to-person. Examples of explicit knowledge include processes, checklists, flowcharts, formulas, and definitions.
6. Tacit knowledge refers to personal knowledge based on individual experiences that is difficult to codify.
7. Knowledge management refers to the process of enhancing company performance by designing and implementing tools, processes, systems, structures, and cultures to improve the creation, sharing, and use of knowledge.

**DESIGNING EFFECTIVE TRAINING**

Training must be systematically designed to help ensure maximum impact. The training design process should follow the principles of Instructional System Design (ISD), a step-by-step process for designing and developing training programs. Following a systematic approach helps ensure that training targets the most important learning needs, adopts the most appropriate methods, and has a meaningful on-the-job impact.

The ISD process involves seven interrelated steps:

1. Conduct a needs assessment—determine who and what needs to be trained
2. Ensure employee readiness for training—ensure employees are prepared and motivated to attend training
3. Create a learning environment—create an environment that has the features for learning to occur
4. Ensure transfer of training—ensure support is in place to facilitate the transfer of trained skills
5. Develop an evaluation plan—determine how the effectiveness of training will be assessed
6. Design and conduct training —select training methods and deliver training
7. Monitor and evaluate—assess the effectiveness of training

The training design process sometimes is referred to as the *ADDIE* model because it includes analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

Regardless of the specific ISD approach used, all share the following assumptions:

* Training design is effective only if it helps employees reach instructional goals and objectives.
* Measurable learning objectives should be identified before training program begins.
* Evaluation plays an important part in planning and choosing a training method, monitoring the training program, and suggesting changes to the training design process.

**OVERCOMING FLAWS OF THE ISD MODEL**

Some training professionals argue that the ISD model is flawed for several reasons.First, in organizations, the training design process rarely follows the neat, orderly, step-by-step approach of activities.Second, in trying to standardize their own ISD method used in the training function, some organizations require trainers to provide detailed documents of each activity found in the model.Third, the ISD implies an end point: evaluation. Fourth, many companies claim to use an instructional design approach but dilute its application.

The ISD model certainly has value. Yet, the training design process should flexible enough to adapt to changing business needs. Although it may not be realistic to follow the ISD model in a pure linear fashion, it is key that organizations focus on each of its component parts. The training design process should be systematic, yet flexible enough to adapt to business needs. Depending on the circumstances, the steps may be completed simultaneously.

**THE FORCES INFLUENCING WORKING AND LEARNING**

**Economic Cycles**

Irrespective of the current economic cycle, training has been shown to positively contribute to an organization’s performance. Today’s economy is currently fairly healthy. One of the implications of the current economy with low unemployment rates is that companies are unable to find employees with the skills they need to expand their operations, replace retiring employees, or keep up with increased demands for their products and services. Also, valuable high-performing employees may be looking to change jobs for higher wages or better career opportunities.

**Globalization**

Many companies are involved in international markets by exporting their products overseas, building manufacturing facilities or service centers in other countries, entering into alliances with foreign companies, and engaging in e-commerce.

Global companies are struggling to find and retain talented employees, especially in emerging markets. Also, companies often place successful U.S. managers in charge of overseas operations, but these managers lack the cultural understanding necessary to attract, motivate, and retain talented employees.

Globalization also means that employees working in the U.S. will come from other countries. Immigrants often provide scientific talent and fill low-wage jobs. The H-1B visa program is for persons in highly skilled and technical occupations requiring completion of higher education. Other visa programs are available for lower-skilled temporary or seasonal workers (H-2A, H-2B) who are also in short supply. Many of these immigrants will have to be trained to understand the U.S. culture. U.S. employees will need skills to improve their ability to communicate with employees from different cultures.

Globalization means that U.S. companies have to carefully consider the costs and benefits of moving jobs overseas or using foreign suppliers. Offshoring refers to the exporting of jobs from developed countries, such as the U.S., to countries where labor and other costs are lower.

**Increased Value Placed on Intangible Assets and Human Capital**

Intangible assets such as human capital contribute to a company’s competitive advantage because they are difficult to duplicate and imitate. Intangible assets are equally as valuable as financial and physical assets, but they are not something that can be touched and they are nonmonetary.

There are four types of intangible assets:

1. Human capital refers to the sum of the attributes, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, energy, and enthusiasm that the company’s employees invest in their work.
2. Intellectual capital refers to the codified knowledge that exists in a company
3. Social capital refers to relationships in the company
4. Customer capital refers to the value of relationships with persons or other organizations outside the company for accomplishing the goals of the company (e.g., relationships with suppliers, customers, vendors, and government agencies)

Training and development have a direct influence on human and social capital because they affect education, work-related know-how and competence, and work relationships. Training and development can have an indirect influence on customer and social capital by helping employees better serve customers and providing them with the knowledge needed to create patents and intellectual property.

The value of intangible assets and human capital has three important implications, including a focus on knowledge workers, employee engagement, and an increased emphasis on adapting to change and continuous learning.

* Knowledge workers are employees who contribute not through manual labor but through what they know, perhaps about customers or a specialized body of knowledge.
* Employee engagement refers to the degree to which employees are fully involved in their work and committed to their job and the company.
* A learning organization embraces a culture of lifelong learning, enabling all employees to continually acquire and share knowledge.

**Focus on Links to Business Strategy**

Training can play a significant role in helping an organization research its strategic goals. Given the important role that intangible assets and human capital play in a company’s competitiveness, managers are beginning to see a more important role for training and development as a means to support a company’s business strategy.

**Changing Demographics and Diversity of the Workforce**

Companies face several challenges as a result of changing demographics and the diversity of the workplace. In particular, the workforce will be older and more culturally diverse. Not only must organizations provide a fair workplace, they must provide training to enhance diversity and help accommodate the needs of different groups.

The aging population means that companies are likely to employ a growing share of older workers—many of them in their second or third careers. Older people want to work, and many say they plan a working retirement.

**Generational Differences**

Five generations (generation Z, Millennials, generation X, baby boomers, and traditionalists) are participating in today’s workforce, each one with unique characteristics.

* Generation Z, born after 1995, have started to graduate from college and are already part of the workforce. They are digital natives; they are more attached to mobile phones and tablets for learning and connecting with others than are Millennials.
* Millennials grew up with diversity in their schools and were coached, praised, and encouraged for participation rather than accomplishment by their Baby Boomer parents. Millennials are characterized as being optimistic, willing to work and learn, eager to please, self-reliant, globally aware, and valuing diversity and teamwork.
* Generation Xers grew up during a time when the divorce rate doubled, the number of women working outside the home increased, and the personal computer was invented. They were often left on their own after school. They value skepticism, informality, and practicality; seek work/life balance; and dislike close supervision.
* Baby Boomers, the “Me” generation, marched against the “establishment” for equal rights and an end to the Vietnam War. They value social conscientiousness and independence.
* Traditionalists grew up during the Great Depression and lived during World War II. They tend to value frugality, are patriotic and loyal, adhere to rules, are loyal to employers, and take responsibility and sacrifice for the good of the company.

To successfully manage a diverse work force, managers and employees must be trained in a new set of skills, including:

* Communicating effectively with employees from a wide variety of backgrounds
* Coaching, training, and developing employees of different ages, educational backgrounds, ethnicities, physical abilities, and races
* Providing performance feedback that is free of values and stereotypes
* Training managers to recognize and respond to generational differences
* Creating a work environment that allows employees of all backgrounds to be creative and innovative

**Talent Management**

Talent management refers to the systematic, planned, and strategic effort by a company to use bundles of HRM practices, including acquiring and assessing employees, learning and development, performance management, and compensation to attract, retain, develop, and motivate highly skilled employees.

Talent management is becoming increasingly more important because of changes in demand for certain occupations and jobs, skill requirements, the retirement of Baby Boomers, and the need to develop managerial talent and skills of the next generation of company leaders.

The results of surveys suggest that opportunities for career growth, learning, and development, and the performance of exciting and challenging work are some of the most important factors in determining commitment to employers, especially among Millennials.

A number of talent management challenges are confronting organizations today:

* The retirement of Baby Boomers. As the Boomers continue to retire in the next several years, the implications for the workforce could be enormous.This could hinder prospects for economic growth and put a greater burden on those remaining in the workforce. There is also the challenge of how to capture the knowledge of Boomers before they leave.
* Skill requirements. As jobless rates fall and business grows, employers in many industries are having difficulty finding qualified workers. Skills deficits are not limited to any one business sector, industry, or job.
* Developing leadership. Companies report that the most important talent management challenges they face are identifying employees with managerial talent and training and developing them for managerial positions. This is attributed to the aging of the workforce, globalization, and the need for managers to contribute to employee engagement. Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations will experience the greatest turnover due to death or retirement.

**Customer Service and Quality Emphasis**

Due to increased availability of knowledge and competition, consumers are very knowledgeable and expect excellent service. This presents a challenge for employees who interact with customers. To compete in today’s economy, companies and employees need to be better skilled than ever.

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a companywide effort to continuously improve the ways people, machines, and systems accomplish work. The following are key principles of TQM:

* Methods and processes are designed to meet the needs of internal and external customers
* Every employee in the company receives training in quality
* Quality is built into a product or service so that errors are prevented from occurring rather than being detected and corrected
* The company promotes cooperation with vendors, suppliers, and customers to improve quality and hold down costs
* Managers measure progress with feedback based on data

The emphasis on quality is seen in the establishment of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the ISO 9000:2000 quality standards. To become eligible for the Baldrige, which is awarded annually, a company must complete a detailed application that consists of basic information about the firm and an in-depth presentation of how it addresses specific criteria related to quality improvement. The Baldrige Award winners usually excel with training and development.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) develops standards related to management and a wide variety of other areas. The ISO 9000 is a family of standards related to quality (ISO 9000, ISO 9001, ISO 9004, and ISO 19011). The ISO 9000 quality standards address what a company needs to do to meet regulatory requirements and the customer’s quality requirements while striving to improve customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.

Many companies are also using Six Sigma for monitoring and improving quality. The Six Sigma process refers to a process of measuring, analyzing, improving, and then controlling processes once they have been brought within the narrow Six Sigma quality standards. Training is an important component of the Six Sigma process.

Training can help companies meet the quality challenge by teaching employees a concept known as “lean thinking.” Lean thinking is a way to do more with less effort, equipment, space, and time, but still provide customers with what they need and want. Part of lean thinking includes training workers in new skills or teaching them how to apply old skills in new ways so they can quickly take over new responsibilities or use new skills to help fill customer orders.

**New Technology**

Advances in sophisticated technology along with reduced costs for the technology are changing the delivery of training, making training more realistic, and giving employees the opportunity to choose where and when they will work. New technologies allow training to occur at any time and any place.

There are a number of uses for social networking in training and development:

* Share, capture, and store knowledge
* Collect employee opinions
* Create online expert communities
* Encourage participation in online discussions
* Share best practices and links to articles and webinars
* Interact with mentors and coaching peers

Despite its potential advantages, many companies are uncertain as to whether they should embrace social networking.They fear that social networking will result in employees wasting time, interfering with completing their work, or offending or harassing coworkers.

While trainer-led classroom instruction remains the most popular way to deliver training, companies report that they are delivering a large portion of training through learning technologies such as intranets and iPods.

Artificial intelligence, robotics, tracking systems, radio frequency identification, and nanotechnology are transforming work. Technology has also made it easier to monitor environmental conditions and employees and operate equipment.

Wearables are just beginning to be developed and used for training and performance support solutions. Wearable Intelligence provides smart eyewear technology and camera technology that gives employees hands-free, voice-activated access to procedures and checklists and live access to experts using tablet computers.

*Flexibility in where and when work is performed.*

Technology can enhance flexibility in where and when work is performed. Many companies are recognizing the benefits that can be gained by both the company and employees through providing flexible work schedules, allowing work at-home arrangements, protecting employees’ free time, and more productively using employees’ work time. The benefits include the ability to have an advantage in attracting and retaining talented employees, reduced stress resulting in healthier employees, and a rested workforce that can maximize the use of their skills. Employees in managerial, business, and financial, operations and professional occupations are most likely to do some or all of their work at home.

*Increased Use of Nontraditional Employment.*

More companies are moving away the traditional employment model based on full-time workers to increasingly rely on nontraditional employment. Nontraditional employment includes the use of independent contractors, freelancers, on-call workers, temporary workers, and contract company workers.

What does nontraditional employment look like? Often, a website or mobile app is used to assign work, and the worker sets his or her own schedule. Because these workers do not work for a company, they do not have taxes withheld from their earnings, they do not have to receive minimum wage or overtime pay, and they are not eligible for worker’s compensation and unemployment insurance.

Some companies that rely primarily on nontraditional employment to meet service and product demands are competing in the gig economy.Examples of companies that rely on the gig economy include transportation services Uber and Lyft and food-delivery services such as Caviar.

A key training issue that nontraditional employment presents is providing training is specific, on demand, delivered in small chunks, and specifically focused on their job.

**High-Performance Models of Work Systems**

One of the most popular methods for increasing employee responsibility and control is work teams. Work teams involve employees with various skills who interact to assemble a product or provide a service. Work teams may assume many of the activities reserved for managers, such as hiring new employees and coordinating work activities.

Cross-training refers to training employees in a wide range of skills so they can fill any of the roles needed to be performed on the team.

Virtual teams are teams with members that are separated by time, geographic distance, culture, and/or organizational boundaries that rely almost exclusively on technology to interact and complete their projects. The success of virtual teams requires a clear mission, good communications skills, trust between members that they will meet deadlines and complete assignments, and an understanding of cultural differences (if the teams have global members).

**SNAPSHOT OF TRAINING PRACTICES**

**Training Facts and Figures**

* Total training expenditures rose almost 33% to 90.6 billion in 2017.
* Direct expenditures, as a percentage of payroll and learning hours, have gradually risen over the last several years.
* The average number of learning hours per employee has increased since 2012.
* There is an increased demand for specialized learning that includes manager, professional, and industry-specific content.
* The use of technology-based learning delivery has increased from 38 percent in 2011 to 45 percent in 2016.
* Self-paced online learning is the most frequently used type of technology-based learning.
* Technology-based learning has helped improve learning efficiency.
* Traditional, instructor-led classroom training continues to be the most popular method. However, its use continues to decline (59% in 2010 to 51% in 2016).

**Training Investment Leaders**

Higher investment in training by companies in the United States is related to use of innovative training practices and high-performance work practices such as teams, employee stock ownership plans, incentive compensation systems, individual development plans, and employee involvement in business decisions. Such spending has been shown to be related to improved profitability, customer and employee satisfaction, and the ability to retain employees.

The Association for Talent Development (ATD) BEST Award winners are companies that aligned training with business strategy, valued learning in their company culture, offered a variety of learning activities for all employees, measured the effectiveness of training, and provided non-training solutions, as needed. Specifically, the BEST companies are characterized as:

* **Alignment** of business strategy with training and development
* **Learning is valued** as part of the culture and supported by executive leaders and top managers
* **Effectiveness and efficiency** of learning is measured
* **Investment** in training and development
* **Different learning opportunities** are provided and all employees have access to them
* **Measurement** of effectiveness and efficiency of training and development activities
* **Non-training solutions** for performance improvement used, including organization development and process improvement

**Roles, Competencies and Positions of Training Professionals**

Trainees can typically hold many jobs, such as instructional designer, technical training, or needs analysis. The ATD competency model describes what it takes for an individual to be successful in the training and development field.

* Learning strategist: determines how workplace learning can be used to help meet the company’s business strategy
* Business partner: uses business and industry knowledge to create training that improves performance
* Project manager: plans, obtains, and monitors the delivery of learning and performance solutions to support the business
* Professional specialist: designs, develops, delivers, and evaluates learning and performance systems

Although training professionals spend most of their time designing learning, delivering training, managing learning programs, identifying, selecting, and using learning technologies, and coaching, they do spend time in other areas as well. Namely, training professionals engage in performance improvement, talent management, and knowledge management.

**Who Provides Training?**

In most companies, training is provided by trainers, managers, in-house consultants, and employee experts. Training may also be outsourced. Outsourcing means that training activities are provided by individuals outside the company.

**Who Is in Charge of Training?**

Training and development can be the responsibility of professionals in human resources, human resource development, or organizational development.Companies may also have entire functions or departments (e.g., human resources, human resource development, talent management or development, or organizational development) that provide training and development. In small companies, training is the responsibility of the founder and all the employees.

Human resource development refers to the integrated use of training and development, organizational development, and career development to improve individual, group, and organizational effectiveness.

**Preparing to Work in Training**

Being a successful training professional requires staying up-to-date on current research and training practices. The primary professional organizations for persons interested in training and development include:

* Association for Talent Development (ATD)
* Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD)
* Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
* Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP)
* Academy of Management (AOM)
* International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI)

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Describe the forces affecting the work place and learning. How can training help companies deal with these forces?

A number of forces are impacting the workplace and learning, including: economic cycles, globalization, customer service and quality emphasis, talent management, new technology, increased value placed on human capital, focus on business strategy, changing demographics and diversity, and high-performance work systems.

Training can improve professional conduct, improve job performance by teaching new techniques and skills, and increase a company’s productivity and customer satisfaction.

2. Discuss the relationship between formal training and development, informal learning, and knowledge management. How are they related to learning and creating a learning organization?

Formal training and development refers to training and development programs, courses, and events that are developed and organized by the company. Typically, employees are required to attend or complete these programs, which can include face-to-face training programs (such as instructor-led courses) as well as online programs.

Informal learning is also important for facilitating the development of human capital. Informal learning refers to learning that is learner initiated, involves action and doing, is motivated by an intent to develop, and does not occur in a formal learning setting. Informal learning occurs without a trainer or instructor, and its breadth, depth, and timing is controlled by the employee.

Knowledge management refers to the process of enhancing company performance by designing and implementing tools, processes, systems, structures, and cultures to improve the creation, sharing, and use of knowledge. Knowledge management contributes to informal learning and human capital development.

3. What steps are included in the training design model? What step do you think is the most important? Why?

Step 1 is to conduct a needs assessment, which is necessary to identify if training is needed.

Step 2 is to ensure that employees have the motivational and basic skills necessary to master the training content.

Step 3 is to create a learning environment that has features necessary for learning to occur.

Step 4 is to ensure that there is the necessary support in the work environment for trainees to apply training content to their jobs.

Step 5 is to develop an evaluation plan. Developing an evaluation plan is important to determine if training worked, how it can be improved, and how training affects the “bottom line.”

Step 6 is to choose the training method based on the learning objectives and learning environment and to deliver training.

Step 7 is to evaluate the program and make changes in it or revisit any of the earlier steps in the process.

All of the steps in the model are important. Students’ answers regarding which step is most important will vary based on their individual perspectives.

4. What are intangible assets? How do they relate to training and development?

Intangible assets consist of human capital, customer capital, social capital, and intellectual capital. Intangible assets have been shown to be responsible for a company’s competitive advantage. Training can help a company’s competitiveness by directly increasing the company’s value through contributing to intangible assets. Intangible assets are equally as valuable as financial and physical assets, but they are not something that can be easily imitated or duplicated.

5. How are companies using training and development to benefit them in today’s economy?

A wide variety of examples were presented in the chapter discussing how training and development has helped organizations succeed in today’s economy. Customer service, employee retention and growth, the economy, a multigenerational workforce, the use of new technology, extending learning beyond the classroom, these are just some of the issues affecting companies in all industries and sizes and influencing training and development practices. These concerns have affected companies in several different business sectors, and training and development has helped them succeed.

Students should provide examples from some of the companies detailed in the chapter, as numerous examples were provided throughout.

6. Training professionals continue to debate whether the ISD model is flawed. Some argue that ISD should be treated as a project management approach rather than a step- by- step recipe for building training programs. Others suggest that ISD is too linear and rigid a process, that it is the primary reason that training is expensive and that it takes too long to develop. ISD focuses on inputs; management wants outputs. Businesses want results, not the use of a design technology. Do you believe that ISD is a useful process? Why or why not? Are there certain situations when it is a more (or less) effective way to design training?

The training design process is useful because it gives a systematic approach to training. Designing training unsystematically will reduce the benefits that can be achieved. For example, choosing a training method before determining training needs or ensuring employees’ readiness for training increases the risk that the method chosen will not be the most effective. Also, training may not even be necessary and may result in a waste of time and money.

Some have criticized the ISD model for a number of reasons. The training design process rarely follows the neat, orderly, step by-step approach. Furthermore, adhering to the model may represent an administrative burden and be too costly. The ISD model also implies an end point. However, the training process is more dynamic, fluid, and iterative. Many companies claim to use an instructional design approach, but dilute its application. The ISD model certainly has value. Yet, the training design process should be flexible enough to adapt to changing business needs. Although it may not be realistic to follow the ISD model in a pure linear fashion, it is key that organizations focus on each of its component parts.

7. Which of the training professionals’ roles do you believe is the most difficult to learn? Which is easiest?

Student answers would vary.

* The learning strategist determines how workplace learning can be best used to help meet the company’s business strategy.
* The business partner uses business and industry knowledge to create training that improves performance.
* The project manager plans, obtains, and monitors the effective delivery of learning and performance solutions to support the business.
* The professional specialist designs, develops, delivers, and evaluates learning and solutions. These roles are included in jobs such as organizational change agent, career counselor, instructional designer, and classroom trainer.

8. How might technology influence the importance of training professionals’ roles? Can technology reduce the importance of any of the roles? Can it result in additional roles?

Given that technology removes some of the human element in training delivery, trainers likely spend less time with one-on-one live instruction and classroom instruction. There is likely a greater emphasis on the design of online programs, which requires a different skill set. As technology may free up time and resources for trainers, trainers may spend more time evaluating programs and identifying ways to ensure transfer of trained skills to the workplace. Trainers may also have a greater impact because they can reach more employees through the use of enhanced technology.

9. Describe the training courses that you have taken. How have they helped you? Provide recommendations for improving the courses.

As answers will vary from student to student, try to identify similarities and differences in their responses. Emphasize that training courses can be improved by following the ISD model.

10. How does training differ between companies that are considered BEST Award winners and those that are not?

* Alignment of business strategy with training
* Visible support from top management
* Efficiency in training through process improvement, technology, and outsourcing
* Providing all employees with access to training on an as-needed basis
* A variety of learning opportunities provided
* Measurement of training effectiveness
* Use of non-training solutions where appropriate

11. What are the implications of generational differences in the workforce? What strategies should companies consider from a training and development perspective to cope with generational differences and use them to benefit the company?

Although generation differences likely exist, members of the same generations are no more alike than members of the same gender or race. Differences in work ethic have been found between Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials. However, Millennials are more similar than different from other generations in their work values.

Training plays a key role in ensuring that employees accept and work more effectively with each other. To successfully manage a diverse workforce, managers and employees must be trained in a new set of skills, including:

* Communicating effectively with employees from a wide variety of backgrounds
* Coaching, training, and developing employees of different ages, educational backgrounds, ethnicities, physical abilities, and races
* Providing performance feedback that is free of values and stereotypes based on gender, ethnicity, or physical handicap
* Training managers to recognize and respond to generational differences
* Creating a work environment that allows employees of all backgrounds to be creative and innovative

12. How has new technology improved training and development? What are some of the limitations of using smartphones or notebooks for training?

Advances in sophisticated technology are changing the delivery of training, making training more realistic, and giving employees the opportunity to choose where and when they will work. New technologies allow training to occur at any time and any place. Technology has many advantages, including reduced travel costs, greater trainee accessibility, consistent diversity, and the ability to access experts. Technological advances have enhanced the capability for social networking and the ability to learn from others. Despite its potential advantages, many companies are uncertain as to whether they should embrace new technology for training. For example, some organizations may fear that employees may waste time with social networking and that it is difficult to ensure employee engagement and compliance with such training.

13. Explain how training relates to attracting new employees, employee retention, and motivation.

Training is an effective means to attract talented employees who seek to advance their careers. Extensive training may also draw individuals to organizations when individuals lack certain skills or are seeking a career change. When employees are properly trained, they possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform their job responsibilities. In this regard, employees may be more apt to remain with an organization. Finally, when employees see ongoing training opportunities, they may be more likely to remain with an organization because such training may lead to long-term employment prospects.

14. What is the relationship between talent management and employee engagement? What role can training and development practices play in keeping employee engagement high? Explain.

Talent management can serve to enhance employee engagement. Talent management gives employees an opportunity for personal growth within the company and allows them to perform their current jobs well. Training is one key part of the talent management process. It should be noted that training opportunities need to be well designed and job relevant. If not, employees may be disengaged and perceive training as a waste of time.

15. How can training, informal learning, and knowledge management benefit from the use of social collaboration tools like Twitter and Facebook? Identify the social collaboration tool and explain the potential benefits gained by using it.

In general, social networking facilitates communications, decentralized decision making, and collaboration. Social networking can be useful for busy employees to share knowledge and ideas with their peers and managers, with whom they may not have much time to interact in person on a daily basis. Employees, especially younger ones, have learned to use social networking tools and see them as valuable tools for both their work and personal lives. Informal learning can occur through many different ways, including casual unplanned interactions with peers, e-mail, informal mentoring, or company-developed or publically available social networking websites such as Twitter or Facebook. Social media can greatly facilitate learning from others.