

# Chapter

# 6

## Training Needs Assessment



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# Introduction

- Effective training practices involve the use of an instructional systems design process.
- The instructional systems design process begins by conducting a needs assessment.



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# Needs Assessment

- Need assessment means the identification and prioritization of training requirements. Training needs starts with the determination of knowledge and skill essential for maximum effectiveness in an organization position.
- Refers to the process used to determine if training is necessary.
- Because needs assessment is the first step in the instructional design process:
  - If it is poorly conducted, training will not achieve the outcomes or financial benefits the company expects.



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# Importance of Need Assessment

- Training may be incorrectly used as a solution to a performance problem.
- Training programme may have the wrong content, objectives or methods.
- Trainees may be send to training programmes for which they do not have the basic skills or confidence needed to learn.
- Training will not deliver the expected learning, behavior change or financial results that the company expects.



# Types of Needs

- Democratic needs are options for training that are preferred, selected or voted for by employees or managers or both.
- Diagnostic needs focus on the factors that lead to effective performance and prevent performance problems, rather than emphasizing on existing problems.
- Analytic needs identify new and better ways to perform a task. These needs are generally discovered by intuition, insight or expert consideration.
- Compliance needs are those mandated by law. Mandated training programmes deal with safety training, prevention of sexual harassment, training under various acts etc.



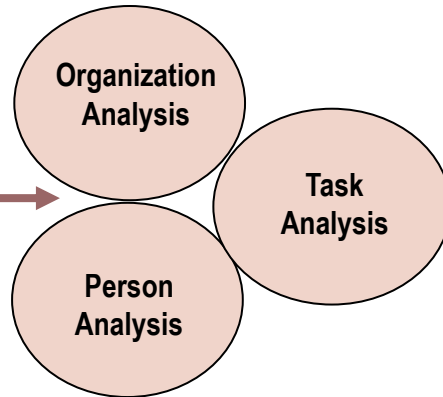
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# The Needs Assessment Process

## Reasons

- Lack of Basic Skills
- Poor Performance
- New Technology
- Customer Requests
- New Products
- Higher Performance Standards
- New Jobs

What is the Context?



Who Needs the Training?

In What Do They Need Training?

## Outcomes

- What Trainees Need to Learn
- Who Receives Training
- Type of Training
- Frequency of Training
- Training Versus Other HR Options Such as Selection or Job Redesign



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# Levels of Needs Assessment

## Organizational Level

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- How does the training relate to organizational objectives?
- How does the training impact day-to-day workplace dynamics?
- What are the costs and expected benefits of the training?

## Task Level

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- What responsibilities are assigned to the job?
- What skills or knowledge are needed for successful performance?
- Should the learning setting be the actual job setting?
- What are the implications of mistakes?
- How can the job provide the employee with direct feedback?
- How similar to or different from the training needs of other jobs are the needs of this job?

## Individual Level

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- What knowledge, skills, and abilities do trainees already have?
- What are the trainees' learning styles?
- What special needs do the trainees have?



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# Needs Assessment Involves:

- **Organizational Analysis** – Involves determining:
  - The appropriateness of training
  - Resources available for training
  - Support by managers and peers for training
- **Company may consider issues like:**
  - Increased competition
  - Greater emphasis on efficiency and cost reduction
  - Increased needs on cooperation
  - Business strategies of the competitive companies
  - Research and Innovation
  - Mergers, acquisitions and expansion
  - Manpower plan on hiring, retrenching of employees



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- **Task Analysis – Involves:**

- Identifying the important tasks and knowledge, skill, and behaviors that need to be emphasized in training for employees to complete their tasks.
- Task analysis should only be undertaken after you have determined from the organizational analysis that the company wants to devote time and money for training.

- **Four Steps in Task Analysis**

- Develop a list of tasks performed in a given job.
- Segregating tasks into groups in case of large number of tasks.
- Identify the KSA,s required for superior performance.
- Assess the importance of tasks and difficulties involved in mastering them.



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# Needs Assessment :Involves: (continued)

- **Person Analysis – Involves:**
  - Determining whether performance deficiencies result from a lack of knowledge, skill, or ability  
(a training issue) or from a motivational or work design problem
  - Identifying who needs training
  - Determining employees' readiness for training
  - **Ways to determine employees deficiencies**
  - Performance and feedback reports, critical incidents provides enough data.
  - A person may be capable but he has had no opportunity at work to show his capabilities.



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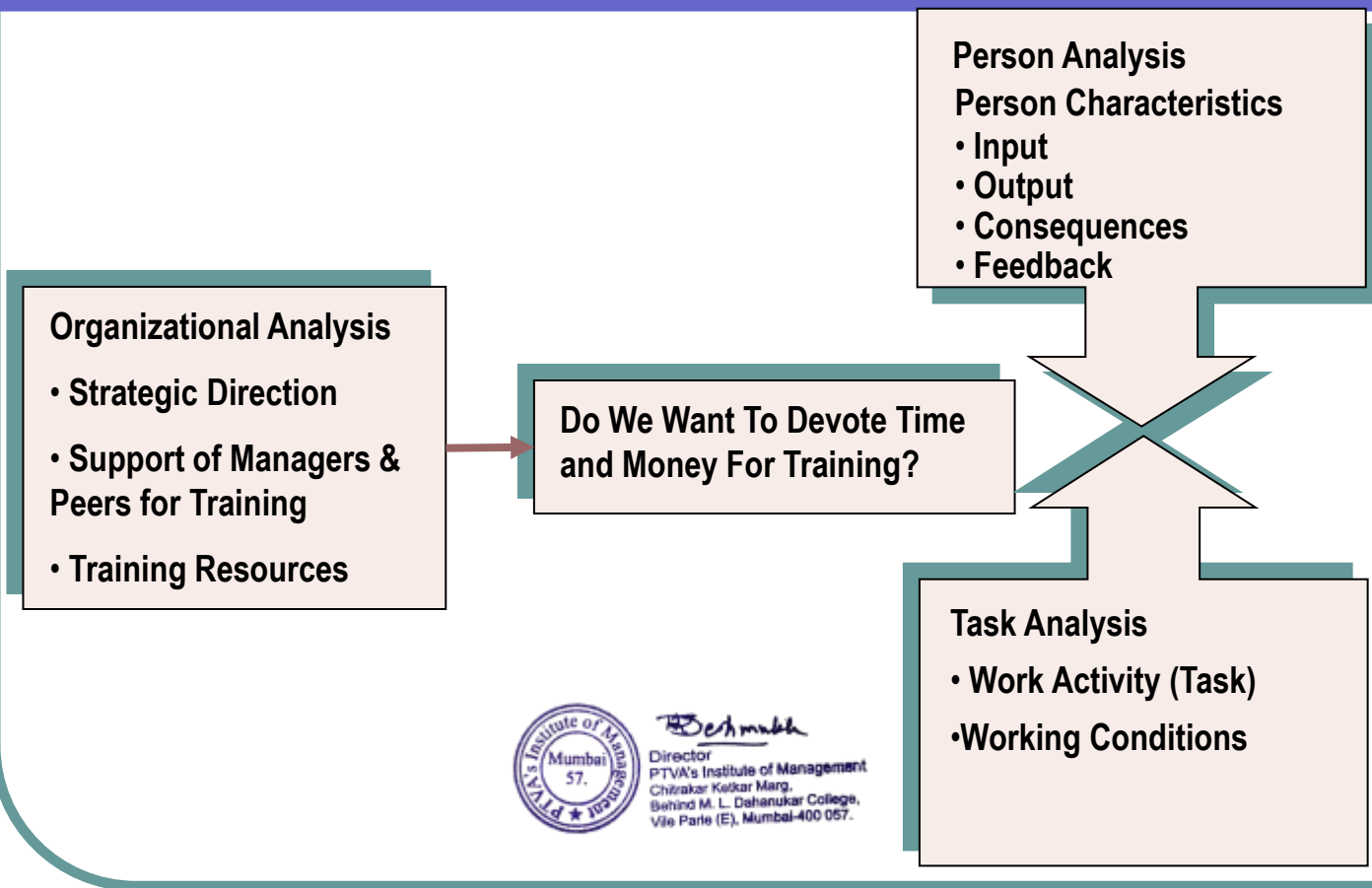
# Key Concerns of Upper- and Midlevel Managers and Trainers in Needs Assessment

	Upper-Level Managers	Midlevel Managers	Trainers
<b>Organizational analysis</b>	<p>Is training important to achieve our business objectives?</p> <p>How does training support our business strategy?</p>	<p>Do I want to spend money on training?</p> <p>How much?</p>	<p>Do I have the budget to buy training services?</p> <p>Will managers support training?</p>
<b>Person analysis</b>	<p>What functions or business units need training?</p>	<p>Who should be trained?</p> <p>Managers?</p> <p>Core employees?</p>	<p>How will I identify which employees need training?</p>
<b>Task analysis</b>	<p>Does the company have the people with the knowledge, skills, and ability needed to compete in the marketplace?</p>	<p>For what jobs can training make the biggest difference in product quality or customer service?</p>	<p>What tasks should be trained?</p> <p>What knowledge, skills, ability, or other characteristics are necessary?</p>



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# The Needs Analysis Process



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# Factors that Influence Employee Performance and Learning:

- **Personal Characteristics**
  - Ability and skill
  - Attitudes and motivation
- **Input**
  - Understand need to perform
  - Necessary resources (equipment, time or budget etc.)
  - Opportunity to perform



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# Factors that Influence Employee Performance and Learning: (continued)

- **Output**
  - Standard to judge successful performers
- **Consequences**
  - Positive consequences/incentives to perform
- **Feedback**
  - Frequent and specific feedback about how the job is performed



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# Self-Efficacy

- **Self-efficacy** is the employee's belief that she can successfully perform her job or learn the content of the training program.
  - The job environment can be threatening to many employees who may not have been successful in the past.
  - The training environment can also be threatening to people.



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# Employees' self-efficacy level can be increased by:

- Letting employees know that the purpose of the training is to try to improve performance rather than to identify areas in which employees are incompetent.
- Providing as much information as possible about the training program and purpose of training prior to the actual training.



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# Employees' self-efficacy level can be increased by: (continued)

- Showing employees the training success of their peers who are now in similar jobs.
- Providing employees with feedback that learning is under their control and they have the ability and the responsibility to overcome any learning difficulties they experience in the program.



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# To ensure that the work environment enhances trainees' motivation to learn:

- Provide materials, time, job-related information, and other work aids necessary for employees to use new skills or behavior before participating in training programs.
- Speak positively about the company's training programs to employees.
- Let employees know they are doing a good job when they are using training content in their work.



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# To ensure that the work environment enhances trainees' motivation to learn: (con'td)

- Encourage work-group members to involve each other in trying to use new skills on the job by soliciting feedback and sharing training experiences and situations in which training content was helpful.
- Provide employees with time and opportunities to practice and apply new skills or behaviors to their work.



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# To determine if training is the best solution, assess whether:

- The performance problem is important, and has the potential to cost the company a significant amount of money from lost productivity or customers.
- Employees do not know how to perform effectively.
  - Perhaps they received little or no previous training or the training was ineffective.
  - (This problem is a characteristic of the person)



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# To determine if training is the best solution, assess whether: (continued)

- Employees cannot demonstrate the correct knowledge or behavior.
  - Employees were trained but they infrequently or never used the training content on the job. (This is an input problem.)
  - There are positive consequences for good performance, while poor performance is not rewarded.



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# To determine if training is the best solution, assess whether: (continued)

- Employees receive timely, relevant, accurate, constructive, and specific feedback about their performance (a feedback issue).
- Other solutions such as job redesign or transferring employees to other jobs are too expensive or unrealistic.



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# Is training the best solution?

- If employees lack the knowledge and skill to perform and the other factors are satisfactory, training is needed.
- If employees have the knowledge and skill to perform but input, output, consequences, or feedback are inadequate, training may not be the best solution.



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# Competency Models

- A **competency** refers to areas of personal capability that enable employees to successfully perform their jobs by achieving outcomes or successfully performing tasks.
  - A competency can be knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, or personal characteristics.
- A **competency model** identifies the competencies necessary for each job as well as the knowledge, skills, behavior, and personality characteristics underlying each competency.



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# Competency models are useful for training and development in several ways:

- They identify behaviors needed for effective job performance.
- They provide a tool for determining what skills are needed to meet today's needs as well as the company's future needs.
- They help determine what skills are needed at different career points.
- They provide a framework for ongoing coaching and feedback to develop employees for current and future roles.
- They create a "roadmap" for identifying and developing employees who may be candidates for managerial positions.



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