Technological Trends in Training & Development and its Impact on Employee Productivity

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Abstract

In the present rapid changing business environment, it is crucial for the employees in the organization to adopt to the pace. Providing proper training to employees has become one of the tools to enhance the performance and productivity, which leads to achieve the goals set up by the organization. Various training methods utilized to convey knowledge and skills to individuals. Training proves to be one of the employee retention strategies, which employers adopt in the workforce.

Incorporating Technology into the training sector helps the workforce to face the unforeseen challenges and develop a healthy work environment. Training techniques has made a drastic change in the sector from the traditional classroom training to the modern digitalized training techniques. Modern digitalized training techniques leverage digital tools and technologies to enhance the learning experience. These techniques offer flexibility, interactivity, and customization, catering to the diverse learning preferences of today's workforce. This article provides an insight into the Technological training techniques and its implacability on Employee productivity.

Keywords: Development, Enhancement, Organization, Performance, Technology, Trends.

Introduction

Albert Einstein rightly said, "Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death". The cornerstone of a prosperous career depends upon constant growth be it an intellectual or skill development. Learning is a never-ending process. There are always new skills to learn and new techniques to adopt. In the current scenario, organizations invest tremendous amount and time on training an employee that empowers and encourages him/her to stay ahead of the curve.

Employees join workforce with the basic knowledge they have, it is the organization who has to inculcate the required skills and train the employee as per the job demand. Apart from filling the required gap, training also helps to adopt new technologies and methods, which improves performance of the present job where as development, prepares them for the future job.

According to Michael Armstrong, "Training is the systematic development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by an individual to perform adequately a given task or job." The HR department continues to play a crucial role in training and development.

In this rapid changing environment, Technology has evolved and changed our workplace in many ways. Technology enabled training

and development benefits employee as well as organization to large extent. The current imperative is the adoption of the latest emerging technological trends. In recent years, there is tremendous changes observed in the field of training techniques.

The influence of training and development on the productivity of employees.

In this dynamic business environment, rapid development in every aspect is a necessity. Human Resource being one of the vital resources also needs an upgrade as per the technological advancement. Training and Development is one of the techniques, which increases employees' potential and productivity, which indirectly help organization to blossom. Training and Development is all about managing and empowering individual. Human Resource professional along with senior managers frame the training strategies and practices which enables overall organizational strategies that contribute to an organization is smooth functioning of operations.

Let us discuss the elements involved in Training and Development, which enhances the employee productivity.

Training is a process, which enables employees develop and learn new aspects, which might be in the form of new process, new technology or new methodology, which is utmost required to perform their job responsibilities. Training also aims to improve skills, attitude, and abilities, which helps to survive in this competitive market.

Education involves process of developing knowledge and information of employees that helps them to perform better in their work. It also helps to think in most rational and logical manner, which assist in analyzing and simplifying the required information.

Development refers to bringing in positive change in employee, which helps to grow in their career path. In simple terms, it is a process, which involves activities, which aim to provide improvement in job performance, and helps to attain progress in their future endeavor.

Corporate Training Initiatives in India

In the last decade, Indian organization has made extreme progress in training initiatives. The reason being enormous upcoming multinational companies, which hires employees with great expertise and creativity to enter into the competitive market. Today's workforce is highly competitive, displaying increased goal orientation and self-motivation. Now considered as an investment on intellectual capital of a company.

In the last two decades, training techniques has taken a drastic change be it from classroom to PC to e - learning to Digital learning.

In the earlier days, training conducted by employers used to be in the form of presentation. It primarily consist of processes and problem solving approaches. Techniques encompasses lecturers, audio-visual methods, with the trainer employing spoken words for communication in the lecturer method. Hands on methods was one of the methods where learner was encouraged to participate in the learning process. On - the - job, training constitutes a primary form of hands –on methods, case studies, business games and simulations.

Then came the PC era, when PC was invented (1981), trainers learned to build videodisk and CD ROM based training. Expensive programs built, which include video, animations, interactivities and assessments. These courses cause hundreds and thousands of dollars to develop, but were scalable than trainers, so companies bought them.

Web and Internet based Training

Perhaps the biggest revolution in the field of training and development in recent years has been the advert use of internet. The

electronic technologies used to train employees outside from a traditional classroom training. Programs delivered to employees via internet. The technology has been around for years that allow employees to attend meetings virtually, through video conferencing, conference calls and so on. However, that is just the one-dimensional.

Let us check on various ways an organization utilizes technology in employee training.

- The training program within the organization been regulated completely online. With the help of various software programs, training process got simpler without the actual guidance from the trainer.

- Learning Management System (LMS) is a software where organization can now track the training progress of employee and help to access any information independently which he/she is not aware off.

- Training is not restricted to a specific place or time. With the help of video conferencing, training attended at convenient time and place. Live training sessions be accessed being in any part of world.

- Technological advancement has made individual more socializing. Instant messaging and social media have made world closer than ever. Knowledge sharing or business conversations is now extremely easier than before.

- Unlike traditional methods where information gathered only through books or magazines, employees can gain knowledge from various improvised online sources such as, e books, blogs, electronic databases, online videos.

- Training is not restricted to only to an individual trainee. Technology has paved a way wherein number of employees situated in different locations can build a team exercise or leverage simulations to get trainees to work in a more collaborative way.

Digital Training Transformation

Enterprises are progressing rapidly and so the required demand for training an employee to deliver the expected innovation solution. In this digitalized world, technology will play a great role in customized, professional development, which will enhance the productivity of the employee.

Revolutionized shift in training process mainly focuses on performing new things in an innovative way as compared to the traditional training process that concentrated only on performing the required basic tasks.

Below are the listed technological training trends that enterprise implement to uplift their workforce.

➤ **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Gone are the days of one-size fits for all. With the fast pace of technological development, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has entered into the training and development sector which facilitates the creation of customized learning programs – faster than before.

AI help to create personalized training plans for individual trainees, which help them to get upgraded information in more advanced way. The manner in which AI offers solutions and suggestions it resembles human intervention on the other end.

➤ **Geo-fencing**

Geo-fencing is one of the latest technological innovation. It is a location-based strategy, which helps to determine geographic areas and boundaries. A virtual fence is set up around specific area and an alert issued whenever the person or device is in demarked area or boundary.

Though used as a marketing strategy, Geo-fencing adopted in the learning field. For instance, if there were a training program, which has to attend by an employee at an off-site or field away from the office location, then it would be difficult to track and monitor their schedules. If the employee sneak-away from the training venue, geo-fencing would track such acts and send alert message immediately. It is important to trace the employee to see that the training program would not go for a toss and ultimately, employees will not reap the benefits of the training program.

➢ **Gamification**

Anything that involves awards and rewards usually interests individual to get engage deeply into the process. If the training programs involves competitions and games for that matter, the program becomes more interesting and challenging to understand.

In simple terms, Gamification is a kind of application, which includes gaming techniques in training program of an employee. A sense of competition built among trainees, which enables learning process to be more interesting and smarter.

➢ **Mobile Learning Apps**

Mobile being part of our daily lives, usage of mobile in training excluded. Due to globalization, business expanded worldwide, employees spread across different location with different time zones. Training application on smart phones, tablets help trainees to access training program as per their convenient time and requirement.

Flexibility and freedom in learning enhances employee productivity and builds organization morality. As number of mobile users are increasing so as the time spent on learning apps has also increased drastically.

➢ **Augmented Reality (AR)**

Augmented Reality is another wonder of Technology. It is a 3D visual application on mobile screens superimposed over a normal image or object. This application helps to experience a real version of product or process and helps in understanding in-depth of product.

However, this technology being more expensive, it is widely used in various industry such as healthcare, sales, architecture etc.

➢ **Simulation training through Virtual interface**

Simulation training existed in the organization a long back, but giving it a virtual touch is an innovative way of learning process. Virtual Simulation training helps to create a real-life environment with real life problems and find the solutions accordingly.

With advancement in technology simulation training done remotely gives employees a hands-on experience on learning.

➢ **Micro learning**

The biggest challenge an employee face during the training period was that he/she has to spend long hours for the program which hampered the working hours. Thanks to the mobile app, which designs to meet the immediate learning requirements of employees with a crucial emphasis on delivering it at the right moment, which helped to carry out their regular work without any disruptions.

➢ **To add up**

Employees simply do not have time to browse content whole day, the most urgent applications to surf are usually the suggestions, solutions or tools obtained at fingertip, which makes the job easier.

Organizations should prioritize training and development programs, though technology plays a great role, the above techniques have

applied as per the requirement of the workload. Investing in these emerging technologies will be beneficial to the employees, which will be helpful to upgrade the workforce and thereby increase productivity, which will have positive impact on the organization.

Few of the Organizations mentioned below who makes employee education as a top priority.

➢ **Google – "Innovative Time"**

Google's management has introduced one of the new aspects in the recent times known as "Innovative Time". Employees in the organization allowed a free time during their regular workweek. The employees given freedom to use this free time as they saw fit, even if it was out of the framework of the employee's regular work schedule as long as it had to do something with the google or google products. So, here the employees automatically directed towards learning new applications or process without any pressure.

According to Google's CEO Larry Page, giving employees time to focus on things besides work is a good idea, just as long as focused. Education may be good use of that focus. (The Economics Times, 2019).

➢ **Amazon – Machine Learning University**

Employees considered as a true asset to a company. In order to upgrade their knowledge Amazon offers payment for enrollment in the company's Machine Learning University, and individuals can also acquire software development skills through the Amazon Technical Academy

The Amazon Career Choice Program is a forward-thinking initiative created to broaden the options for employees in their future careers, whether within Amazon or in another industry.

➢ **Paychex – Home base Virtual learning**

Paychex stands as a prominent provider of comprehensive human capital management, offering services in HR, payroll, and insurance. In the sales and services, employees provided with customized training program to suit as per their required specification. The onboarding programs for new hires consist of a blend of virtual learning at the employee's home base to create a sense of ease and comfort.

Public relations manager Lisa Fleming says, "Our commitment to employee learning and development has been a strong contributor to company success for over two decades".

➢ **Randstad US**

Randstad US is one of the largest staffing organization in the US. The company believes in valuing the employee progress. Major training programs in the organization include in the area of certification, developing managerial skills, leadership skills, also includes mentoring and coaching programs.

Senior Vice president of talent management Michelle Prince says, "We value our employees and encourage their professional growth and career mobility within the organization. Providing professional development to employees is an important part of their career success at Randstad".

Advanced Training techniques influence employee's performance and organizational competitiveness

Following are the factors, which prove how Training and Development makes a remarkable difference in employee's efficiency and productivity as well as contribute towards organizational success.

➢ **Adopt Change**

It has become utmost important to adopt new technology in the workforce or else we risk of falling behind our competitors. With the advanced training techniques, employees are trained in a more effective and efficient way. Training actually help in making the process and things smoother and faster which enhance employee's productivity and overall performance and they feel more engaged with the process.

The work system and work flow become easier than before, with the advert use of simple latest applications such as cloud-based application which makes collaboration and presentation of documents much easier and simpler than before, where we used to juggle between files and documents in order to make simple amendments.

Where employees used to do their job in a regular fashion, a minor change and innovation in the process makes them feel uneasy, without any appropriate guidance and learning, it may hamper their quality of work performance. Therefore, an ideal training program helps employees to adopt change in a more soother way.

➢ **Build moral and job satisfaction**

According to Keith Davis and Newstrom, "Job satisfaction is the set of favorable or unfavorable feelings with which employees view their work".

Most of the employees join organization not only for the sake of monetary benefits but also to acquire new knowledge, build great skills and abilities. Employees are more satisfied if the company supports and thinks of constant career growth, which makes them feel more confident and eventually build moral.

As the saying goes, "A Happy employee is a Productive Employee". If the employees trained to work more proficiently, they are more engaged in the work, are more motivated, and contribute their best to the organization. The satisfied employee is never hesitant to use the latest technology, which will be a benefit to the work he has undertaken which ultimately benefit the organization.

➢ **Technological Training helps Employee Engagement.**

Employee Engagement is one of the factors, which helps organization in achieving desired target or goal. Employee being one of the most important resource in an organization, it is important to see if they are connected to the job they perform and not just interested in the pay checks they receive. They are more concerned with the organization's mission.

According to the Forbes, employee engagement "Is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals".

An engaged employee wants to be valued in the company and work constantly for the growth and betterment of the organization.

Now how does technology play a great role in Employee Engagement?

Yes definitely, technology has a role to play in Engaged Employee. Many of the organizations are just skeptical about employees using the electronic gadgets in the workplace they work such as phones, smartphones, and tablets and so on. Employers think these gadgets hamper the productivity and performance of the employee, but that is not the case. These electronic devices actually help employees in making their work easier. It may be from sharing the simple document to making the collaborative work possible all with the help of technology in hand. Ultimately, the tools do not spoil the work performance; rather it depends on the employee who use it in a more generic manner.

➢ **Personalized Training Program**

Advert use of technology has paved a way to build a customized training program. With the implementation of digitalized methods, training programs now customized to meet the specific needs and requirements of employees. Since every individual has different capabilities, interest or ability to grasp the things and prefer to choose specific mode of training method, personalized training program will be a more helpful one.

Thanks to Artificial Intelligence and augmented learning which helps to create an individual training plan which includes the learner's overall objective, initiatives and goals. It helps learner engage which help in reaching the target set by the organization.

According to the LinkedIn Learning survey, 58% of workers favor learning opportunities in their own environment. The survey also indicated that 49% prefer learning now of necessity, highlighting the suitability of accessible, self-paced online learning for a workforce that is progressively diverse and multi-generational.

➢ **Promote innovation and risk taking**

One of the reasons for the cutthroat competition among the organization is the technological advancement and the innovation. In order to survive into the competitive society, it is utmost necessary to be a step ahead of the competitors and this is possible only when the required training given to the employees to learn new techniques and process. With the appropriate training programs, employees can gain confidence and courage to take up new challenges and boost productivity of the organization.

➢ **Few of the other benefits of Training and Development**

• Skill Development

• Reduces Employee Turn over

• Helps manage employee's career development paths

• Reduce cost

• Healthy work environment

• Boost team spirit

• Improves managerial skills

• Maintains organization reputation.

is it worth spending so much on Training and Development?

Figure 1: Gregor Schuster/Getty Images

Where do companies Training and Development found to be lost out?

Today's fast-moving business makes organization to adopt the changing circumstances more rapidly. In addition, during this race individual tend to make blunder mistakes, over think the issues, and ask stupid questions and tend to teach others what we have learnt.

Most of the training programs conducted these days are ineffective, indiscretion in timings, overestimation of the training content and so on. During the busy schedule of the employees, they attend the training programs related to conflict management or soft skills or some other course with little alignment to their required work needs.

Based on looking at the business environment the following beliefs needs to reconsidered in order to retain the essence of training and development program.

➢ **Poor content quality**

One of the reasons for failure of training program is the quality of content to overlook. The standard and strict learning content or process will not work in an organization where the entire employee is learning capacity, methodology and proficiency level differs drastically.

If the objective of the training program is ambiguous then the purpose of the training tends to be ineffective.

➢ **Expense to companies**

Training and development can become a financial burden for companies if their intended goals not achieved effectively. The training programs efforts has to view from long-term perspective. For example, the training programs has to be flexible enough to make minor periodic changes to suit the requirement.

Since employee learning is a necessity to an organization's development, a wise training budget can minimize the expenditure to the company. Group training; finding trainers within the companies, e learnings are few of the instances, which help to manage the expenses.

➢ **Training remotely.**

With the technology adopted in almost all fields, the employees may feel little discomfort to attend online training sessions, which usually conducted apart from their usual work hours, which makes them feel, stressed out, as they tend to lose their relaxation time. Consequently, it will reduce interest in learning certain subjects.

However, the merits of online training tend to over numbered than its demerits. Ease of resources, easily connectivity, flexibility and low budget are few of the instances which proves truly integrated technology provides countless benefits to the employee's productivity and thereby organization's success

➢ **Learning do not start and stop at training sessions.**

The major challenge in providing the training is employees tend to forget the learnings and fail to adopt them practically. Learning transfer is challenging as human beings are complex, and every individual is different from others. The program that appears to interesting to one person may be a challenging to other. Again, a person who grasp content of the training well may not be able to embrace it in real work life.

To gain the real benefits of the training program, one must see that a comprehensive learning experience has to provide to the employees in order to help business grow. It is important that all the stages of learning transfer have to be taken care of i.e., before, during and after the training process.

➢ **Uniform Learning components**

Following the identical routine, same style and same method of training makes employees loose interest in learning. Training content has to be such that it engages and enriches the learner.

The organization should make sure that their training components should be a blend of various training techniques, which includes not only the traditional methodologies but also contemporary ones. Organizations should include a comprehensive blend of classroom trainings, job rotations, on the job trainings, online trainings, mentoring, coaching, mobile learning, webinars so that the training program would be more effective and captivating.

➢ **Too Much Training makes employees loose interest**

Any aspect done too much is too bad. Sometimes employees carry out their task consistently for longer hours to meet their deadlines. However, many a times they do their regular along with the training, which makes them more stressful, which hampers their productivity and performance. Many at times it also happens that employees given training a month long on new technology by the time they are fully trained, the technologies become old.

A systematic training program helps to build employee's morale and confidence. It is also important to focus on the training needs and regular feedback from the employees in order to know if the training is actually helping them to build the required skill.

Conclusion

Training and Development should not be looked as any other program, which has to conduct just because of the organizational demand. It has to give priority as an investment in employee's development, which helps them in upgrading their skill, which is most required in this competitive world. Innovation and Technological development are the two mantras for the success of any organization. The emerging technology has a huge impact on the training program, which helps in enhancing their performance and productivity. It is important to adopt new and latest technology in order to survive in this digital world.

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