



Topics:

- Mindsets. Why development fails.
- Training is important but we can't stop production.
- Better planning. Better training.
- You only play as you train. On-the-job training.
- Inspect the expected. After training.
- Learning rules. OK?
- Plan before you train.
- Hit and myth. The traditional approach.



Mindsets

You can change behaviour in an entire organisation, provided you treat training as a process not an event.

Edward W Jones, Training Director, General Cinema Beverages, Inc. *Training*, Dec 1986

A man has no ears for that which experience has given him no access.

George Wilhelm Nietzsche, 1844-1900, German philosopher, *Ecce Homo*

As Bill Shakespeare wrote in *Henry the Fifth*, "all things are ready if our minds be so."

Ever wonder about the range of mindsets held by participants in a management development course? No? Ever wonder why people attend management development programs, return to work and display no or little change to their management behaviour? Still no? Well get off this page and go read something else.

If you are organising management or leadership development, delivering management or leadership training or sending your people off to participate in management or leadership training or you expect that 'people problems' will now be solved because you have sent a manager to attend this type of training, read on.

Fortunately, some people who attend management training hold mindsets that make them ready to be trained and ready to apply the learnings in the workplace. Sadly, in my experience, they make up only 30 - 40 % of the participants.

Here are just some of the mindsets held by participants that mean that they are less likely to be ready for learning and even less likely to be ready for application in their work place. The problem is that once people establish these mindsets, they have trouble letting them go unless the mindsets have been replaced by you with other ways to think about the management training.

- This will be some bullshit that will bear no relevance to me and my job.
- I'm really busy at work trying to get my job done (read that as the technical aspects of their job, not the 'people management' aspects of their job). Now I have to get further behind by being here.
- This sounds fine in theory, but it wouldn't work in my work place with my people with my problems.
- I do all of this anyway. This is just reinforcing what I already know.
- I hope Shelley is taking all this in. She really needs this. (Thinks Ralph).
- I hope Ralph is taking all this in. He really needs this. (Thinks Shelley).
- I wonder if ... (the management trainer) has ever worked in my job. You don't ever get any time to do this sort of stuff.
- My people would laugh themselves silly if I tried this stuff with them.
- This (the management trainer) has no idea of the ramifications for me or the ramifications on the relationships within my people if I were to try this stuff with them.

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- It's OK for (the management trainer) to suggest this approach, she/he doesn't have to deal with the consequences if it backfires. No thanks.
- I'd say this model was developed by some academic who has never worked in the real world.
- I'll be buggered if I know why I am even here. I have no idea just what I am expected to do with this.
- I wish senior management were here. They don't do any of this themselves.



You only play as you train

Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.

Edmund Burke, 1729-1797, English statesman, orator and writer, On a Regicide Peace

On-the-job training is the cheapest and most effective way to develop your people and improve their performance. The person conducting the training needs to be competent in the task in which people are being trained and they need to be effective communicators. The manager may be the on-the-job trainer or this function could be delegated to a member of the team

The main trap in conducting any form of training is an over reliance on words - too much talking. The amount of information which people retain from just hearing words is very limited. Yet when people are conducting training they invariably fall into this trap - talk, talk, talk.

People learn best through doing not by being told. The focus should be on the trainee not the trainer. The trainee needs to be an active participant in the training, not a passive listener, if you want them to be able and motivated to apply new skills.

Here are some pointers to improve the quality of on-the-job training:

People learn best by doing. Every time you tell a trainee how to do something, provide the opportunity for applying it immediately - 'hands on' practice.

If this is not practical, get them to describe in their own words how to do what you just told them. Or they can tell you why it's important to do something this way or that. Or they can tell you what would happen if it were done this way or that.

Check their level of knowledge and experience of the task. It is better to start at a basic level rather than an advanced level. Explain to the trainee at what level you are conducting the training and check frequently if your level of presentation is too basic or too advanced.

Before starting the training, describe the learning objective. State what they will be able to do as a result of the training in observable and measurable terms. Describe how well, that is, to what standard, they will be required to perform the task.

Job behaviour consists of three parts - knowledge, attitude and skill. To be effective, training must address all three - what the trainee knows, how the trainee feels and what skills the trainee has. Most on-the-job training ignores the critical attitude component. To put it even more simply, job performance requires skill and will. Most performance problems are due to a lack of will not a lack of skill. And will is dictated by attitude.

Training should consist of: **S Stimulus** (anything you tell or show the trainee); **R Response** (what the trainee says or does); and **F Feedback** (any corrective comments or actions you make).

This S R F unit is the basic building block of any on-the-job training. An effective training sequence consists of a number of S R F links.

Training sequence = SRF + SRF + SRF + SRF + SRF + SRF + SRF....

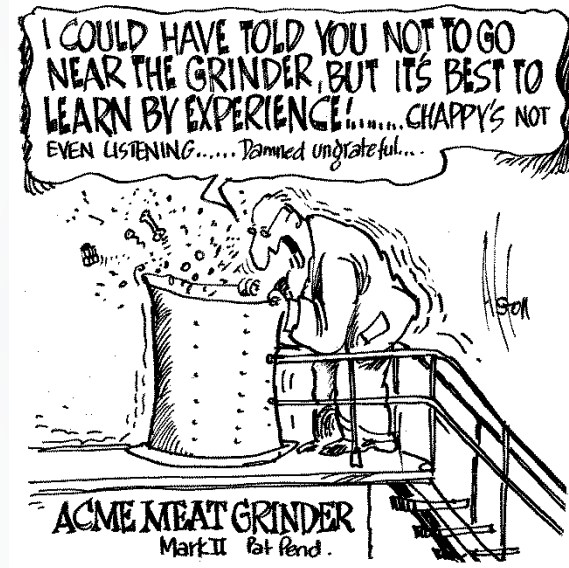
The S Stimulus needs to be short so that the R Response can be immediate. Any S Stimulus that you give a trainee should be put to use by the trainee as soon as possible. The emphasis needs to be on the trainee talking and doing rather than the trainer talking and doing.

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The things the trainer says or does (S) are interesting, but the responses the trainee makes (R) are more relevant since these determine the effectiveness of the training.





Plan before you train

We are forced to rely on people, which is why we put so much emphasis on training them.

Henry Block, CEO, H & R Block, *Inc. Magazine*, December 1987.

Every moment spent in planning saves three or four spent in execution.

Crawford Greenwalt

President, Du Pont, Mackenzie, *The Time Trap*, (McGraw-Hill, 1972).

The best place for staff to learn and develop new skills is at work. While off-the-job training is important in the development of new skills and knowledge, it usually lags behind effective on-the-job training. However, there's the catch. Most on-the-job training is of the unplanned, ad hoc variety and therein lies the problem.

Before you start to train:

- Establish what the trainee already knows about the subject.
- Identify those skills already present which you will build on.
- Establish at what level the trainee is ready to start.
- Decide what attitudes the trainee holds to the job, your organisation, work in general and this subject in particular.
- Decide how this will affect the trainee's ability to learn and what you will say to motivate him or her to learn. How will you get the psychological 'buy in'? How will you answer the question, "What's in it for me?"
- Decide if this is the right person, i.e. are they trainable within your time/money constraints.
- Describe what you want the trainee to be able to do as a result of this training.
- Identify the performance criteria (quality standards) the trainee will be expected to meet.
- Write training or learning objectives that are observable and measurable.
- Decide what the consequences are for correct and incorrect performance.
- Establish what information the trainee needs in order to be able to perform as desired.
- Decide what the trainee must know during the first few weeks or months on the job versus things they can learn later after being in the job for a while.
- Prepare any materials you will need to support the training.
- Prepare a basic session plan with small chunks of talking and showing by you and large chunks of doing by the trainee reinforced with feedback and encouragement from you. Remember that people can learn best not by being told but by experiencing the consequences of their actions. You might have to help them understand their learning from the experience.
- Avoid overloading the person with too much information in too short a time.
- Organise the workplace and others so that you will not be distracted when training.



- Decide if you are the best person to conduct the training in terms of patience, communicating ability, competence and ability to put yourself in the trainee's mind.
- Explore their attitudes with them. Find out their beliefs about the subject areas and the meanings they attach to these beliefs. Ask them what other beliefs and meanings could also be true. Ask them how their current attitudes serve them. Ask them are there other attitudes that could serve them better.





Training is important, but we can't stop production

Hiring and training are costly but it is infinitely more costly to have a marginal or barely average (employee) on the company rolls for 30 years.

Gordon W. Wheeling, Personnel Manager, Beckman and Whitley, *Leadership in the Office* (AMACOM, 1963)

Managers hold some funny attitudes about training and development. Some managers believe that if there is a problem in the workplace then all you have to do is to send people off to a training course and the problem is fixed. Others will tell you that they fully support training, but when crunch time comes and opportunity presents, they will give you plenty of reasons why they can't release their staff right now. And, of course, there never is a 'right' time.

Another view is that training is a waste of time, effort and money because managers don't see any change in behaviour after staff has been trained. They may well be right too, but I'll bet that they don't see that they are a major reason for this happening.

All problems have a solution with a cost. If managers want to see new, different and better behaviours resulting from training, then it will cost them some of their time. But time well spent.

For training to be applied in the workplace there needs to be a context, a reason, a purpose, an expectation and a follow-up strategy. Who should do this? The trainers - right? Wrong - the manager.

Before you send your people off to be developed through a training course, meet with them, do these things and watch the difference:

- Think about all the aspects of a person's job performance and identify the areas they need to improve.
- Describe specifically what new skills you want the person(s) to acquire or what things you want the person(s) to do new, different and better.
- Inform yourself about the learning outcomes and the content of the training to make sure the training is relevant.
- Create a context for this particular training - why the training is relevant to them.
- Establish a reason why they have been selected to attend the training. What's the purpose for them and for others with whom they interact.
- State clearly your expectations of what you would like them to get from the training and, most importantly, your expectations of the things you will expect them to begin to do new, different and better back in the workplace.
- Ask them to identify the areas of their job performance that they would like to improve as a result of the training.
- Explain that the training is not a 'punishment' but a development opportunity. Ask them about their attitude to the training and explore any negative views they might hold.



- Agree how their workload will be handled while they are away. Ask what support is needed from you.
- Set up a meeting to review the training the day after it finishes.
- Explore their attitudes with them. Find out their beliefs about the subject areas and the meanings they attach to these beliefs. Ask them what other beliefs and meanings could also be true. Ask them how their current attitudes serve them. Ask them are there other attitudes that could serve them better.





Inspect the expected

Learning does not occur because behaviour has been primed (stimulated); it occurs because behaviour, primed or not, is reinforced.

B.F. Skinner, Harvard University, Beyond Freedom and Dignity (Knopf, 1971)

When staff return to the workplace after a high quality training and development experience, they will have undergone some change, however small. They will have learned and experienced some new ways of thinking and doing. They will have some new awareness, some new insights, some new skills. Now they need an opportunity and a motive to practise these new learnings, these new behaviours.

But what have the rest of the staff been doing while they have been away? Busy beaver away at maintaining the status quo. So while the 'trainee' has changed and has some ideas about new ways of doing things, the rest of the gang are more or less unchanged and are maintaining the routine and habit - the old ways of doing things.

The 'trainee' probably comes back to a backlog of work and urgent priorities which demand their attention. Under these conditions, we expect them to apply the learnings from the training course. And this is one of the major reasons why staff don't demonstrate new behaviours after a training course. They come back to a work environment unsupportive of change.

As a team leader to overcome this, try these actions:

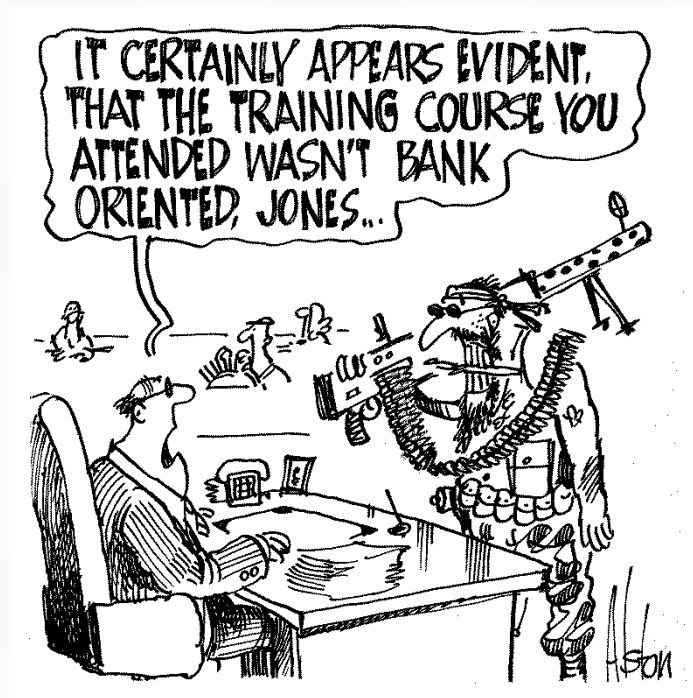
- Meet with staff the day after they return from a training course. Set this up in advance so they know you will be meeting with them.
- Ask them what things they gained most from the course - new insights, new awareness, new knowledge, new skills, new perceptions, etc.
- Ask them how they would like to apply these learnings. What things they intend to do which will be new, different and better.
- Re-state clearly your expectations about what changes you will be looking for both in their behaviour and in their results.
- Help them to develop a list of actions they plan to apply.
- Check whether you need to re-arrange the priorities of their workload to allow them time to introduce some new ways of doing things.
- Ask them what they would like you to do more of or less of to assist them to apply their learnings.
- Discuss whether there are existing policies, systems and procedures which will block the application of desirable learnings.
- Discuss with other staff what things the 'trainee' will be doing which will be new, different and better and ask them to support the 'trainee' in the application of these new ways.
- Agree an action plan with the trainee and include regular meetings to monitor and review their progress and to address any on-going problems. Discuss any new experiences, new insights or new consequences as time progresses.

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- Encourage them to make small step improvements to the way they do things and look for opportunities to provide recognition and feedback.
- Set up a session with the trainee and other staff so that the trainee can pass on his or her learnings and explain the things that the trainee is going to apply.





Hit and myth

Practice is the best master – Latin proverb

Over a period of 18 years, I designed and delivered over 250 training and development programs for managers and supervisors. These ranged from half day workshops to one week, full time, residential programs. For most of these years, I laboured under the awareness that what I was engaged in was largely ineffectual.

People would come along to these programs, be intellectually stimulated, have some fun, go back to work and pretty much carry on as before. The training didn't really transfer into new and better behaviours in the work place. With, hopefully, some exceptions, it didn't really make people better managers.

My performance as a management trainer or facilitator was usually evaluated by what are referred to as 'happy sheets'. Scoring high on the 'happy sheet' evaluations was relatively easy. Spend the day playing management games and simulations (at one time I might have held the world record for facilitating the most number of the 'lost in the desert, on the moon, in space, at sea, in the wilderness, et al', type of simulations) and various structured learning experiences. Keep everybody intellectually stimulated, throw in lots of ice-breakers and energisers, make sure people have some fun and - hey presto - high scores on the happy sheet evaluations.

And this is not a criticism of those learning methodologies - the causes of the transfer of learning problem lay mostly with - guess who? The people being trained and their managers. Some say it is caused by the culture of the organisation, but managers (and workers) are the culture of the organisation.

What did we create? A lot of happy people as they finished up the training or a lot of better managers in the workplace? How much of the stuff from the training programs was transferred into improved management behaviours in the real world of work with real people dealing with the real problems and the ramifications of people working together? Well. No one knows - or else the few that do have kept it pretty quiet - because it was not usually measured in any meaningful way. OK. Perhaps I am being a bit harsh and certainly some organisations do it better than others. But you wouldn't want to bet your life on the view that management training was producing positive changes to management behaviour in the workplace. Would you?

Many organisations still conduct management training in this way. Billions of dollars every year largely wasted. The dissatisfaction with this approach was one of the catalysts for asking the question - is there a better way? (Watch out - here comes another plug. Thus the MAPP™ System was born. (superthinker.com/services). It was designed to incorporate the criteria below. I told you to watch out).

What is usually missing from the traditional approach to management training and development?

- Relevance between theory and reality
- Clarification of the specific management behaviours expected.
- Identification of participants perceptions of the importance of required/desired management behaviours.



- Identification of participant's perceptions of how effectively they currently perform the required/desired management behaviours.
- Context for learning - the background, the rationale, the why.
- Acceptance of a need to improve by the individual participants.
- A focus on specific and relevant, individual needs
- Peer awareness of and support for better management behaviours
- Accountability for application in the workplace
- Monitoring, follow up and reporting on application in the workplace
- Measurement of results/improvements to behaviour in the workplace
- Reinforcement of new behaviours from relevant others in the workplace
- Identification of the support required from higher management.

And just while I am getting these things off my chest. I also have a problem with the inferred message from management trainers/facilitators to real, practising managers - I don't know who you are, your temperament, your psychological make-up, your assets and liabilities as a manager, your people, their temperaments, your unique circumstances, the relationship issues, the history, but I am going to suggest to you how to be a better manager.

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Better planning, better training

Think before you act

Aesop, c.620-c.560 B.C., Greek Fabulist, *The Fox and the Goat*

Before you start any on-the-job training, as always it will pay you well to plan the training. Well, you know that anyway right? But in reality, we probably rush the most important part of on-the-job training because of a desire to get into it. Curb that desire and do it right the first time. Use this as a template for your own planning. Reproduce this but adding more lines under each section.

Task:

Task Performance Objective (Or Learning Objective)

To be able to:

Performance Standards

Time Standard (per unit/cycle - task completion):

Quantity Standard (unit per hour/day):

Quality Standards (performance indicators):

Performance Skills

To be able to perform this task, the trainee needs to perform these actions:

Performance Knowledge

To be able to perform this task, the trainee needs to know and understand:

Performance Attitudes

To be able to perform this task, the trainee needs to believe that, accept that, think that:

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Support Actions/Conditions Necessary to Enable Task to Be Done

To be able to perform this task, other people need to perform these actions or these conditions need to exist:

Aids

Tools, software programs, materials, fixtures, etc:

Safety requirements, gear, clothing, etc:

Blueprints, drawings, diagrams:

Job Descriptions, etc:



Learning rules. OK?

The conventional definition of management is getting work done through people, but real management is developing people through work.

Agha Hasan Abedi, President, Bank of Credit and Commerce International (Luxembourg), *Leaders*, July 1984

Each mind has its own method.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882, American essayist and poet, *Essays*

You are only as good as the people you train.

Lonear Heard, President, James T. Heard Management Corp., *Black Enterprise*, September 1987

The more intelligible a thing is, the more easily it is retained in the memory, and contrariwise, the less intelligible it is, the more easily we forget it.

Benedict Spinoza, 1632-1677, Dutch philosopher and oculist, *Ethics*

Training Techniques

To train and develop effectively there are a number of steps to follow. The first step is preparation. The second step is preparation. The third step is preparation. Got it? Preparation is tantamount to success.

Preparation

1. What (you are training) – the skills and knowledge, the equipment and materials you need.
2. Who - your trainee. Find out his/her level of understanding and knowledge, particularly of technical terms.

How people learn

1. By being given a context.
2. In small, digestible chunks.
3. By practice.
4. By feedback.
5. By repetition.
6. By understanding the lessons gained through the experience.



Why people learn

1. Give an incentive to start.
2. They understand the reason to learn.
3. Acknowledge and encourage during the lesson.
4. Congratulate at the end.

Simple rules of learning

1.	Get Your Material in the Right Order	Points presented at the beginning and end of a training 'session' are remembered better than those in the middle. The two most important points should be given first and last.
2.	Know Your Trainee	Adjust your approach to meet the needs and ability of your trainee.
3.	Link Your Training to the Trainee's Existing Knowledge	Draw on the previous experience of the trainee and link this to the job to be learnt.
4.	Concentrate on Positive Instruction	Avoid negative instruction; just talk about and demonstrate the right ways to approach a job.
5.	Give the Trainee Feedback on Progress	Tell the trainee how she/he is doing and give praise and encouragement.
6.	Allow the Trainee Time to Practice	Practice reinforces understanding and learning.
7.	Top up the Training	Give follow up training sessions to reinforce learning.