CONCEPT

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and Developing a Learning Strategy

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Technical depth: Practitioner · **Practical mode:** Case study

Introduction

Training plans are often built from course requests and last year's catalogue rather than from evidence of what the organisation needs. The result is spend on programmes that do not address the real performance gap, while problems caused by processes, tools or incentives are sent to the training function to solve. This Core Concept course equips managers to run a structured training needs analysis, separate training from non-training causes, prioritise needs against business goals and turn them into a learning strategy. Participants leave with a TNA report and a three-year learning strategy for their own unit.

Course Objectives

- Distinguish training needs from performance problems with non-training causes using the Mager and Pipe flowchart and Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model
- Conduct a three-level needs analysis linked to business goals, applying ISO 10015 competence needs determination
- Select and apply needs analysis methods, including DACUM, the critical incident technique, surveys and structured interviews
- Prioritise needs with a weighted scoring matrix and validate findings by triangulating evidence
- Translate priorities into a learning strategy with a delivery mix, sourcing decisions, risk controls and an evaluation plan
- Produce a TNA report and a three-year learning strategy for presentation to leadership

Target Audience

- Training and L&D managers responsible for annual training plans
- L&D specialists and analysts who carry out needs assessments
- HR business partners translating business goals into development priorities
- Learning programme managers accountable for evaluation and budget use
- Functional managers accountable for team capability and training nominations

Course Outline

Day 1: Needs Analysis Foundations and Business Alignment

- Training Needs Versus Performance Needs: Mager and Pipe Performance Analysis Flowchart
- McGehee and Thayer Three-Level Analysis: Organisation, Task and Person
- Business Goal Cascade from Strategy Map to Learning Priorities
- ISO 10015 Competence Needs Determination at Organisation, Team and Individual Levels
- Current-State Review of Training Records and Learning Spend

Day 2: TNA Models and Diagnostic Methods

- Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model for Root Causes of Performance Gaps
- Action Mapping for Separating Training from Non-Training Solutions
- DACUM Job and Task Analysis Workshop Method
- Critical Incident Technique for Identifying Skill Deficits
- Competency Gap Scoring Against Role Profiles

Day 3: Conducting the TNA and Shaping the Strategy

- TNA Survey Instrument Design and Sampling Plan
- Structured Stakeholder Interview and Focus Group Protocols
- Performance Data Analysis: KPIs, Quality Records and Appraisal Outcomes
- Needs Prioritisation Using a Weighted Scoring Matrix
- Learning Strategy Document Architecture: Vision, Priorities, Delivery Mix and Governance

Day 4: Validation, Risk and Strategic Choices

- TNA Quality Review Checklist: Wish-List Bias, Sampling Bias and Self-Report Error
- Triangulation of Survey, Interview and Performance Evidence
- 70:20:10 Delivery Mix and Build, Buy or Borrow Decisions
- Learning Strategy Risk Assessment: Budget Cuts, Shifting Priorities and Weak Manager Support
- Evaluation Plan Linking Kirkpatrick Level 4 Results and the Brinkerhoff Success Case Method

Day 5: Case Work, TNA Report and Learning Strategy

- Retail Network Case Study: Customer Complaints Misread as a Training Need
- Engineering Services Case Study: Competence Gaps After a Technology Upgrade
- TNA Report Build for an Own Unit
- Three-Year Learning Strategy Drafting
- Leadership Panel Review and Strategy Defence

Skills You Will Gain

- Training Needs Assessment
- Performance Gap Analysis
- Job and Task Analysis
- Survey and Interview Design
- Needs Prioritisation
- Learning Strategy Development
- Evaluation Planning
- Evidence Triangulation

Why Attend This Course

- Leave with a TNA report and a three-year learning strategy for your own unit, tested before a leadership panel
- Stop funding training for problems it cannot fix, such as unclear processes, missing tools or conflicting incentives
- Replace wish-list surveys with evidence that holds up when budgets are questioned
- Compare needs analysis practice with peers from other sectors and countries

Conclusion

A learning strategy is only as sound as the needs analysis beneath it. This course moves from separating training needs from other performance problems, through the principal diagnostic models and data collection methods, to validating findings and making the strategic choices on delivery mix, sourcing, risk and evaluation. The final day turns that work into a TNA report and a three-year learning strategy that participants present to leadership, giving them an evidence base for every programme they propose and every budget they defend.