



Learning Objective: The student will understand the conduct of a training needs assessment.

Determine the organizational benefits of a needs assessment. This part of the process will assist decision-makers and stakeholders in understanding the concept of a needs assessment. A needs assessment based on the alignment of critical behaviors with a clear organizational mission will account for critical occupational and performance requirements.

- Eliminate redundant training efforts.
- Substantially reduce the unnecessary expenditure of training dollars.
- Assist trainers in identifying performance requirements that can best be satisfied by training and other developmental strategies.

Plan — the needs assessment is likely to be only as successful as the planning.

- Set goals/objectives for the needs assessment.
- Evaluate organizational readiness, and identify key roles.
- Evaluate prior/other needs assessments.
- Prepare project plan.
- Inventory the capacity of staff and technology to conduct a meaningful training skills assessment and analysis.
- Clarify success measures and program milestones.

Conduct needs assessment.

- Obtain needs assessment data (e.g., review strategic plans, assess human resources metrics, review job descriptions, conduct surveys, review performance appraisals).
- Analyze data.
- Define performance problems/issues: occupational group/individuals.
- Describe critical behaviors needed to affect problems/issues.
- Determine and clarify why critical behaviors do not currently exist.
- Research integrated performance solutions.
- If training is the best solution, determine best training and development approach(es).
- Assess cost/benefit of training and development approach(es); build a “business case.”
- Include organizational drivers needed to reinforce the critical behaviors that will affect problems/issues.
- Describe how the critical behaviors will be monitored and assessed after implementation of the improvement plan.

After completing the needs assessment, perform an analysis of data collected. The information gathered in assessment and refined in analysis can be used to define program goals. These goals are then stated as specific teaching objectives, which in turn will function as the foundation for course development to determine lesson plans, materials, tests, assignments and activities.