

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Bruce Fortado

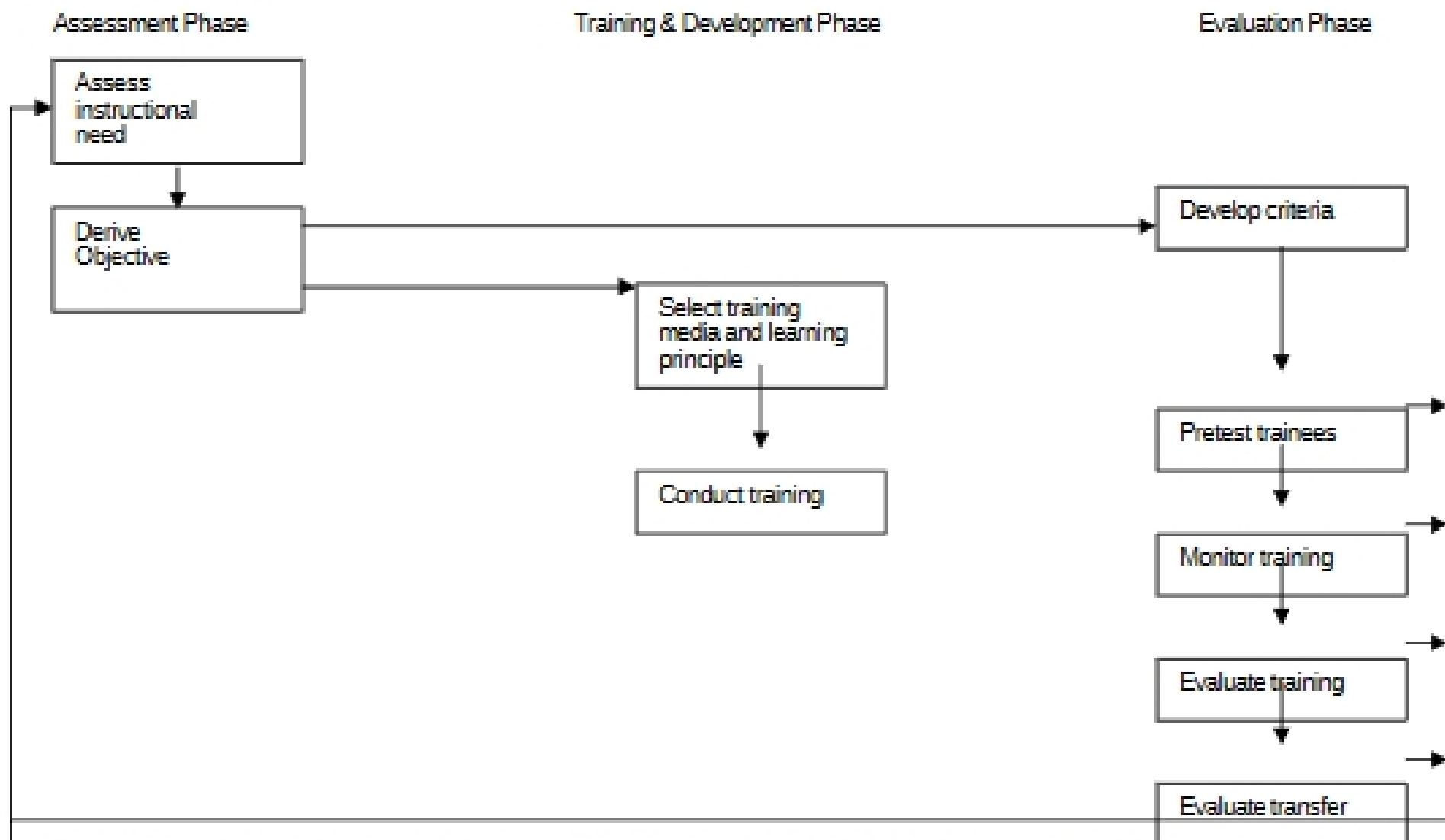
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An Instructional System is composed of (1) Problem Diagnosis (Need Analysis or Skills Gapping), (2) Program Design, (3) Program Delivery, and (4) Program Evaluation.

The systems approach gives important impetus to the establishment of objectives and evaluation criteria. A small pilot test may be conducted to validate the program before the program is fully implemented. Training/development is never a finished product. There are always continued revisions to meet goals, situations change, and goals also change. It should be kept in mind that there may be a "sleeper effect" where it takes time for results to show up back on the job. One also does not know how long the impact will last. In other words, one should check to see if the impact wanes over time or if it endures. Interest in training and development has risen due to the need for a wider array of skills, awareness of the entire production system, the need to be responsive to mishaps, changing customer needs, interest in building clusters of internal experts to manage teams, more vocal concern over employment security, career growth, and retraining costs.

An Institutional System



Note: There are many other instructional-system models for military, business and educational systems. Some of the components of this model were suggested by other systems. Taken from I. L. Goldstein (1986). *Improving the Effectiveness of Performance Appraisal*, in *Perspectives on Personnel/ Human Resource Management*, H. G. Heneman III and D. P. Schwab (eds.), 212-218. Homewood, IL: Irwin.

HR Training and Development Methods

Job Instruction = The trainer explains the job and executes the tasks to demonstrate how it should be done. The trainee tries to replicate the methods, and receives feedback from the trainer.

Coaching = On a day-to-day basis the trainer/manager notes what the employee is doing properly and improperly. Ideally, the trainer will provide advice on how the trainee can do his/her job more easily and effectively. Some supervisors, however, are reluctant to challenge or criticize.

Mentoring = A figure who is often 8 to 15 years older, and 2 or 3 levels above provides career advice, hints on how to tackle problems, and demonstrates interpersonal/political skills by example. The trainee often picks up the mentor's friends and enemies. There may be some "guilt by association." The process should be monitored so a young person is not exploited (the elder figure taking credit for his/her ideas, etc.).

Apprenticeship = Normally seen in craft positions (plumbers, carpenters, electricians, linemen, etc.). It normally lasts 2 to 5 years (the average being four years). It primarily involves on the job training under the direction of an experienced person. It also frequently has a classroom component. The skilled workmen may want to limit the number of new craftsmen to further their own interests. A client may be charged the craftsman's rate despite the fact a trainee did some of the work.

Business (Management) Games = Simulations of what it is like to make top management decisions. When I was in college, I took a course that centered around a software package that simulated an industry with four to six competitors. On a weekly basis thirty decisions had to be submitted (product price, quantities to be manufactured, wage rates, staffing levels, distribution by region, advertising, inventory levels, debt levels, the amount of stock outstanding, production capacity, etc.). Ideally, this would show students how all the varied functions fit together. Each organization was operated by a team of five to six students. These students were generally selected from different disciplinary backgrounds. The students' grades were determined by their finish (stock price, dividends, etc.). Board meetings were held with students from other industries so the team could explain their strategy and get new ideas. Political fights did break out in the team discussions due to the composition of the groups and the stakes involved. Some students attempted to spy on other groups. A key question is where does the economic information within the simulation come from. Does it reflect current realities, or does it foster outdated thinking?

Case Studies = Normally these are in-depth descriptions (5 to 30 pages) of the experiences of disguised organizations. The trainees are able to see the experiences of numerous managers in a short period of time. Hopefully, the trainees will not repeat the same mistakes as the characters in the case. The case, however, is pre-gathered information. Therefore, the trainees do not practice researching problems. They do normally try to analyze the given information and pose solutions. They never see an actual implementation, nor have a chance to enact revisions. Essentially, the middle stages of handling problems are stressed, while the initial and final steps are left out. If

groups analyze cases, and grades are at stake, aspects such as social loafing and political infighting may emerge.

Discussion Method (Incident Method) = Short controversial scenarios (one to three pages), like "An Exam for Mrs. Smith," are used to spark discussion. There are no "right answers." One can learn from the experiences of others, and should come to better appreciate others' views. The trainee should also develop his/her analytic skills and management style. Some people who long for exact answers dislike the disorganized and open-ended nature of these discussions. This method can only be effectively carried out in small groups. The nature of the feedback needs to be monitored ("Well, in my company we had a different experience ..." versus "No, you are wrong. That would never work.")

In-basket Exercises = The trainee is given a stack of memos, phone messages and letters. In the upcoming time frame (one week), the person has too much to do. Therefore, the problems must be prioritized. Time management must be exercised. In some cases, responses must be drafted. If the material is really job related, this can be a very useful developmental tool.

Sensitivity Training (T-groups) = This method is intended to change interpersonal relationships. A series of somewhat bizarre exercises will be carried out. The trainee will then discuss the experiences with the other participants (group analysis). Later, the trainee will put his/her reflections in writing (self analysis). These multiple analytic processes are intended to give the trainees greater insight into the behavior of others and themselves. Ideally, it will build greater understanding and tolerance. People should be able to develop new ways of interacting. Attitudes are quite likely to change. One must beware the damage that can be done by inappropriate feedback. When people bare their innermost thoughts, they can be really hurt if a person says "That's stupid," or the like. This technique can only be properly carried out in small group. It is obviously not being properly done if people rush from exercise to exercise with little group analysis or personal reflection. A tradeoff exists. If you do the exercises with people from your workplace, they will have greater difficulty opening up. Yet, changes are more likely to transfer back to work. Conversely, if one's superior does not become more "sensitive," it is unlikely any of that person's subordinates will sustain much of the changed behavior they initially display.

Lecture = The most common training method. This is an economical way to convey information to large numbers of trainees with a small number of trainers. The amount of content for the time consumed is generally very high. Normally, this consists of a simple one-way presentation of information. The lack of social interaction and individualized material is a drawback. The extensive usage of lectures sometimes results in boredom. The lack of reinforcement and the ability to practice can pose problems in skill training.

Programmed Instruction (Auto Instructional Techniques) = Modules like the SRA reading program and computer software packages (CDs, Web sites, Learning Portals, etc.) that promote self paced learning. Ideally, this method will be challenging and individualized. Computers and modules do not get impatient. Travel time to human presentations is eliminated. Advocates assert the same amount of material can be learned in one-third the time. The immediate feedback the employee can receive from self tests, and the branching the software programs provide to locate