

PRINTED BY: 61e49a0172e5bb3@placeholder.9722.edu. Printing is for personal, private use only. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without publisher's prior permission. Violators will be prosecuted.

and materials include (for example) iPads, workbooks, lectures, PowerPoint slides, Web- and computer-based activities, course activities, trainer resources (manuals, for instance), and support materials.

3 Explain how to use five training techniques.

Some employers create their own training content, but there's also a vast selection of online and offline content. (See, for example, the American Society for Training and Development's Infoline at [no longer online] www.astd.org, www.trainerswarehouse.com, and [no longer online] www.gneil.com, among thousands of such suppliers.)⁴⁸ Turnkey training packages often include a trainer's guide, self-study book, video, and other content.

Once you design, approve, and develop the program, management can implement and then evaluate it. *Implement* means actually provide the training, using one or more of the instructional methods (such as lectures) that we discuss next.

Implementing the Training Program



HR in Practice at the Hotel Paris

As Lisa and the CFO reviewed measures of the Hotel Paris's current training efforts, it was clear that some changes were in order. Most other service companies provided at least 40 hours of training per employee per year, while the Hotel Paris offered, on average, no more than five or six. To see how they handled this, see the case on pages 252–253.

With objectives set and the program designed and developed, you can turn to implementing the training program. This means actually doing the training, using one or more of the following training methods.



On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training (OJT) means having a person learn a job by actually doing it. Every employee, from mailroom clerk to CEO, should get on-the-job training when he or she joins a firm. In many firms, OJT is the only training available.⁴⁹

on-the-job training (OJT)

Training a person to learn a job while working on it.

Types of on-the-Job Training

The most familiar on-the-job training is the *coaching or understudy method*. Here, an experienced worker or the trainee's supervisor trains the employee. This may involve simply observing the supervisor, or (preferably) having the supervisor or job expert show the new employee the ropes, step-by-step. On-the-job training is part of multifaceted training at The Men's Wearhouse, which combines on-the-job training with comprehensive initiation programs and continuing-education seminars. Every manager is accountable for developing his or her subordinates.⁵⁰ *Job rotation*, in which an employee (usually a management trainee) moves from job to job at planned intervals, is another OJT technique. *Special assignments* similarly give lower-level executives firsthand experience in working on actual problems.

Do not take the on-the-job training effort for granted. Instead, plan out and structure the OJT experience. Train the trainers themselves (often the employees' supervisors), and provide training materials. They should know, for instance, how to motivate learners. Because low expectations may translate into poor trainee performance, supervisor/trainers should emphasize their high expectations.

Many firms use “peer training” for OJT; for instance, expert employees answer calls at selected times during the day or participate in in-house “radio programs” to answer their peers’ call-in questions about technical aspects of doing their jobs.⁵¹ Others use employee teams to analyze the jobs and prepare training materials. The employees, already job experts, reportedly conduct task analyses more quickly and effectively than do training experts.⁵²

The OJT Process

Here are some steps to help ensure OJT success.

Step 1: Prepare the learner

1. Put the learner at ease.
2. Explain why he or she is being taught.
3. Create interest and find out what the learner already knows about the job.
4. Explain the whole job and relate it to some job the worker already knows.
5. Place the learner as close to the normal working position as possible.
6. Familiarize the worker with equipment, materials, tools, and trade terms.

Step 2: Present the operation

1. Explain quantity and quality requirements.
2. Go through the job at the normal work pace.
3. Go through the job at a slow pace several times, explaining each step. Between operations, explain the difficult parts, or those in which errors are likely to be made.
4. Again, go through the job at a slow pace several times; explain the key points.
5. Have the learner explain the steps as you go through the job at a slow pace.

Step 3: Do a tryout

1. Have the learner go through the job several times, slowly, explaining each step to you. Correct mistakes and, if necessary, do some of the complicated steps the first few times.
2. Run the job at the normal pace.
3. Have the learner do the job, gradually building up skill and speed.
4. Once the learner can do the job, let the work begin, but don't abandon him or her.

Step 4: Follow-up

1. Designate to whom the learner should go for help.
2. Gradually decrease supervision, checking work from time to time.
3. Correct faulty work patterns before they become a habit. Show why the method you suggest is superior.
4. Compliment good work.

Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship training is a process by which people become skilled workers, usually through a combination of formal learning and long-term on-the-job training, often under the tutelage of a master craftsperson. When steelmaker Dofasco discovered that many of their employees would be retiring within 5 to 10 years, the company decided to revive its apprenticeship training. New recruits spend about 32 months in an internal apprenticeship training program, learning various jobs under the tutelage of experienced employees.⁵³

apprenticeship training

A structured process by which people become skilled workers through a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training.

The U.S. Department of Labor's National Apprenticeship System promotes apprenticeship programs. More than 460,000 apprentices participate in 28,000 programs, and registered programs can receive federal and state contracts and other assistance.⁵⁴ **Figure 8-2** lists popular recent apprenticeships.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Registered Apprenticeship program offers access to more than 1,000 occupations, such as the following:

- Able seaman
- Carpenter
- Chef
- Child care development specialist
- Construction craft laborer
- Dental assistant
- Electrician
- Elevator constructor
- Fire medic
- Law enforcement agent
- Over-the-road truck driver
- Pipefitter

FIGURE 8-2 Some Popular Apprenticeships

Source: www.dol.gov/OA/occupations.cfm, accessed October 12, 2012.

Informal Learning

Surveys from the American Society for Training and Development estimate that as much as 80% of what employees learn on the job they learn through informal means, including performing their jobs while interacting every day with their colleagues.⁵⁵

Employers can facilitate informal learning. For example, one Siemens plant places tools in cafeteria areas to take advantage of the work-related discussions taking place. Even installing whiteboards with markers can facilitate informal learning. Sun Microsystems implemented an informal online learning tool it called Sun Learning eXchange. This evolved into a platform containing more than 5,000 informal learning items/suggestions addressing topics ranging from sales to technical support.⁵⁶ Cheesecake Factory employees use VideoCafé, a YouTube-type platform, to let employees “upload and share video snippets on job-related topics, including customer greetings and food preparation.”

Job Instruction Training

Many jobs (or parts of jobs) consist of a sequence of steps best learned step-by-step. Such step-by-step training is called **job instruction training (JIT)**. First, list the job's required steps (let's say for using a mechanical paper cutter) each in its proper sequence. Then list a corresponding "key point" (if any) beside each step. The steps in such a *job instruction training sheet* show trainees what to do, and the key points show how it's to be done—and why, as follows:

job instruction training (JIT)

Listing each job's basic tasks, along with key points, in order to provide step-by-step training for employees.

Steps	Key Points
1. Start motor	None
2 Set cutting distance	Carefully read scale—to prevent wrong-sized cut
3 Place paper on cutting table	Make sure paper is even—to prevent uneven cut
4 Push paper up to cutter	Make sure paper is tight—to prevent uneven cut
5 Grasp safety release with left hand	Do not release left hand—to prevent hand from being caught in cutter
6 Grasp cutter release with right hand	Do not release right hand—to prevent hand from being caught in cutter
7 Simultaneously pull cutter and safety releases	Keep both hands on corresponding releases—avoid hands being on cutting table
8 Wait for cutter to retract	Keep both hands on releases—to avoid having hands on cutting table
9 Retract paper	Make sure cutter is retracted; keep both hands away from releases
10 Shut off motor	None

As an example, the steps UPS teaches new drivers include: Shift into the lowest gear or into park; turn off the ignition; apply the parking brake; release the seatbelt with left hand; open the door; place the key on your ring finger.⁵⁷

Lectures

Lecturing is a quick and simple way to present knowledge to large groups of trainees, as when the sales force needs to learn a new product's features.⁵⁸ Here are some guidelines for presenting a lecture:⁵⁹

- Don't start out on the wrong foot, for instance, with an irrelevant joke.
- Speak only about what you know well.
- Give your listeners signals. For instance, if you have a list of items, start by saying something like, "There are four reasons why the sales reports are necessary. . . . The first. . . ."
- Use anecdotes and stories to show rather than tell.
- Be alert to your audience. Watch body language for negative signals like fidgeting or boredom.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience.
- Make sure everyone can hear. Repeat questions that you get from trainees.
- Leave hands hanging naturally at your sides.
- Talk from notes or PowerPoint slides, rather than from a script.
- Break a long talk into a series of short talks. Don't give a short overview and then spend a 1-hour presentation going point by point through the material. Break the long talk into a series of 10-minute talks, each with its own introduction. Write brief PowerPoint slides, and spend about a minute on each. Each introduction highlights what you'll discuss, why it's important to the audience, and why they should listen to you.⁶⁰
- Practice. If possible, rehearse under conditions similar to those under which you will actually give your presentation.

Programmed Learning

Whether the medium is a textbook, PC, or the Internet, **programmed learning** is a step-by-step, self-learning method that consists of three parts:

programmed learning

A systematic method for teaching job skills, involving presenting questions or facts, allowing the person to respond, and giving the learner immediate feedback on the accuracy of his or her answers.

1. Presenting questions, facts, or problems to the learner
2. Allowing the person to respond
3. Providing feedback on the accuracy of answers, with instructions on what to do next

Generally, programmed learning presents facts and follow-up questions frame by frame. What the next question is often depends on how the learner answers the previous question. The built-in feedback from the answers provides reinforcement.

Programmed learning reduces training time. It also facilitates learning by letting trainees learn at their own pace, get immediate feedback, and reduce their risk of error. Some argue that trainees do not learn much more from programmed learning than from a textbook. Yet studies generally support programmed learning's effectiveness. A typical study focused on 40 second year undergraduates in an organic chemistry course. Some studied in a conventional lecture setting and others used programmed learning. The researchers concluded, "The findings suggest that programmed learning could be considered as a better alternative to conventional lecturing in teaching stereochemistry."⁶¹

Intelligent tutoring systems take programmed learning one step further. In addition to the usual programmed learning, computerized intelligent tutoring systems learn what questions and approaches worked and did not work for the learner, and then adjust the instructional sequence to the trainee's unique needs.

Behavior Modeling

Behavior modeling involves (1) showing trainees the right (or “model”) way of doing something, (2) letting trainees practice that way, and then (3) giving feedback on the trainees’ performance. Behavior modeling training is one of the most widely used, well-researched, and highly regarded psychologically based training interventions.⁶² The basic procedure is as follows:

behavior modeling

A training technique in which trainees are first shown good management techniques in a film, are asked to play roles in a simulated situation, and are then given feedback and praise by their supervisor.

1. ***Modeling.*** First, trainees watch live or video examples showing models behaving effectively in a problem situation. Thus, the video might show a supervisor effectively disciplining a subordinate, if teaching “how to discipline” is the aim of the training program.
2. ***Role-playing.*** Next, the trainees get roles to play in a simulated situation; here they are to practice the effective behaviors demonstrated by the models.
3. ***Social reinforcement.*** The trainer provides reinforcement in the form of praise and constructive feedback.
4. ***Transfer of training.*** Finally, trainees are encouraged to apply their new skills when they are back on their jobs.

Audiovisual-Based Training

Although increasingly replaced by Web-based methods, audiovisual-based training techniques like DVDs, films, PowerPoint, and audiotapes are still popular.⁶³ The Ford Motor Company uses videos in its dealer training sessions to simulate problems and reactions to various customer complaints, for example.

Vestibule Training

With vestibule training, trainees learn on the actual or simulated equipment but are trained off the job (perhaps in a separate room or *vestibule*). Vestibule training is necessary when it's too costly or dangerous to train employees on the job. Putting new assembly-line workers right to work could slow production, for instance, and when safety is a concern—as with pilots—simulated training may be the only practical alternative. As an example, UPS uses a life-size learning lab to provide a 40-hour, 5-day realistic training program for driver candidates.⁶⁴

Electronic Performance Support Systems (EPSS)

Electronic performance support systems (EPSS) are computerized tools and displays that automate training, documentation, and phone support.⁶⁵ When you call a Dell service rep, he or she is probably asking questions prompted by an EPSS; it takes you both, step-by-step, through an analytical sequence. Without the EPSS, Dell would have to train its service reps to memorize an unrealistically large number of solutions. Aetna Insurance cut its 13-week instructor-led training course for new call center employees by about 2 weeks by providing the employees with performance support tools.⁶⁶

electronic performance support systems (EPSS)

Sets of computerized tools and displays that automate training, documentation, and phone support; integrate this automation into applications; and provide support that's faster, cheaper, and more effective than traditional methods.

Performance support systems are modern job aids. **Job aids** are sets of instructions, diagrams, or similar methods available at the job site to guide the worker.⁶⁷ Job aids work particularly well on complex jobs that require multiple steps, or where it's dangerous to forget a step. For example, airline pilots use job aids (a checklist of things to do prior to takeoff).

job aid

A set of instructions, diagrams, or similar methods available at the job site to guide the worker.

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing involves delivering programs over broadband lines, the Internet, or satellite. Vendors such as Cisco offer videoconference products such as Webex and TelePresence (www.cisco.com/en/US/products/ps10352/index.html). Employers typically use videoconferencing technology with other technology. For example, Cisco's Unified Video Conferencing (CUVC) product line combines Cisco group collaboration and decision-making software with videoconferencing, video telephony, and realistic "TelePresence" capabilities.⁶⁸

Computer-Based Training (CBT)

Computer-based training refers to training methods that use interactive computer-based systems to increase knowledge or skills. For example, employers use CBT to teach employees safe methods for avoiding falls. The system lets trainees replay the lessons and answer questions, and are especially effective when paired with actual practice under a trainer's watchful eye.⁶⁹

Computer-based training is increasingly realistic. For example, *interactive multimedia training* integrates the use of text, video, graphics, photos, animation, and sound to create a complex training environment with which the trainee interacts.⁷⁰ In training a physician, for instance, such a system lets a medical student take a hypothetical patient's medical history, conduct an examination, and analyze lab tests. The student can then interpret the sounds and draw conclusions for a diagnosis. *Virtual reality training* takes this realism a step further, by putting trainees into a simulated environment.

Simulated Learning

“Simulated learning” means different things to different people. A survey asked training professionals what experiences qualified as simulated learning experiences. The percentages of trainers choosing each experience were:

- Virtual reality-type games, 19%
- Step-by-step animated guide, 8%
- Scenarios with questions and decision trees overlaying animation, 19%
- Online role-play with photos and videos, 14%
- Software training including screenshots with interactive requests, 35%
- Other, 6%⁷¹

Virtual reality puts the trainee in an artificial three-dimensional environment that simulates events and situations experienced on the job.⁷² Sensory devices transmit how the trainee is responding to the computer, and the trainee “sees, feels and hears” what is going on, assisted by special goggles and sensory devices.⁷³

The U.S. Armed Forces use simulation-based training programs for soldiers and officers. For example, the army developed video game-type training programs called Full-Spectrum Command and Full-Spectrum Warrior for training troops in urban warfare. They offer realistic features, and cultivate real-time leadership and decision-making skills.⁷⁴

Other Examples

Employers increasingly use computerized simulations (sometimes called *interactive learning*) to inject realism into their training. Orlando-based Environmental Tectonics Corporation created an Advanced Disaster Management simulation for emergency medical response trainees. One simulated scenario involves a plane crash. So realistic that it's "unsettling," trainees including firefighters and airport officials respond to the simulated crash's sights and sounds via pointing devices and radios.⁷⁵ Cisco embedded the learning required to train thousands of Cisco trainees for Cisco certification exams within a video game-like program that includes music, graphics, and sound effects.⁷⁶ A Novartis pharmaceuticals division runs about 80 or so clinical trials per year, and it must be sure each trial team is trained for this. Novartis uses a custom made simulation as a team training device. For example, the simulation shows trainees "how their decisions affected the quality of the trial and whether their decision saved time or added time to the process."⁷⁷ The Cheesecake Factory uses a simulation that shows employees how to build the "perfect hamburger."

Advantages

Training simulations are expensive to create, but for large companies the cost per employee is usually reasonable.⁷⁸ In general, interactive and simulated technologies reduce learning time by an average of 50%.⁷⁹ Other advantages include mastery of learning (if the trainee doesn't learn it, he or she generally can't move on to the next step), increased retention, and increased trainee motivation (resulting from responsive feedback).

Specialist multimedia software houses such as Graphic Media of Portland, Oregon, produce much of the content for these programs. They produce both custom titles and generic programs such as a \$999 package for teaching workplace safety.

Lifelong and Literacy Training Techniques

Lifelong learning means providing employees with continuing learning experiences over their tenure with the firm, with the aim of ensuring they have the opportunity to learn the skills they need to do their jobs and to expand their horizons. For example, one senior waiter at the Rhapsody restaurant in Chicago received his undergraduate degree and began work toward a master of social work using the lifelong learning account (LiLA) program his employer offers. Lifelong learning may thus range from basic remedial skills (for instance, English as a second language) to college. Somewhat similar to 401(k) plans, employers and employees contribute to LiLA plans (without the tax advantages of 401(k) plans), and the employee can use these funds to better himself or herself.⁸⁰

lifelong learning

Provides employees with continuing learning experiences over their tenure with the firm, with the aims of ensuring they have the opportunity to learn the skills they need to do their jobs and to expand their occupational horizons.

Literacy Training

By one estimate, about 39 million people in the United States have learning disabilities.

Some call the American workforce ill-prepared.⁸¹ Yet today's emphasis on teamwork and quality requires that employees read, write, and understand numbers.⁸²

Employers often turn to private firms like Education Management Corporation to provide the requisite education.⁸³ Another simple approach is to have supervisors teach basic skills by giving employees writing and speaking exercises.⁸⁴ For example, if an employee needs to use a manual to find out how to change a part, teach that person how to use the index to locate the relevant section. Some call in teachers from a local high school.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE: HR Practices Around the Globe Diversity Training at ABC Virtual Communications, Inc.

Diversity training aims to improve cross-cultural sensitivity, with the goal of fostering more harmonious working relationships among a firm's employees. Such training typically includes improving interpersonal skills, understanding and valuing cultural differences, improving technical skills, socializing employees into the corporate culture, indoctrinating new workers into the U.S. work ethic, improving English proficiency and basic math skills, and improving bilingual skills for English-speaking employees.⁸⁵ For example, IBM has online programs to educate managers regarding diversity, inclusive leadership, and sexual harassment. Training materials include interactive learning modules that enable trainees to practice what they've learned, testimonials from IBM executives, and self-assessment tools.⁸⁶

Most employers opt for an off-the-shelf diversity training program such as *Just Be F.A.I.R.* from VisionPoint productions. It includes streaming video, a facilitator discussion guide, participant materials and workbook, a DVD with print materials, PowerPoint slides, and two videos (the purchase price for the program is about \$1,000). Vignettes illustrate such things as the potential pitfalls of stereotyping people.⁸⁷

ABC Virtual Communications, Inc. (www.abcv.com/) is a Des Moines, Iowa, provider of customized software development and other solutions. It therefore requires qualified personnel, particularly software engineers. Recruiting such employees is difficult anywhere, but particularly in Iowa, where many recent graduates move away. A shortage of qualified personnel would weaken the firm's performance.

ABC therefore recruits foreign-born individuals. However, it was obvious that hiring these skilled employees wasn't enough: ABC needed a diversity management training program that could turn these new employees—and the firm's current employees—into productive colleagues.

Their program consists of several courses. New ABC employees, representing 14 countries and 45 ethnic groups, take a mandatory 8-hour orientation overview for new employees on the American Workplace. All ABC employees take an “effective communications” training course. Conversational English and accent reduction classes for employees and their families are available through Rosetta Stone language learning software. The company also partnered with Des Moines Area Community College to create specialized classes for individual needs. At ABC Virtual, a globally diverse workforce was the key to improved performance, and diversity training helped them manage their diversity.⁸⁸



Discussion Question 8-2:

1. List five competencies that you believe such a diversity program should cultivate.

Team Training

Teamwork does not always come naturally. Companies devote many hours to training new employees to listen to each other and to cooperate. For example, a Baltimore Coca-Cola plant suffered from high turnover and absenteeism.⁸⁹ The new plant manager decided to address these problems by reorganizing around teams. He then used team training to support and improve team functioning.

Team training focused on technical, interpersonal, and team management issues. In terms of *technical training*, for instance, management encouraged team employees to learn each other's jobs, to encourage flexible team assignments. **Cross training** means training employees to do different tasks or jobs than their own; doing so facilitates flexibility and job rotation, as when you expect team members to occasionally share jobs.

cross training

Training employees to do different tasks or jobs than their own; doing so facilitates flexibility and job rotation.

Interpersonal problems often undermine team functioning. Team training here therefore included *interpersonal skills* training such as in listening, handling conflict, and negotiating.⁹⁰ Effective teams also require team management skills, for instance in problem solving, meetings management, consensus decision making, and team leadership, and the teams received such training as well.

Many employers use team training to build stronger management teams. For example, some use outdoor “adventure” training such as Outward Bound programs to build teamwork. This usually involves taking a firm’s management team out into rugged, mountainous terrain.⁹¹ The aim is to foster trust and cooperation among trainees. One chief financial officer for a bank helped organize a retreat for 73 of his firm’s financial employees. As he said, “They are very individualistic in their approach to their work. . . . What I have been trying to do is get them to see the power of acting more like a team.”⁹² Other team training methods include action learning and team building, which we’ll address later in this chapter.⁹³



Improving Performance Through HRIS

Internet-Based Training

Employers use Internet-based learning to deliver almost all the types of training we have discussed to this point. For example, ADP trains new salespeople online, using a Blackboard learning management system similar to one used by college students.⁹⁴ The Italian eyewear company Luxottica (whose brands include LensCrafters and Sunglass Hut) provides training to its 38,000 employees worldwide via instant online access to information on new products and regulations.⁹⁵ Recently, state-owned postal service China Post had to train about 100,000 employees quickly. It created a new center to manage its online training college, which now delivers about 9,000 hours of training annually, offering over 600 programs.⁹⁶



Learning Portals

A *learning portal* is a section of an employer's website that offers employees online access to training courses. Many employers arrange to have an online training vendor make its courses available via the employer's portal. Most often, the employer contracts with applications service providers (ASPs). Here, when employees go to their firm's learning portal, they actually access the menu of training courses that the ASP offers for the employer. A Google search for e-learning companies reveals many, such as SkillSoft, Plateau Systems, and Employment Law Learning Technologies.

Learning Management Systems

Learning management systems (LMS) are special software tools that support Internet training by helping employers identify training needs, and to schedule, deliver, assess, and manage the online training itself. (Blackboard and WebCT are two familiar college-oriented learning management systems). General Motors uses an LMS to help its dealers in Africa and the Middle East deliver training. The Internet-based LMS includes a course catalog, supervisor approved self-enrollment, and pre- and post-course tests. The system then automatically schedules the individual's training.⁹⁷

Many employers integrate the LMS with the company's talent management systems. That way, skills inventories and succession plans automatically update as employees complete their training.⁹⁸

Online learning doesn't necessarily teach individuals faster or better. In one review, Web-based instruction was a bit more effective than classroom instruction for teaching memory of facts and principles; Web-based instruction and classroom instruction were equally effective for teaching information about how to perform a task or action.⁹⁹ But, of course, the need to teach large numbers of students remotely, or to enable trainees to study at their leisure, often makes e-learning the logical choice.¹⁰⁰

Some employers opt for *blended learning*. Here, trainees use multiple delivery methods (such as manuals, in-class lectures, and Web-based seminars or "webinars") to learn the material.¹⁰¹ Intuit (which makes TurboTax) uses instructor-led classroom training for getting new distributors up to speed. Then they use virtual classroom systems (see the following) for things like monthly meetings with distributors, and for classes on special software features.¹⁰²

The Virtual Classroom

A **virtual classroom** uses collaboration software to enable multiple remote learners, using their PCs or laptops, to participate in live audio and visual discussions, communicate via written text, and learn via content such as PowerPoint slides.

virtual classroom

Teaching method that uses special collaboration software to enable multiple remote learners, using their PCs or laptops, to participate in live audio and visual discussions, communicate via written text, and learn via content such as PowerPoint slides.

The virtual classroom combines the best of Web-based learning offered by systems like Blackboard and WebCT with live video and audio. Thus, Elluminate Live! lets learners communicate with clear, two-way audio; build communities with user profiles and live video; collaborate with chat and shared whiteboards; and learn with shared applications such as PowerPoint slides.¹⁰³

Mobile Learning

A majority of large employers distribute internal communications and training via mobile devices.¹⁰⁴ Employees at CompuCom Systems Inc. access instruction manuals through mobile devices; the company subsidizes employee purchases of smart phones or tablets to facilitate this. Natural user interfaces such as Apple's Siri voice recognition system facilitate such training.¹⁰⁵

Mobile learning (or “on-demand learning”) means delivering learning content, on the learner’s demand, via mobile devices like cell phones, laptops, and tablets, wherever and whenever the learner has the time and desire to access it.¹⁰⁶ For example, trainees can take full online courses using dominKnow’s ([no longer online] www.dominknow.com) iPhone-optimized Touch Learning Center Portal.¹⁰⁷

Employers use mobile learning to deliver training and downloads on topics “from how to close an important sales deal to optimizing organizational change.”¹⁰⁸ IBM uses mobile learning to deliver just-in-time information (for instance, about new product features) to its sales force. To facilitate this, its training department often breaks up, say, an hour program into easier-to-use 10-minute pieces. Some employers use blogs to communicate learning to trainees.¹⁰⁹ J.P. Morgan encourages employees to use instant messaging, for instance, to update colleagues about new products quickly.



Social Media and HR

Employers use social media, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, and virtual worlds like Second Life to communicate company news and messages and to provide training.¹¹⁰ For example, British Petroleum uses Second Life to train new gas station employees. The aim here is to show new gas station employees how to use the safety features of gasoline storage tanks. BP built three-dimensional renderings of the tank systems in Second Life. Trainees use these to “see” underground and observe the effects of using the safety devices.¹¹¹

Web 2.0 learning is learning that utilizes online technologies such as social networks, virtual worlds (such as Second Life), and systems that blend synchronous and asynchronous delivery with blogs, chat rooms, bookmark sharing, and tools such as 3-D simulations.¹¹² About 40% of learning professionals surveyed said their companies use Web 2.0 learning, and 86% said they anticipated doing so. One large firm uses Web 2.0 to deliver credit card sales training to its service representatives around the country. *Collaborative peer forums* require teams of six to eight trainees to virtually “sell” their sales problem and solution to an executive.¹¹³ The accompanying HR Tools feature shows how managers can create their own training programs.

Web 2.0 learning

Training that uses online technologies such as social networks, virtual worlds (such as Second Life), and systems that blend synchronous and asynchronous delivery with blogs, chat rooms, bookmark sharing, and tools such as 3-D simulations.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE: HR Tools for Line Managers and Entrepreneurs Creating Your Own Training Program

While it would be nice if supervisors in even the largest firms could tap into their companies' packaged training programs to train the new people that they hire, the fact is that many times they cannot. You often hire and are responsible for the performance of a new employee only to find that your company provides little or no specialized training for this person, beyond the new person's introductory orientation. Without the required training, your team's performance might well suffer.

If so, you have several options. First, for either the individual manager or small business owner there are literally hundreds of suppliers of prepackaged training solutions. These range from self-study programs from the American Management Association, to more elaborate programs, for instance from American Media, or Business Advantage Inc. Similarly, reviewing trade journals such as *EHStoday* (www.ehstoday.com) will provide information on specialized prepackaged training program suppliers (in this case, for occupational safety and health).

Second, small and medium-sized companies may also want to take advantage of the new trend toward **outsourced learning** ¹¹⁴. Major consulting firms such as Accenture and IBM Global Services can obtain increased returns to scale by providing training solutions to multiple clients. Therefore many employers are now saving training dollars by outsourcing their entire learning functions to them.

outsourced learning

Utilizing a resource outside the company to provide employee training.

Third, you can create your own "costless" training program, using the following process.

- **Step 1.** Set Training Objectives. First, write down your training objectives. For example, your objective might be to reduce scrap, or to get new employees up to speed within 2 weeks.
- **Step 2.** Write a Detailed Job Description. A detailed job description is the heart of any training program. It should list the daily and periodic tasks of each job, along with a summary of the steps in each task.
- **Step 3.** Develop an Abbreviated Task Analysis Record Form. For practical purposes, the individual manager or small business owner can use an abbreviated version of the Task Analysis Record Form (**Table 8-1**) containing just four columns. In the first, list *tasks* (including what is to be performed in terms of each of the main tasks, and the steps involved in each task). In column B, list *performance standards* (in terms of quantity, quality, accuracy, and so on). In column C, list *trainable skills* required, things the employee must know or do to perform the task. This column provides you with specific knowledge and skills (such as “Keep both hands on the wheel”) that you want to stress. In the fourth column, list *aptitudes required*. These are the human aptitudes (such as mechanical comprehension, and so on) that the employee should have to be trainable for the task and for which the employee can be screened ahead of time.
- **Step 4.** Develop a Job Instruction Sheet. Next, develop a job instruction sheet for the job. We saw earlier that a job instruction training sheet shows the steps in each task as well as key points for each.
- **Step 5.** Prepare a Training Package for the Job. At a minimum, your training package should include the job description, abbreviated Task Analysis Record Form, and job instruction sheet, all collected in a training manual. The latter should also contain a summary of the training program’s objectives, and a listing of the trainable skills required for the trainee. The manual might also contain an introduction to the job, and an explanation of how the job fits with other jobs in the plant or office.