Research Paper

Management

Training Need Analysis: the case of OPTCL

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ABSTRACT

Training Need identification is the foundation on which success of any training department lies. Organizations incur money to yield a justified result. Often training department fails in this regard and reason lay at the basics only i.e. irregularities in conducting training need analysis. A well defined attempt in this regard can enhance the process of training for better achievements. Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Limited owes the credit of stability of performance irrespective of several changes it has undergone. This paper discusses the initiatives taken by the esteemed organization in regard to training needs analysis for the success of training at OPTCL. It also evaluates the process for better consequences.

Keywords: Training Need Analysis, Training Need Identification, OPTCL

INTRODUCTION:

Layoffs, Pink slips and Rightsizing affected the total world during the last couple of year. Employer and the employees both were bothered about these dirty but essential terms. Thank God, gone are those days. This is the era when emphasis is on target and the talent to achieve the same in right time. Here are the concerns for those companies who can prepare themselves for turbulence and stand still with a progress line. A survey of business executives, conducted by McKinsey and Co., asking them to name the factor contributing the most to the increasing competitive intensity in the global markets, identified the improved capabilities of the competitors, in terms of knowledge and talent. More low-cost competitors and more competition were the second and third factors mentioned (The McKinsey Quarterly). This is the reason may be why human resource practices are no more considered as "hygiene" factors, or as staff maintenance issues. These human resources are considered as the leading source of competitive advantage (Peters and Waterman). Globalization and privatization have equipped the organizations to alter the way these companies were operating. The change in the nature and content of work (Howard) has impacted organizational choice of human capital development programs. One of the most frequently encountered human capital development interventions is training (Petrovic & etal). Owing to shorter innovation cycles, increasing competitive pressure and the need for more flexibility in an uncertain business environment, organizations need more efficiency and effectiveness of the employees through education and training (Garvin). Organizations in order to equip their employees with the skills necessary to do their job, train them, in an effort to optimize their workforce's potential. Some companies, planning for the long-term, invest in the development of new skills by their employees, so as to enable them to handle issues not currently present, but likely to come up in the future (Sahinidis & Bouris).

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS:

Training can be introduced simply as a process of assisting a person for enhancing his efficiency and effectiveness to a particular work area by getting more knowledge and practices. According to Silberman and Phillips (2006), training and development supports the organization's goals and objectives by analyzing needs, designing and developing training programs, conducting training at all levels throughout the organization, and evaluating them. This is how the HR department can take initiative for the organization to remain compet-

itive in all times. Training is defined as "a planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinants of individual job performance" (Campbell and Kuncel). Training is important but only when the same is observed with the actual reasons to have them. Thus is the necessity of Training Needs Analysis process, the first step to have training. The process of needs assessment identifies more than one training need; the training manager, working with management, prioritizes the training based on the urgency of the need (timeliness); the extent of the need (how many employees need to be trained); and the resources available, that makes training more viable (Mirza and Riaz). But this function usually gets minimum of attention in practice. Nicholas Clarke refers to training needs analysis as the politics of the HR department as it is treated only as an important function half-heartedly.

OBJECTIVES:

The present research is an attempt to analyze the training needs analysis process of Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (OPTCL. The study aims to find out:

1- Training need analysis procedure at OPTCL
a.   The policies regarding TNA
b.   The practices related to TNA

OPTCL PROFILE:

Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (OPTCL), one of the largest Transmission Utility in the country was incorporated in March 2004 under the Companies Act, 1956 as a company wholly owned by the Government of Odisha to undertake the business of transmission and wheeling of electricity in the State. The registered office of the Company is situated at Bhubaneswar, the capital of the State of Odisha. Its projects and field units are spread all over the State. OPTCL became fully operational with effect from 9th June 2005 consequent upon issue of Odisha Electricity Reform (Transfer of Transmission and Related Activities) Scheme, 2005 under the provisions of Electricity Act, 2003 and the Odisha Reforms Act, 1995 by the State Government for transfer and vesting of transmission related activities of GRIDCO with OPTCL. The Company owns Extra High Voltage Transmission system and operates about 9550.93 ckt kms of transmission lines at 400 kV, 220 kV, 132 kV levels and 81 nos. of substations with transformation capacity of MVA.

To achieve such a respective position OPTCL has catered

several strategic moves in different angle. One of such strategy is to improve the managerial skill level of its employees, beneath HR category. Training as a whole is said to be the base of OPTCL to achieve its goal.

DEPARTMENT OF TRAINING AT OPTCL:
OPTCL unlike other govt. owned organization has always given adequate importance to training department. Figure 1 shows the organizational structure of OPTCL. This shows that the training department is been separately maintained in the organization. Training department is directly headed by the Sr. General Manager (Sr. GM) reporting to the director HRD. Training department is again segregated as Power Training Centre (PTC) and Management Training Centre (MTC). Assistant General Manager (AGM) is in-charge of the responsibilities at MTC and PTC each. They are assisted by two Sr. Managers too. This gives the clear picture of OPTCL providing importance to training as a vital part for their effective administration.

Training Process at OPTCL:
The process of training has been dictated by the researchers from Price Waterhouse-Cooper in 2005. The training manual given by this well renowned consultancy is been revised and followed at OPTCL till now. The process of training at OPTCL is as follows. The training process goes through five stages of administration. The first phase is training need identification. Every year in the month of February the training need for the next year is decided by the training department. Next is designing the training programs. Usually OPTCL relies on its established training programs designed and proposed by its training manual. The next important stage is communicating the employees about the various programs and do the needful required for the successful implementation. The last phase is training evaluation to find out the effectiveness of the cost incurred on training. OPTCL believes in analyzing the root points systematically for an effective use of the training department. This induces a valuable and thoughtful use of training need analysis process at OPTCL.

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS AT OPTCL:
OPTCL seems to be very active in conducting training. The organization has a well spelled training matrix. The training matrix defines all the training programs of OPTCL under 11 broad categories. The matrix defines the category of employees for whom the training may be appropriate. In total 167 different training programs are defined in this matrix. But this does not mean the matrix is the only source of conducting training program. This matrix use to get modified as and when required by the organization.

Policies of Training Need Identification at OPTCL: The training manual of OPTCL spells training need analysis as training need identification process. It includes all possible sources of finding the needs for conduction training program. Figure 1 gives an illustration of the sources that contribute to OPTCL training need identification process.

Figure 1: Sources of Training Need Identification at OPTCL

Source: Compiled by the authors from the secondary data as collected from OPTCL training manual

The details of this process and sub-processes at OPTCL are:
1- Company objectives as declared from the chief managing directorate office takes the prime importance for training department before preparing the training calendar for any financial year.
2- The next important source of identifying need for training is the appraisal forms collected at the end of the each financial year. OPTCL has carefully added one sheet in the appraisal form. This sheet stimulates the employee to write down his/her own training desires. The same gets forwarded by the reporting authority to the training department. These appraisal forms after being collected get compiled by the training department and are listed to identify proper designing and timing of their administration.
3- Departmental requisitions are the next important source. Each department from different locations of business of OPTCL has to submit a departmental training requisition form in the month of February in every year. This form reports the name of the training program needed by the department along with the number of interested employees and the proposed convenient timing of the training program.
4- New technologies introduced in the organization also demand the attention of the training department. At OPTCL every new technology is been rightly addressed by the training department.
5- Job rotation though not a very usual phenomena in OPTCL but not totally absent. Thus training department also takes the opportunity to address such needs. Any job rotation incidences are rightly captured by the training program and addresses appropriately.
6- Transfers and promotions are also taken as the occasions to be taken care of by the training department. Any type of urgency in training by the reporting authority due to transfer of work place or promotion gets addressed with optimum care by the training department.
7- Government Policies that get amended from time to time is also rightly considered at OPTCL. Being a government run organization the employees should have very clear yet right understanding of its rules and regulations and policies. Thus any such change gets adequate attention by the OPTCL training department.

The above discussion illustrates the policies cited towards understanding the training needs analysis by the training department at OPTCL.

Practices of Training Need Analysis Process At OPTCL:
Close observations of practices at OPTCL training department regarding the process of training needs analysis are listed as follows:

• Based on the above policy, the training manager supposes to produce an annual training plan for the forthcoming financial year. But as it is observed that such activity is not done as it is proposed. Instead of an annual training plan the training events occur as and when required at OPTCL excepting some of the regular training programs.
• Lack of proper documentation to fill the appraisal forms' training need identification content. It is found to be based on the supervising authority's perception and expertise rather than a scientific process. Training wing is also found to be smart enough to send these formats in-time to different departments of OPTCL. As per the observation during the research period it is found that such formats rarely get filled up in proper duration. Hence availability of all the formats from different department faces difficulty.
• OPTCL HRD department perhaps, owes the credit of completion of this process as it is proposed in the training policy. As discussed in the training document these forms get collected in time in each training year from the HRD department. Further in the supervision of the training DGM and AGMs of respective technical centers the training executives prepare a list of desired training programs

for different employees. On the basis of this report the training calendar is expected to be prepared and presented before the director HRD first and then before the CMD of OPTCL for approval.

As observed all the above written procedures are well initiated by the AGMs responsible for both PTC and MTC along with the training managers in a routine format. Hence gaps in execution procedure and irregularity in practice at OPTCL

training wing is observed.

CONCLUSION:
Work well planned is regarded as work half-done. This is the reason for which training need analysis process owes a special position in the total training area. Working on this element is like bleeding in the practice to avoid bleeding at war. Agony is organizations are following this without a perfect mission

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