

WHAT'S YOUR TRAINING MANTRA?

There is a dearth of skilled employees in the current job market, say experts. Even those labelled as 'skilled' are often inadequately skilled. Under such circumstances, HR managers, trainers and organisational heads must devise unique training programmes that help derive quantitative and qualitative results

Take the case of the retail sector where the manpower gaps are huge. Recently, Bharti Wal-Mart, a joint venture between Bharti Enterprises and Wal-Mart, along with Centum Learning took up the challenge and embarked upon a unique training initiative to try and bridge this gap. They used an employability training model, as a result of which over 1000 students have been placed in 20 months. Once numbers are attached to a



training programme, it not only becomes measurable, but also credible. Sanjeev Duggal, CEO and executive director, Centum Learning comments, "Today, India is facing a huge gap in terms of skilled workers, only 4.3 million skilled people are available against a demand of 13 million. Hence, we need a sustainable employability model."

DRIVING RESULTS

While training is definitely an



add-on to the company's reputation and ability to attract employees, the ultimate purpose of training is to drive results. Kamal Karanth, MD, Kelly Services adds, "I think most of the organisations would agree that the purpose of training is to achieve results. Results could be either to allow them to achieve higher retention or it could be directly linked to sales and so on. Companies are using training as a tool to achieve what is important for them. Training has

become so critical that in many organisations, it is directly reported to the top management. Training is structured to achieve results. Another way to focus on results is through training-led analysis. Designing of the training programme is based on performance management feedback; hence, there is a direct correlation with results." With changing times, the focus on training has become more sophisticated, with soft skills forming almost 70 per cent of the

training programmes. How does it impact results? Vivek Dwivedi, associate director, people and change advisory, KPMG, Mumbai feels, "In recent times, leadership development to fuel growth has been one of the most prominent objectives of training initiatives. For training initiatives to yield results, HR managers need to be in sync with their contextual business needs."

MEASURING RESULTS

An essential component of any programme is the post-programme analysis and its effectiveness in achieving goals. The same holds true for training programmes. Nikul Shah, VP, HR and commercial, Omnitech InfoSolutions Ltd shares his thoughts on the same, "Evaluating training is not just about whether new skills have been learnt or performance has improved; it is more than that. To get meaningful information, you need to measure what has improved and in what ways. For measurability, set specific learning objectives right in the beginning. Decide ways to measure the objective. Quantifiable learning objectives

are easy to measure. Learning objectives w.r.t quality or behaviour are more difficult to gauge. For example, if you wanted to measure one's negotiating skills, you might discuss case scenarios by asking

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targeted questions and observing one's work in context. Use feedback from trainees, colleagues and managers to get data for qualitative assessment. For correct post-training analysis, ensure that learning objectives are achievable."

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