

9.2: Employee Development

Learning Objectives

- Differentiate between employee training and employee development
- Evaluate various employee development methods

As described in *Foundations of Human Resource Management*, “employee training is a learning experience that teaches new skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors necessary for successful job completion.”^[1] That is, the objective of training is to develop or enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) relative to an employee’s current position. For example, a person may be trained on departmental processes or how to use task- or department-specific applications or equipment.

In contrast, employee development is learning that benefits the organization broadly. Development involves cultivation of core—generally soft—skills such as critical thinking, communication and leadership. For perspective, compensation research site Payscale’s Compensation Best Practices Report (CBPR) survey indicated that the area HR professionals plan to invest in most heavily in 2019 is employee training and development. Specifically, 23% of respondents identified training and development as their largest investment, followed by recruiting and compensation changes—a tie at 15%.^[2]

Practice Question

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Employee Development Methods



A majority of the training methods mentioned earlier in this module are also applicable to employee development. For example, case studies—used extensively in management and legal training—are a highly effective means of teaching critical thinking and problem-solving skills. To quote Texas Women’s University professor Dr. Laura Trukillo-Jenks, “One of the best practices in teaching and learning is the use of a three-part case study, or a scenario-based story, to help students deepen their understanding of a concept. The three parts of a case study are a scenario-based story that focuses on a specific, hypothetical problem, supporting literature that aligns with the main themes of the story, and guiding questions that help the learner gain the most from understanding the concepts and objectives of the case study by applying critical and higher order thinking skills.”^[3] Role-playing, also mentioned previously, is common in crisis management, emergency response and the military.^[4] Both case studies and role play can also be used to explore complex issues such as ethics and unconscious bias since they provide a safe environment to work through scenarios and build confidence and effective decision-making skills.

Additional employee development methods include the following:

- Committee or special project assignments—Committee or special project assignments promote development of analytical and communication skills and organizational/industry knowledge and provide exposure or opportunities to work with senior leaders
- Classes, conferences and seminars/webinars—Participation in (as an attendee, panelist or presenter) structured learning—in person or online—can build knowledge/expertise, communication and critical thinking skills, industry or functional knowledge and relevant professional networks

? Practice Question

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/18169>

1. DeCenzo, David A., Susan L. Verhulst, and Stephen P. Robbins. *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management*. 12th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2019. ↵
2. Zhao, Jingcong. "Employee Training and Development is the Biggest HR Focus Area in 2019." January 7, 2019. Accessed July 18, 2019. ↵
3. Trujillo-Jenks, Laura. "Guiding Students to Think Critically Using Case Studies." Faculty Focus. February 21, 2014. Accessed July 18, 2019. ↵
4. Buelow, John. "3 Benefits of Making Role-play Part of Training." Training Magazine. February 6, 2014. Accessed July 18, 2019. ↵

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