

## 7: Designing a Training Program

### Learning Objectives

1. Be able to design a training program framework.
2. Understand the uses and applications of a career development program.

The next step in the training process is to create a training framework that will help guide you as you set up a training program. Information on how to use the framework is included in this section.

### Training Program Framework Development

When developing your training plan, there are a number of considerations. Training is something that should be planned and developed in advance.

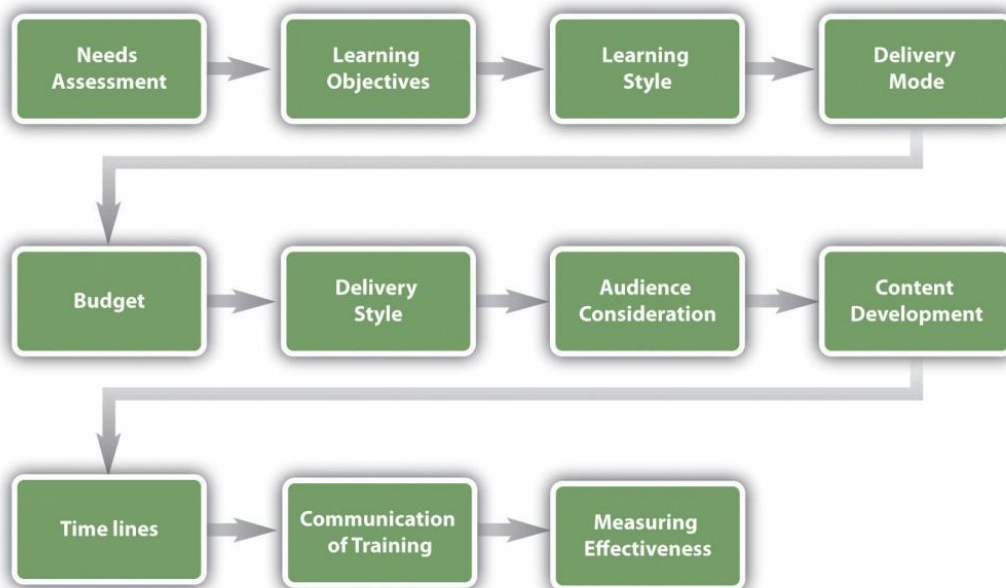


Figure 7.1: Training Program Development Model

The considerations for developing a training program are as follows:

1. **Needs assessment and learning objectives.** This part of the framework development asks you to consider what kind of training is needed in your organization. Once you have determined the training needed, you can set learning objectives to measure at the end of the training.
2. **Consideration of learning styles.** Making sure to teach to a variety of learning styles is important to development of training programs.
3. **Delivery mode.** What is the best way to get your message across? Is web-based training more appropriate, or should mentoring be used? Can vestibule training be used for a portion of the training while job shadowing be used for some of the training, too? Most training programs will include a variety of delivery methods.
4. **Budget.** How much money do you have to spend on this training?
5. **Delivery style.** Will the training be self-paced or instructor led? What kinds of discussions and interactivity can be developed in conjunction with this training?
6. **Audience.** Who will be part of this training? Do you have a mix of roles, such as accounting people and marketing people? What are the job responsibilities of these individuals, and how can you make the training relevant to their individual jobs?
7. **Content.** What needs to be taught? How will you sequence the information?
8. **Timelines.** How long will it take to develop the training? Is there a deadline for training to be completed?
9. **Communication.** How will employees know the training is available to them?
10. **Measuring effectiveness of training.** How will you know if your training worked? What ways will you use to measure this?

## Human Resource Recall

Can you think of a time where you received training, but the facilitator did not connect with the audience? Does that ever happen in any of your classes (of course not this one, though)?

## Needs Assessment

The first step in developing a training program is to determine what the organization needs in terms of training. There are three levels of training needs assessment: **organizational assessment**, **occupational (task) assessment**, and **individual assessment**:

1. **Organizational assessment.** In this type of needs assessment, we can determine the skills, knowledge, and abilities a company needs to meet its strategic objectives. This type of assessment considers things such as changing demographics and technological trends. Overall, this type of assessment looks at how the organization as a whole can handle its weaknesses while promoting strengths.
2. **Occupational (task) assessment.** This type of assessment looks at the specific tasks, skills knowledge, and abilities required to do jobs within the organization.
3. **Individual assessment.** An individual assessment looks at the performance of an individual employee and determines what training should be accomplished for that individual.

We can apply each of these to our training plan. First, to perform an organizational assessment, we can look at future trends and our overall company's strategic plan to determine training needs. We can also see how jobs and industries are changing, and knowing this, we can better determine the occupational and individual assessments.

Researching training needs can be done through a variety of ways. One option is to use an online tool such as SurveyMonkey to poll employees on what types of training they would like to see offered.

As you review performance evaluations turned in by your managers, you may see a pattern developing showing that employees are not meeting expectations. As a result, this may provide data as to where your training is lacking.

There are also types of training that will likely be required for a job, such as technical training, safety training, quality training, and professional training. Each of these should be viewed as separate training programs, requiring an individual framework for each type of training. For example, an employee orientation framework will look entirely different from an in-house technical training framework.

Training must be tied to job expectations. Any and all training developed should transfer directly to the skills of that particular employee. Reviewing the HR strategic plan and various job analyses may help you see what kind of training should be developed for specific job titles in your organization.

## Learning Objectives

After you have determined what type of training should occur, learning objectives for the training should be set. A **learning objective** is what you want the learner to be able to do, explain, or demonstrate at the end of the training period. Good learning objectives are performance based and clear, and the end result of the learning objective can be observable or measured in some way. Examples of learning objectives might include the following:

1. Be able to explain the company policy on sexual harassment and give examples of sexual harassment.
2. Be able to show the proper way to take a customer's order.
3. Perform a variety of customer needs analyses using company software.
4. Understand and utilize the new expense-tracking software.
5. Explain the safety procedure in handling chemicals.
6. Be able to explain the types of communication styles and strategies to effectively deal with each style.
7. Demonstrate ethics when handling customer complaints.
8. Be able to effectively delegate to employees.

Once we have set our learning objectives, we can utilize information on learning styles to then determine the best delivery mode for our training.

## Learning Styles

Understanding learning styles is an important component to any training program. For our purposes, we will utilize a widely accepted learning style model. Recent research has shown that classifying people into learning styles may not be the best way to

determine a style, and most people have a different style depending on the information being taught. In a study by Pashler et al., the authors look at aptitude and personality as key traits when learning, as opposed to classifying people into categories of learning styles. Bearing this in mind, we will address a common approach to learning styles next.

An effective trainer tries to develop training to meet the three different learning styles<sup>1</sup>:

1. **Visual learner.** A visual learner usually has a clear “picture” of an experience. A visual learner often says things such as “I can see what you are saying” or “This looks good.” A visual learner is best reached using graphics, pictures, and figures.
2. **Auditory learner.** An auditory learner learns by sound. An auditory learner might say, “If I hear you right” or “What do you hear about this situation?” The auditory learner will learn by listening to a lecture or to someone explaining how to do something.
3. **Kinesthetic learner.** A kinesthetic learner learns by developing feelings toward an experience. These types of learners tend to learn by doing rather than listening or seeing someone else do it. This type of learner will often say things such as “This feels right.”

Most individuals use more than one type of learning style, depending on what kinds of information they are processing. For example, in class you might be a visual learner, but when learning how to change a tire, you might be a kinesthetic learner.

## Delivery Mode

Depending on the type of training that needs to be delivered, you will likely choose a different mode to deliver the training. An orientation might lend itself best to vestibule training, while sexual harassment training may be better for web-based training. When choosing a delivery mode, it is important to consider the audience and budget constrictions. For example, Oakwood Worldwide, a provider of temporary housing, recently won the Top 125 Training Award for its training and development programs<sup>2</sup>. It offers in-class and online classes for all associates and constantly add to its course catalog. This is a major recruitment as well as retention tool for its employees. In fact, the company credits this program for retaining 25 percent of its workforce for ten years or more. Table 7.1 looks at each of the types of training and suggests appropriate options for delivery modes.

Table 7.1: Types of Training and Delivery

Delivery Method	Type of Training Suggested
On-the-job coaching	Technical training
	Skills training
	Managerial training
	Safety training
Mentor	Technical training
	Skills training
	Managerial training
	Safety training
Brown bag lunch	Quality training
	Soft skills training
	Professional training
	Safety training
Web-based	Technical training
	Quality training
	Skills training
	Soft skills training
	Professional training
	Team training

Delivery Method	Type of Training Suggested
Job shadowing	Managerial training
	Safety training
	Technical training
	Quality training
Job swapping	Skills training
	Safety training
	Technical training
	Quality training
Vestibule training	Skills training
	Professional training
	Team training
	Managerial training
	Safety training
	Technical training
	Quality training
	Skills training
	Soft skills training
	Professional training
	Team training
	Managerial training
	Safety training

## Budget

How much money do you think the training will cost? The type of training performed will depend greatly on the budget. If you decide that web-based training is the right delivery mode, but you don't have the budget to pay the user fee for the platform, this wouldn't be the best option. Besides the actual cost of training, another cost consideration is people's time. If employees are in training for two hours, what is the cost to the organization while they are not able to perform their job? A spreadsheet should be developed that lists the actual cost for materials, snacks, and other direct costs, but also the indirect costs, such as people's time.

## Delivery Style

Taking into consideration the delivery method, what is the best style to deliver this training? It's also important to keep in mind that most people don't learn through "death by PowerPoint"; they learn in a variety of ways, such as auditory, kinesthetic, or visual. Considering this, what kinds of ice breakers, breakout discussions, and activities can you incorporate to make the training as interactive as possible? Role plays and other games can make the training fun for employees. Many trainers implement online videos, podcasts, and other interactive media in their training sessions. This ensures different learning styles are met and also makes the training more interesting.

## Audience

Considering your audience is an important aspect to training. How long have they been with the organization, or are they new employees? What departments do they work in? Knowing the answers to these questions can help you develop a relevant delivery style that makes for better training. For example, if you know that all the people attending the training are from the accounting department, examples you provide in the training can be focused on this type of job. If you have a mixed group, examples and discussions can touch on a variety of disciplines.

## Content Development

The content you want to deliver is perhaps one of the most important parts in training and one of the most time-consuming to develop. Development of learning objectives or those things you want your learners to know after the training makes for a more focused training. Think of learning objectives as goals—what should someone know after completing this training? Here are some sample learning objectives:

1. Be able to define and explain the handling of hazardous materials in the workplace.
2. Be able to utilize the team decision process model.
3. Understand the definition of sexual harassment and be able to recognize sexual harassment in the workplace.
4. Understand and be able to explain the company policies and structure.

After you have developed the objectives and goals, you can begin to develop the content of the training. Consideration of the learning methods you will use, such as discussion and role playing, will be outlined in your content area.

Development of content usually requires a development of learning objectives and then a brief outline of the major topics you wish to cover. With that outline, you can “fill in” the major topics with information. Based on this information, you can develop modules or PowerPoint slides, activities, discussion questions, and other learning techniques.

## Timelines

For some types of training, time lines may be required to ensure the training has been done. This is often the case for safety training; usually the training should be done before the employee starts. In other words, in what time frame should an employee complete the training?

Another consideration regarding time lines is how much time you think you need to give the training. Perhaps one hour will be enough, but sometimes, training may take a day or even a week. After you have developed your training content, you will likely have a good idea as to how long it will take to deliver it. Consider the fact that most people do not have a lot of time for training and keep the training time realistic and concise.

From a long-term approach, it may not be cost effective to offer an orientation each time someone new is hired. One consideration might be to offer orientation training once per month so that all employees hired within that month are trained at the same time.

Development of a dependable schedule for training might be ideal, as in the following example:

1. Orientation is offered on the first Thursday of every month.
2. The second and third Tuesday will consist of vestibule training on management skills and communication.
3. Twice yearly, in August and March, safety and sexual harassment training will be given to meet the legal company requirements.

Developing a dependable training schedule allows for better communication to your staff, results in fewer communication issues surrounding training, and allows all employees to plan ahead to attend training.

## Communication

Once you have developed your training, your next consideration is how you will communicate the available training to employees. In a situation such as an orientation, you will need to communicate to managers, staff, and anyone involved in the training the timing and confirm that it fits within their schedule. If it is an informal training, such as a brown bag lunch on 401(k) plans, this might involve determining the days and times that most people are in the office and might be able to participate. Because employees use Mondays and Fridays, respectively, to catch up and finish up work for the week, these days tend to be the worst for training.

Consider utilizing your company’s intranet, e-mail, and even old-fashioned posters to communicate the training. Many companies have Listservs that can relay the message to only certain groups, if need be.

## Human Resource Recall

What can happen if training is not communicated to employees appropriately?

## Measuring Effectiveness

After we have completed the training, we want to make sure our training objectives were met. One model to measure effectiveness of training is the Kirkpatrick model (Kirkpatrick, 2006), developed in the 1950s. His model has four levels:

1. Reaction: How did the participants react to the training program?
2. Learning: To what extent did participants improve knowledge and skills?
3. Behavior: Did behavior change as a result of the training?
4. Results: What benefits to the organization resulted from the training?

Each of Kirkpatrick's levels can be assessed using a variety of methods. We will discuss those next.



Figure 7.2: Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation

Review the performance of the employees who received the training, and if possible review the performance of those who did not receive the training. For example, in your orientation training, if one of the learning objectives was to be able to request time off using the company intranet, and several employees who attended the training come back and ask for clarification on how to perform this task, it may mean the training didn't work as well as you might have thought. In this case, it is important to go back and review the learning objectives and content of your training to ensure it can be more effective in the future.

Many trainers also ask people to take informal, anonymous surveys after the training to gauge the training. These types of surveys can be developed quickly and easily through websites such as SurveyMonkey. Another option is to require a quiz at the end of the training to see how well the employees understand what you were trying to teach them. The quiz should be developed based on the learning objective you set for the training. For example, if a learning objective was to be able to follow OSHA standards, then a quiz might be developed specifically related to those standards. There are a number of online tools, some free, to develop quizzes and send them to people attending your training. For example, Wondershare QuizCreator offers a free trial and enables the manager to track who took the quiz and how well they did. Once developed by the trainer, the quiz can be e-mailed to each participant and the manager can see how each trainee did on the final quiz. After you see how participants do on the quiz, you can modify the training for next time to highlight areas where participants needed improvement.

It can be easy to forget about this step in the training process because usually we are so involved with the next task: we forget to ask questions about how something went and then take steps to improve it.

One way to improve effectiveness of a training program is to offer rewards when employees meet training goals. For example, if budget allows, a person might receive a pay increase or other reward for each level of training completed.



Training Framework	Plan
Needs Assessment	Formalized New Employee Orientation
Delivery Mode	Vestibule
Budget (per person)	Lunch: \$15 Notebook: \$20
Delivery Style	Discussion, PowerPoints, Icebreaker
Audience	New hires from all departments
Goals and Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to explain company history and structure</li> <li>• Understand operational company policies</li> <li>• Meet department heads</li> </ul>
Timeline	4 hours for training, new employee orientation offered on the 5th and 15th of every month
Communication	E-mail to hiring managers and to new employee
Measurement Method	Interactive team quiz

Training Framework	Plan
Needs Assessment	Sexual harassment training
Delivery Mode	Web based
Budget (per person)	User fee: \$10
Delivery Style	Online modules and online assignments
Audience	Required for all employees
Goals and Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what constitutes sexual harassment</li> <li>• Know what to do if you are sexually harassed at work</li> </ul>
Timeline	1.5 hours, offered every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. and every Thursday at 3:30 p.m. during the month of February
Communication	Company Listserv, announcement to department heads at weekly meeting
Measurement Method	Online end-of-course quiz

Training Framework	Plan
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Needs Assessment	Product training
Delivery Mode	Vestibule
Budget (per person)	Materials only online: \$0
Delivery Style	PowerPoint, Role playing
Audience	Salespeople
Goals and Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the features of product xx</li> <li>• Be able to explain the benefits of product xx</li> </ul>
Timeline	New product release is October 1st, so training will be in September, 1 hour. Delivered during regular weekly sales meeting
Communication	E-mail list message to salespeople, work with sales manager
Measurement Method	Sales figures for product xx

Figure 7.3

Once the training framework has been developed, the training content can be developed. The training plan serves as a starting point for training development.

## Career Development Programs and Succession Planning

Another important aspect to training is career development programs. A **career development program** is a process developed to help people manage their career, learn new things, and take steps to improve personally and professionally. Think of it as a training program of sorts, but for individuals. Sometimes career development programs are called professional development plans.

Table 7.2: Sample Career Development Plan Developed by an Employee and Commented on by Her Manager

Today's Date	February 15, 2012
Employee	Sammie Smith
Current job title	Clerk, Accounts Payable
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop management skills</li> <li>• Learn accounting standards</li> <li>• Promoted to Accounts Payable Manager</li> </ul>
Estimated Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management training</li> <li>• Peachtree accounting software Advanced training</li> <li>• Earn AAAS online degree in accounting</li> <li>• Take tax certification course</li> <li>• Communications training</li> </ul>
Completion Date	Spring of 2014
<b>Manager Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-house training offered yearly: "Reading Body Language," and "Writing Development," and "Running an Effective Meeting"</li> <li>• External Training needed: Peachtree software, AAAS Degree, Tax certification Training Course</li> <li>• Assign Sammie to Dorothy Redgur, the CFO for mentorship</li> <li>• Next steps: Sammie should develop a timeline for when she plans to complete the seminars.</li> </ul> <p>The budget allows us to pay up to \$1,000 per year for external training for all employees. Talk with Sammie about how to receive reimbursement.</p>	



As you can see, the employee developed goals and made suggestions on the types of training that could help her meet her goals. Based on this data, the manager suggested in-house training and external training for her to reach her goals within the organization.

Career development programs are necessary in today's organizations for a variety of reasons. First, with a maturing baby-boom population, newer employees must be trained to take those jobs once baby boomers retire. Second, if an employee knows a particular path to career development is in place, this can increase motivation. A career development plan usually includes a list of short- and long-term goals that employees have pertaining to their current and future jobs and a planned sequence of formal and informal training and experiences needed to help them reach the goals. As this chapter has discussed, the organization can and should be instrumental in defining what types of training, both in-house and external, can be used to help develop employees.

To help develop this type of program, managers can consider a few components (Heller, 2005):

1. **Talk to employees.** Although this may seem obvious, it doesn't always happen. Talking with employees about their goals and what they hope to achieve can be a good first step in developing a formal career development program.
2. **Create specific requirements for career development.** Allow employees to see that if they do A, B, and C, they will be eligible for promotion. For example, to become a supervisor, maybe three years of experience, management training, and communication training are required. Perhaps an employee might be required to prove themselves in certain areas, such as "maintain and exceed sales quota for eight quarters" to be a sales manager. In other words, in career development there should be a clear process for the employees to develop themselves within the organization.
3. **Use cross-training and job rotation.** Cross-training is a method by which employees can gain management experience, even if for short periods of time. For example, when a manager is out of the office, putting an employee "in charge" can help the employee learn skills and abilities needed to perform that function appropriately. Through the use of **job rotation**, which involves a systematic movement of employees from job to job within an organization, employees can gain a variety of experiences to prepare them for upward movement in the organization.
4. **Utilize mentors.** Mentorship can be a great way for employees to understand what it takes to develop one's career to the next level. A formal mentorship program in place with willing mentees can add value to your career development program.

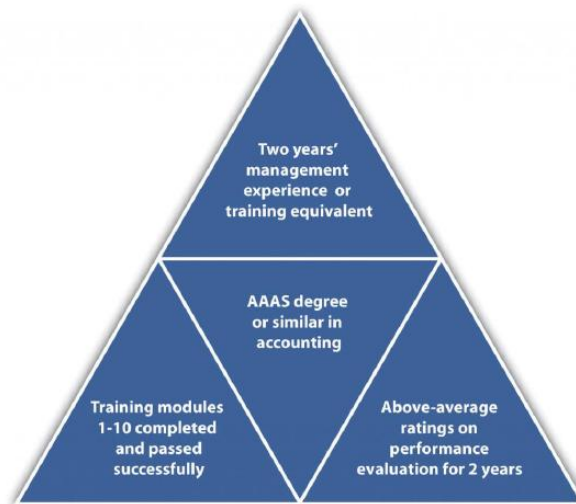


Figure 7.4: Career Development Sample Process to Become an Accounts Payable Manager

There are many tools on the web, including templates to help employees develop their own career development plans. Many organizations, in fact, ask employees to develop their own plans and use those as a starting point for understanding long-term career goals. Then hopefully the organization can provide them with the opportunities to meet these career goals. In the late 1980s, many employees felt that career opportunities at their current organizations dwindled after seeing the downsizing that occurred. It gave employees the feeling that companies were not going to help develop them, unless they took the initiative to do so themselves. Unfortunately, this attitude means that workers will not wait for career opportunities within the company, unless a clear plan and guide is put into place by the company (Capelli, 2010). Here is an example of a process that can be used to put a career development program in place (Adolfo, 2010):

1. Meet individually with employees to identify their long-term career interests (this may be done by human resources or the direct manager).

2. Identify resources within the organization that can help employees achieve their goals. Create new opportunities for training if you see a gap in needs versus what is currently offered.
3. Prepare a plan for each employee, or ask them to prepare the plan.
4. Meet with the employee to discuss the plan.
5. During performance evaluations, revisit the plan and make changes as necessary.

Identifying and developing a planning process not only helps the employee but also can assist the managers in supporting employees in gaining new skills, adding value, and motivating employees.

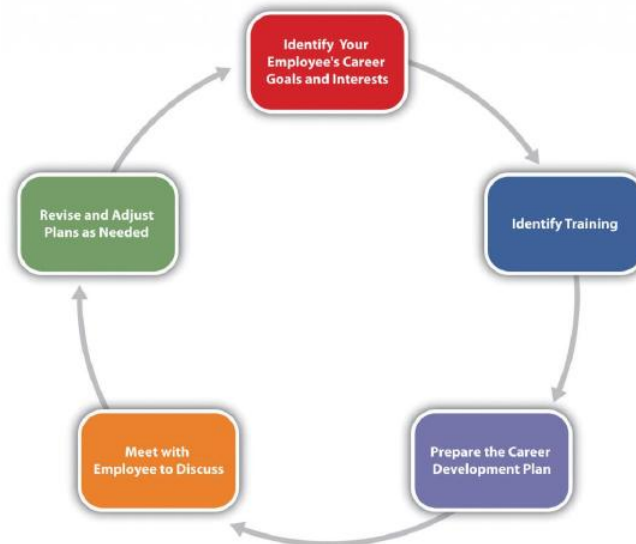


Figure 7.5: Career Development Planning Process

### Key Takeaways

- There are a number of key considerations in developing a training program. Training should not be handled casually but instead developed specifically to meet the needs of the organization. This can be done by a needs assessment consisting of three levels: *organizational, occupational, and individual assessments*.
- The first consideration is the delivery mode; depending on the type of training and other factors, some modes might be better than others.
- Budget is a consideration in developing training. The cost of materials, but also the cost of time, should be considered.
- The delivery style must take into account people's individual learning styles. The amount of lecture, discussion, role plays, and activities are considered part of delivery style.
- The audience for the training is an important aspect when developing training. This can allow the training to be better developed to meet the needs and the skills of a particular group of people.
- The content obviously is an important consideration. Learning objectives and goals for the training should be developed before content is developed.
- After content is developed, understanding the time constraints is an important aspect. Will the training take one hour or a day to deliver? What is the time line consideration in terms of when people should take the training?
- Letting people know when and where the training will take place is part of communication.
- The final aspect of developing a training framework is to consider how it will be measured. At the end, how will you know if the trainees learned what they needed to learn?
- A career development process can help retain good employees. It involves creating a specific program in which employee goals are identified and new training and opportunities are identified and created to help the employee in the career development process.

### Exercises

1. Develop a rough draft of a training framework using Figure 7.1 for a job you find on Monster.com.
2. Write three learning objectives you think would be necessary when developing orientation training for a receptionist in an advertising firm.

3. Why is a career development plan important to develop personally, even if your company doesn't have a formal plan in place? List at least three reasons and describe.

<sup>1</sup>“What's YOUR Learning Style?” adapted from *Instructor Magazine*, University of South Dakota, August 1989, accessed July 28, 2010, <http://people.usd.edu/~bwjames/tut/learning-style/>.

<sup>2</sup>“Oakwood Worldwide Honored by Training Magazine for Fifth Consecutive Year Training also Presents Oakwood with Best Practice Award,” press release, February 25, 2011, *Marketwire*, accessed February 26, 2011, <http://www.live-pr.com/en/oakwood-worldwide-honored-by-training-magazine-r1048761409.htm>.

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