

Course Learning Outcomes for Unit III

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

3. Identify components of major learning, performance, and motivational theories applicable to training development.
 - 3.1 Describe how Social Learning Theory integrates cognitive and behaviorist perspectives.

Reading Assignment

Chapter 3: Learning, Motivation, and Performance

Unit Lesson

Effective training programs are based on theories and principles that explain how people learn as well as what motivates them to learn and perform. Chapter 3 focuses on the major theories related to motivation, performance, and learning which include cognitive and behavioral perspectives.

In order for any training to be effective, the material must be relevant, up to date, and practical. There is nothing more irritating from a trainee perspective than to be offered out-of-date training to be applied to today's real world activities. The training must be relevant to the trainee's occupation or needs, or else there will be little motivation on the trainee's part to pay attention or to practice the training goals once arriving back on the job. The training must be practical and achievable at their employment location as well.

Theories are important when developing training. The way in which people learn depends on many factors both internally and externally. Behavioral theorists pose that people learn based on rewards and punishments. One's environment controls the learning process; we learn based on stimuli and responses. Stimuli are presented, we respond them, and we receive either positive or negative reinforcements (consequences), which results in learning. This relies heavily on the trainer to elicit correct associations between stimuli and responses (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013).

Cognitive theorists pose that processes lead to learning. Experiences create a permanent change in cognition. Thus, the learner controls what material is learned. The trainer affects the learning process less as the learner controls what and how material is learned based on experiences (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013).

Both of these perspectives of learning can be seen in most local law enforcement academy training. States vary in their training requirements for local municipal and sheriff department officers; however, most training is hands-on training at the academy. In order to become legally certified to use less lethal weapons such as a Taser and mace, officers themselves must be tasered and sprayed with mace. This training is supported by arguments that officers should be able to experience what these weapons cause a person to feel so they will not be abused by officers. Thus, this is cognitive learning at its best! The trainee is experiencing the effects of the Taser and mace first hand.

Another issue greatly stressed and practiced at law enforcement academies involves firearms. Certain scores must be attained in firearm training in order to pass the academy. Thus, behavioral learning takes place through the instructor, climate, and activities surrounding this module of academy training. Range shooting occurs during both daytime and nighttime as well as shooting at targets from various distances. However, in the real world, targets usually do not stand still in deadly encounters. Therefore, many police departments are now incorporating the Firearms Training Simulator (F.A.T.S.) training in their areas.

F.A.T.S. is basically a virtual live firearm training program that allows officers to experience "shoot or no shoot" scenarios. The program uses real pistols, rifles, or less lethal weapons hooked up to microprocessors,

which provide hundreds of scenarios that officers may experience on a daily basis. Trainers usually allow the officer to run around the building a few times to increase heart rate to simulate what would really be occurring in the field in such an incident. Officers come back to the training room and a scenario begins to play out. Officers are required to verbally give commands to the scenario and make a judgment as to which actions to take. After the scenario has been completed, the trainer replays the scenario and reviews any errors in judgment made by the officer, which allows the officer instant feedback.

Learners are motivated by several factors internally and externally. Some internal factors include cognition and anxiety. External factors include climates of training and supervisor and/or peer support (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013). Perceptions of oneself have a tremendous impact on training outcomes as well. If an employee does not "measure up" in his or her own mind with other employees due to academic or experience differences, then perhaps he or she will require some counseling beforehand or may require separate training sessions.

For effective training and optimum training outcomes to be met, trainers must know their audience and their learning capacities. Employees vary in their levels of cognition, learning abilities, academic intelligence, skill sets, and self-confidence. Some folks need to have immediate feedback in order to learn; they allow their environments to control their learning experiences. Others need to be hands on and experience the training material in order to learn successfully. An effective trainer will study his or her audience before offering any material.

Reference

Blanchard, P. N., & Thacker, J. W. (2013). *Effective training: Systems, strategies, and practices* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Learning Activities (Nongraded)

Nongraded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study. You do not have to submit them. If you have questions, contact your instructor for further guidance and information.

Read the case analysis titled "Rick's New Job" in the textbook on pages 86-88. On page 88, answer the case question #1.

Course Learning Outcomes for Unit IV

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

4. Define the purpose, theories, and methods used for performing a training needs analysis (TNA).

Reading Assignment

Chapter 4: Needs Analysis

Unit Lesson

When a performance gap (PG) is noted in an organization, and there is a need to determine what caused the gap, training needs analysis (TNA) is a valuable tool in locating that cause. The performance gap is generally flagged as the result of a triggering event. TNA has the potential to identify if training can improve performance, provide guidance for performance levels, indicate who should attend the training, and show possible participants how the training would be useful to them. A TNA can most likely ensure that money spent on training is indeed effective increase motivational levels for employees, and align training expectations and goals with the organization's overall vision and plan.

The TNA consists of three areas: organizational, operational, and personal analysis (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013). Organizational analysis deals with the internal environment and strategies of the organization. This analysis concerns itself with the policies, procedures, issues, potential problems with training, resources available for training, and factors from the organization which may be contributing to employee problems or low morale.

Each month, the lieutenants of the local police department notice that some officers' number of citizen complaints increase more than the norm. Every Friday, an informal meeting is held for officers to come in and voice their concerns about the citizen complaints. Lieutenants notice that only a few of the officers show up at these meetings and usually remain very quiet. Does this indicate that the others officers are not concerned with the number of citizen complaints that are on the increase? This would urge management and HR to conduct a TNA into the organizational analysis of the department to search for areas of the internal work environment that may be contributing to the rise in citizen complaints as well to pull the jackets of the officers who are receiving the unusually high number of citizen complaints to determine possible areas of training and retraining.

The second area of a TNA analysis is operational. This involves researching the KSAs (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) needed to get the job done. This involves reviewing the job descriptions of jobs inside the organization as well as the skills needed for the jobs. What are the needs of employees to be effective in their daily job performances? Much of this information can be gathered by current employees and supervisors. Perhaps job descriptions and training requirements need to be updated. One or two employees in each job level should have input in this process. Perhaps questionnaires as well as oral interviews could be conducted about each job's requirements.

In the above police example, officers at each level under lieutenant should be involved in this task analysis process. Perhaps the department needs to hire more officers or the precincts need to be divided into more manageable geographic locations. Perhaps additional diversity and sensitivity training is needed for officers receiving more of the citizen complaints. Or, once the training analysis is completed, perhaps the department will realize that new officers need more than the current time they have on probationary status. Perhaps they

need to stay with another experienced officer for more than the current term. Policies and procedures may need to be reviewed and modified as well.

The third area of the TNA involves the personal analysis. This involves the employees and the skills, knowledge, and attitudes they possess in order to be successful at their job. There are many ways to measure an employee's job performance: yearly performance appraisals, self-reports, and coworker reports. Job performance should be based on more than one performance appraisal due to possible personality differences and politics. Other problems with performance appraisals include lack of supervisor training on how to use appraisals, lack of opportunity for the supervisor to spend time evaluating the employee's job performance, and poorly developed performance appraisal instruments (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013).

Blanchard and Thacker (2013) discuss the implementation of the 360 degree performance review. In this review process, employees rate themselves, and receive ratings from peers, subordinates, customers, students, and citizens. The police officers in the above example should be rated by their supervisor, their fellow officers, random citizens on their beat, and a self-evaluation.

Employees need retraining on a yearly basis concerning the skills and knowledge necessary to complete their jobs effectively. Cognitive tests, as well as hands on skill tests, should be given frequently to assess employees' knowledge and retention of that knowledge in order to stay successful. In the above police officer example, perhaps training needs to be introduced that refreshes officers on how to handle difficult citizens and a refresher on the use of force continuum. Retraining on diversity, multiculturalism, and sensitivity issues are a must in the police profession. Thus, ongoing in service or contracted training should be included in each year's budget due to the nature of police work.

TNA can be approached either on a proactive or reactive basis. A reactive TNA addresses a problem currently affecting performance in an organization. A proactive TNA addresses a potential future performance problem or requirement.

Proactive TNAs prepare employees for future promotions or transfers into other areas of the organization; they can also prepare employees for changes in their current jobs. Reactive TNAs usually begin with some problem in the organization, perhaps in a specific department. This could include one area of a department or one particular employee's performance which is lacking (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013).

In the above example discussed in this unit, it would appear that perhaps a reactive TNA would be needed immediately to determine the source of the increase in citizen complaints. Maybe it involves only one shift, or one or two officers, which can hopefully be remedied before the problems spread to other officers and other departments.

Proactive and reactive TNAs can be paralleled with proactive and reactive policing. Proactive policing requires police to make their presence known in communities in an effort to deter criminal activity before it is committed. Creating the sense of "the cops are everywhere" in any would-be criminal's mind is proactive police work. In comparison, reactive police work includes police showing up to calls for service after harm/crime has occurred.

Reference

Blanchard, P. N., & Thacker, J. W. (2013). *Effective training: Systems, strategies, and practices* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

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Read the case analysis on page 139 in the textbook. Answer case questions 1 and 2.