



## **The Modern Corporate Trainer-Roles, Responsibilities, Myths and Challenges**

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### **Abstract**

Modern trainers need to possess and use diverse skills while communicating with their trainees. A trainer's job is to make all possible efforts to make learning more effective and interesting. Trainer's today are required to come out of their traditional mindset of just imparting classroom training but the need of the hour is the exploration of innumerable possibilities of utilizing interesting methodologies to impart training. Also, modern day corporate trainers are expected to highlight and justify the actual benefit of their training programs in correlation with the cost incurred for the training imparted.

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### **Introduction**

The role of a Corporate Trainer has evolved over the ages. While the traditional role of a trainer just required them to impart training in a closed environment with conservative classroom setting but in today's context; understanding the roles and responsibilities of a modern trainer requires expanding one's domain and exploring newer avenues in training methodologies, imparting flexible training modules and upgrading their skill set to suit the modern day corporate requirements. Trainers today need to be proactive in their approach and should possess the requisite skill set to influence trainees in a way so that they are able to deliver satisfactory performance on the job and are also prepared to face higher order challenges once they move up the corporate ladder.

### **The Traditional Roles of a Trainer are that of:**

- **A Designer:** A designer adapts training programmes to trainees needs and knows and uses the principles of learning adults. He/she introduces adequate training methods, designs training manual and learning methods and materials.
- **An Organizer:** As an organizer, a trainer needs to learn about the participants and place of training. He/ She needs to design the training materials and arrange the training rooms. During the training, he/she needs to take care of training resources and participants.

- **A Leader:** As a leader, a trainer needs to define the training situation, manage the work of the training group and act towards managing the training goal. A leader understands and controls the group process. He/ she also respond in difficult situations.
- **A Moderator:** As a moderator, a leader uses discussions as a learning method and stimulates engagement of trainees. A leader is one who activates the process of sharing experiences.
- **An Expert:** A trainer is meant to be an expert in his domain and they make use of their expertise and broad knowledge base.
- **An Ally:** As a close confidant, trainees expect the trainer to take good care of them and make them feel safe and secure while divulging their inner fear and setbacks.
- **A Presenter:** A very important traditional role of the trainer is to define the situation of presentation and structure the presentation accordingly. A trainer inspires, tells stories, uses humour and engages the trainees. A trainer needs to prepare proper slides, use effective body language and keeps contact with the audience.
- **A Business Partner:** As a business partner, a trainer needs to adapt the training programme and content to the business requirement of the client.

The aforementioned roles and responsibilities take a traditional take on the Corporate Trainer, however with the changing times and technology, the modern trainer is facing increased challenges in bridging the gap between the perceived expectations of the trainees and the actual training delivery as well as trainer's intentions.

### **The Roles and Responsibilities of the Modern Trainer can be discussed as below:**

- **Content Curation:** The modern trainer has the advantage of using the huge available data on the web. But the problem lies in sorting, analyzing and presenting the already available data in a meaningful way. Content curation does not mean discovering new ideas or creating anything new but a modern trainer needs to have good working knowledge about using the internet or the legal complications of using the already available data.
- **Knowledge of E-Learning activities:** Knowledge of E-learning schedules and activities becomes an absolute necessity for the modern trainer. A modern trainer needs to be appreciative of the E-Learning techniques and methods in order to use them in his training schedules and blend the best of training methods together for his trainees.
- **Analysing and Interpreting the entire picture of imparting training:** The ability to forecast and analyse the entire picture of training will not only be beneficial for the trainer but also for the organization as well as the trainees. This would help the trainer to choose the most effective method of imparting training suiting the budget of the organization.
- **Creating and using visuals for effective delivery:** Nowadays, visuals play a very important role in training delivery. A modern trainer should effectively create and use visuals to make his presentations worth listening to. The visuals need not be artistic but have to be attractive enough to catch attention of the trainees.
- **Should be efficient with oral, written as well as visual communication:** A modern trainer should be well versed with oral, written as well as visual communication skills. While the traditional trainer was expected to be conversant only with oral communication skills and body language but for a modern trainer grammatical knowledge, proper sentence framing, gab for writing along with confident delivery is an absolute necessity.

- **Use the remote learning tools effectively:** A modern trainer needs to understand the use of remote learning tools and should have the knowledge of its usage and application. Right from the primitive remote tools like E-mail to the most updated solutions like virtual online presence, these remote learning tools have widened the scope and horizon for a trainer. A modern trainer has to exude confidence while dealing with non face to face interaction while imparting training.
- **Training evaluation:** Training evaluation is an attempt to identify the effects of a training program and a modern trainer needs to be a pro at calculating the cost –benefit analysis of a training imparted. Training evaluation helps in comparing the post training results to the objectives expected by the trainer, trainees, administrators and management in totality. Without training evaluation, the results of training would not be fruitful.
- **Acts as a Consultant and Innovator:** A modern trainer is more concerned with identifying and analysing business problems and attempting solution for the same through training. Training imparted without any proper objective or goal becomes meaningless in the long run. Also, as an innovator the role of a trainer is to manage changes in the organization and effectively provide performance solutions.

Based on the above mentioned points, one can easily identify that the job of a trainer is not easy. In fact, a trainer today needs to continuously upgrade himself and have a better understanding of the environment surrounding him, the organization and his trainees. Only a proactive approach in training will truly benefit the parties involved and affected by the training program.

### Myths associated with Modern Corporate Trainers:

- **Trainers can bring in a solution for performance problems:** Performance can be affected by many things and one cannot be sure if training is the only solution to all the problems until and unless the problem and the situation has been thoroughly analyzed. Corporate trainers become an easy scapegoat for performance related issues. However, poor management, employee conflicts and inefficient processes and operations can have an equally damaging impact on performance.
- **Trainers impact only learners in training:** Though the first visible impact of training is on the learners but they are definitely not the only people impacted by training. Effective trainers impact the entire organization, from employees to stakeholders to customers etc.
- **Trainers can get across the matter to all learners at a similar pace:** People's ability to take hold of new ideas or thoughts varies and hence many factors influence on how well the learners are going to implement training. Past experience, existing skill set, motivation etc can all integrate and influence the understanding of the training programme.
- **Trainers should not allow mistakes on the part of learners:** Failures and mistakes can be a great learning experience. It's important not to fail at all times. However, if there are lot of opportunities to succeed, it's okay to fail at times. Allowing people to make mistakes makes them find better and superior way to enjoy the fruits of success.

### Challenges associated with the role of a Corporate Trainer:

- **Inconsistent Training due to multiple locations:** Organizations today are not confined to a single location but are widespread across different locations with various branches. Though this expansion is desired but at the same time there can be no guarantee that the training imparted would be the same and consistent across the different branches because the trainers

and trainees would be different in different branches. Also, in such cases the result exhibited by the various branches might be drastically unmatched and different.

- **Flexible and Mobile Workforce:** The long duration of work hours and the increasing number of man hours required to complete a task effectively has added on to the challenges for employees to maintain work –life balance. Work division and flexible work timings have become equally important today. The need of the hour is flexible training courses which help in delivering training in instalments rather than in totality and flexible training programs which can be taken up at learner’s own expediency rather than enforcing rigid training schedules.
- **Reach Global Employees:** In most cases, corporate training is imparted in the global link language i.e. in English. However, global expansion throws in the challenge of imparting training in nations where the population is not familiar with the English language and prefers to stick to their own native language. In such situations training delivered in the English language will not bear the desired fruits.
- **Training should be beneficial to New-Age Learners:** Learners and employees of today would like to have access to short term training programs at their own convenience. The challenge for new age trainers is to be ahead of their trainees in terms of the use of technology and to device training modules which would be easily compatible with smart devices owned and operated by the trainees.
- **Updating Training Modules:** The ease of use of technology and its easy access throws in challenges of its own. Modern trainers cannot have a lethargic approach to learning. The trick is to offer trainees something fresh, different and out of the box which makes attending the training program worthwhile and interesting.
- **Application of skills acquired:** A training program however good would be considered ineffective and superfluous in the absence of lack of application. Training should develop a culture of self managed learning but learning without any positive impact on employee’s productivity should be an absolute no for the organization.
- **Instilling Conflict Management Skills:** An organisation is known by its people and no two persons in the world are similar. Difference of opinion gives rise to conflict in the organization and it might give rise to uncongenial environment. Conflict Management is a crucial skill and can truly be a decisive factor in deciding the future course of action and direction for the organization. Trainer’s today need to be imparting conflict management skills in their training programs.
- **Quantifying Training Effectiveness:** Training requires time, energy and money and it is important for an organization to understand if their investment in training is being spent judiciously and whether it is worth the effort or not. Modern Trainers need to have proper performance metrics to justify the expenditure on training because organizations are not willing to spend money just based on faith. Modern trainers should develop proper Return on Investment (ROI) measures to justify the monetary benefits obtained by the organization over a specified time period in return for a given investment in training program.
- **Improving Learning Effectiveness:** Trainers are charged with developing their employees and they need to understand the nature of the requisite skill set to be imparted to their trainees. For learning to be effective, training strategies need to be developed depending on the learning outcomes they seek to achieve. Different kinds of training to be imparted would require different types of skill set and the trainer needs to have a flair for understanding the requisites of the same.

## Conclusion

Modern Corporate Trainers need to be smarter than their trainees. With the changing profile of work force and corporate sectors hiring more educated and eloquent executives than ever before, the job of modern day Corporate Trainer has become all the more complicated at the same time. Efficient trainers have the ability to train their trainees not only to perform their job efficiently but also to shoulder higher responsibilities in the long run.

In the knowledge based economy, trainers need to keep their trainees updated with the various happenings around. To bring out a more realistic approach to training, it becomes necessary for trainers these days to have an idea about the learning styles of their training group and to innovate and upgrade their training program. It is only through a partnership module in training program where the trainer and trainees are working at tandem that one can expect the true worthwhile results of training to be emitting its true glow.

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### Author's Profile

**Aanzoomaan K Ahmed** is a professional with over 8 years of widespread expertise in the areas of Academics, Training and Research, designing courseware for training and customized modules identifying training gaps for trainees. She is proactive trainer and academician with expertise in training skills, imparting specialized courses in management, coordinating various activities in the college and designing soft skills training programme for college students. She has more than 8 years of teaching and training experience at Graduation as well as Post Graduation level in Management. She has participated in a number of National Workshops, Conferences and Faculty Development Programmes. She has a number of papers to her credit published in National Journals and Magazines. She is a MBA and MPhil in Management and currently pursuing her Ph.D from Seacom Skills University, Bolpur, West Bengal, India.

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