Thesis Paper
on
Effectiveness of Training and Development of Ascent Group

Submitted
for
The partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Business Administration

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Program: Executive Master of Business Administration

Date of submission: September 5, 2022

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The Thesis Paper submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Sonargoan University.
2. The Thesis Paper does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The Thesis Paper does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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LETTER OF SUBMISSION

Date: 05/09/2022

To,

Md. Rasel Hawlader

Coordinator,

Department of Business Administration

Sonargaon University

Subject: Submission of Thesis Paper.

Honorable Sir,

At first I would like to thank you for giving me such an opportunity to prepare a project paper on Human Resource Management practices of **Effectiveness of Training and Development of Ascent Group**. I have the pleasure to inform you that, I have accomplished my internship on Human Resource Management practices of Peerless Technical Services Ltd. I tried to know about the **"Ascent Group"** as per your instruction. I have tried to give my best efforts and concentration during preparing the report.

I would like to thank you for your prolonged support and guidance during my Internship and preparing the report. I have completed this report solely by myself, any part or any documents are not copied directly from anywhere without proper permission and references. And I hope that you would be kind enough to see inconveniences or mistakes that may have appeared beyond my knowledge.

Sincerely Yours,

Md. Elias Hossen

ID: EMBA2102023029

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that, Md.Elias Hossen, ID: EMBA2102023029 is a student of Executive Master of Business Administration program, Sonargaon University. She has completed the project report entitled Effectiveness of Training and Development of Ascent Group" which is done as a requirement of Master of Business Administration degree of the Sonargaon University.

I am pleased to certify that the data and the findings presented in the report in is an authentic work of, I strongly recommend the report presented by Md. Elias Hossen, for further academic session.

I also certify that Md. Elias Hossen bears strong moral character and a very pleasing personality. It has indeed been a great pleasure of me working with her.

I wish her every success in life.

Supervisor,

Md.Rasel Hawlader
Coordinator
Department of Business Administration
Sonargaon University

Acknowledgement

The Thesis Paper opportunity I had with Ascent Group was an excellent opportunity of learning and professional development. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work in close contact with such a talented team. I would like to express profound gratitude to all those people who have guided me and helped me to prepare this Internship Report. First, I would like to express deepest gratitude and thanks to my academic internship supervisor and faculty Mr. Zaheed Husein Mohammad Al-Din for helping me with the selection of the topic of this report and for giving proper guidance and instructions throughout my internship program. I am also thankful to him for always being available when I needed help and suggestions from him for preparing this report. I would like to express special thanks to my organizational supervisor Mr. Mushfiqur Rahman General Manager, Scholastica/SPEED) for giving me clear guidance and instructions on my work activities, for making me feel welcome and also for being an excellent mentor. I am thankful to other employees of Ascent Group for being friendly and cooperative with me during this internship program.

Executive Summary

This report was written for the fulfillment of my Internship Program with Sonargaon University. I completed my internship with Ascent Group, specifically with the Training and Development team of Ascent group, as an Operations Intern.

The objective of this study is to measure the Effectiveness of the Training and Development Process of Ascent Group. The model used to measure such was Kirkpatrick's model. The methods used to collect data for this study were Observation, Unstructured interview taken through telephone of an Academic Supervisor of Scholastica and prior lecturer of SPEED, Active Participation and secondary data found through the internet.

Training and Development is the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitude that increases competencies. It has been proven that Training and development is more beneficial to companies than it is to employees, since competent employees equal to more effective and efficient performance. Ascent Group places heavy emphasis on Training and development as well. This practice has managed to keep Scholastica relevant and maintain its reputation in the market for over 40 years.

During my internship, I learned that SPEED, the Training and Development team of Ascent Group, uses a combination of feedback forms and tests taken at different stages to determine the effectiveness of their training. These data from the feedback forms are later input as organized information, and are used to evaluate where they need improvement.

According to the information I was able to collect from the HR department of Ascent Group, and my own personal observation, the overall results from the first three stages of the Kirkpatrick's model are positive. The results show that trainees in average all enjoy the training sessions, learn from it, and are able to transfer it to their daily work and improve their performance.

Keywords: Effectiveness; Relevant; Improvement; Transfer

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List of Acronyms

HR	Human Resource
T&D	Training and Development
AG	Ascent Group
SU	Sonargoan University
KSA	Knowledge, skill and attitude

Chapter -1 Introduction

Student Information: Student Name, ID, Program, and Major/Specialization.

Student Name : Md. Elias Hossen

ID : EMBA 2102023029

Program : Executive Master of Business Administration

Major : Human Resource Management

Internship Information: Period, Company name, Department/Division, Address.

Company Name : Ascent Group

Department : Finance

Address : House 3D, Road 2A, Block J, Baridhara, Dhaka 1212.

Internship Company Supervisor's Information

Name of company Supervisor : Mr. Mushfiqur Rahman

Position : General Manager (GM)

Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

I was assigned as an intern at the Operations Department of Ascent Group under the supervision of Mr. Mushfiqur Rahman.

An Operations Department of a company ensures smooth and efficient running of operations and delivery of consistent quality. As an Operations Intern at Ascent Group, specifically of the Training and Development team, I had the opportunity to observe and learn how they target specific needs of the company and fulfil them to maintain the overall quality of the company. My work was to assist & facilitate day to day activities of my team. I worked under the guidance, and often reported to, Officer Sumana Afrin and Junior Officer Nihad Jahan. I supported my team by researching for content for the courses they conducted on language and soft skills both within the organization and for external clients. I often helped organize those resources according to the organization's fixed format by either creating PowerPoint slides, articles or making worksheets using MS word. I also assisted to keep client's data up to date.

Some of my regular tasks included:

Creating materials for online courses

I regularly searched the internet for interesting articles, games, pictures and videos for the online classes SPEED was launching. I was given certain topics, and I would look for content and get them approved by my superiors. I assembled and formatted those materials, made PowerPoint slides and other activities for the courses. I researched for more platforms where online classes or materials could be shared in an organized manner.

Researching for materials and creating worksheets

SPEED conducted training sessions almost every day for different organizations or subsidiaries of AG on language or soft skills. Since they constantly update their materials according to training objectives and level of difficulty, one of my tasks was to look for new resources online and format materials accordingly.

I often helped assess the learner's outcomes and input those data on MS excel.

Table 1: A list of my weekly activities

Week	My activity
Week 1	Commencement of Internship,introduction andice breaking.
Week 2	Helped look for resources for worksheets, created some materials for Language course.
Week 3	Searched for resources for ongoing Language courses, made materials for worksheets, started research for the launch of online courses.
Week 4	Browsed the internet for interesting content for Google Classroom courses. Looked for more websites to share materials for online classes.
Week 5	Assisted with making grammar worksheets. Created effective and appealing PowerPoint slides for learners.
Week 6	Assessed papers of participating trainees and recorded scores using MS Excel. Corrected PowerPoint slides as per feedback. Continued research for online courses content and more websites to share materials on.
Week 7	Searched for more educational platforms to share materials for online classes. Assisted a meeting with clients. Recorded scores of exam assessments using MS Excel. Created report of trainee results for HR.
Week 8	Sorted saved materials for online classes under supervision of Junior officer. Started Working on creating materials for online classes.
Week 9	Worked on creating interesting PowerPoint slides for online courses. Learned how to do animations using MS PowerPoint. Made corrections to another PowerPoint slides for a class lecture according to supervisor's instructions.
Week 10	Searched for content for internal training session on Leadership. Worked on creating content for online courses. Recorded test scores.
Week 11	Started working from home due to the outbreak of novel Corona virus. Worked on creating PowerPoint slides, quizzes and assignments for online courses.
Week 12	Worked on creating PowerPoint slides, quizzes and assignments for online courses.

Week 13	Searched for interesting and engaging worksheets, quizzes, videos and other various types of content that could be used for online courses. End of Internship.

Internship Outcomes

Student's Contribution to the company

During my interview for the intern's position, I was told that interns of AG were treated like full time employees. True to that, I wasn't tied to menial or irrelevant tasks, but rather I was always included and often assisted in all the projects my team worked on. I assisted my superiors in their day to day activities as well as the projects they worked on. A lot of my work included browsing the internet to search for unique and interesting resources. I was often praised for my work. I haven't received any complaints or expression of dissatisfaction from any of my coworkers, and I have tried my level best to perform my job well and abide by the company rules.

Benefits to the student

I have been benefitted in various ways by my internship with Ascent Group.

Technical Skills

My assigned tasks required me to get comfortable with MS office applications. I was able to improve my current knowledge and skills of MS office, as well as learn advanced applications through practice or with the help of my superiors. I also learned how to navigate on certain websites like Blogger.com, Google Classroom and Ted-ed.

Organizational Behavior

I learned how to behave in an office environment professionally. I had to learn the work culture and respect it, maintain deadlines, as well as learn to address my colleagues and supervisors.

Achieving results

During my first few weeks at Ascent Group, I could not always deliver my work properly. However as time progressed, I learned from my supervisor and colleagues how to address each issue and get them done. I learned to keep the end goal in mind, always attempt to relate if I would enjoy the materials I was delivering to the learners myself, and how to work in an organized manner.

Interpersonal Skills

During my time as an intern, I learned how to speak clearly and respectfully with my colleagues. Since I worked with a team, it was always important to speak clearly to make sure we were working in the same direction. I always updated my supervisor about where I was with my work or if I needed any feedback to ensure I was heading at the right track.

Personal Development:

This internship has not only helped improve my skills and knowledge, it has also developed my cognitive skills. During my interview, my supervisor said to me that the team I would be working on is extremely positive-minded. Working with this organization has taught me how to always think positively. It has taught me to address all issues and my peers in a positive manner.

I have learned how to ‘work’. This job helped me develop the habit of waking up early each day to build the stamina to stay at office till evening. It has taught me how to take on per task and complete it properly.

Problems/Difficulties

I faced a minor difficulty while my internship with AG. It wasn't an organizational issue, but rather a personal one. Since my office is at a great distance from my home, commuting daily was quite time consuming and at times inconvenient. However, the problem wasn't big enough to de-motivate me from my work.

I had to complete the last few weeks of my internship from home due to the outbreak of novel Coronavirus. This created communication distance with my team and often caused delay in work.

Recommendations to the company for future internships

Recommendations I would give to the company for future internships are:

1. To use social media to post for vacancies as well as internal University portals. I found AG's internship announcement through OCSAR of BU, however a majority of my peers weren't aware of this internship opportunity, as I discovered later while discussing, or of the fact that Scholastica hires interns at all.

   Youth today depends heavily on social media to look for jobs and internships. There are University specific groups on Facebook which AG could use to attract a larger pool of candidates.

2. The company could also organize an orientation for interns. It could be an hour long event to just introduce them to the organization policies. I believe it could help interns get better accustomed and help with first day 'jitters'.

3. AG could mandate interns to keep a personal journal. This could help interns with keeping track of their own tasks as well as help the company track interns' progress better.

Chapter 2: Profile of the Organization: Overview, Operations and a Strategic Audit

Introduction

I completed my internship with AG. This group of companies consists of a few subsidiaries – the most famous of them being Scholastica. My contract with them was for 3 months. I started my internship on January 15th. For the ten weeks of my internship, I worked 9am to 5pm at their Gulshan 2 campus. The last three weeks of work were observed from home due to the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus.

Objective

To get a clear understanding of the company's background and function of departments.

Methodology

The majority of the data for this part of the report is collected through the websites of the company – which is secondary data. Parts of the information, especially those regarding the internal work of the departments, are collected through observation and active participation – which is primary data.

Scope

The scope of the study is to get first hand knowledge about the functionality of a renowned private company of Bangladesh

Limitation

Due to the issue of confidentiality, a breadth of information had to be held back.

Overview of the company

The History of Scholastica

The beginning of AG started from the birth of Scholastica. In the summer of 1977,

Mrs. Yasmeen Murshed established 'Scholastica Tutorial' in a two-storied building in Dhanmondi with the vision to create a school that will deliver high standard education using English as the medium of instruction.

Since then, it has become 'Scholastica', the school which started with a handful of students, today expanded to become one of the largest and highly-esteemed schools in Bangladesh with several campuses spread throughout the city. Scholastica is currently managed by Syeda Madiha Murshed, who is the appointed Managing Director.

Aim and Vision of Scholastica

Aim:

Scholastica aims to develop intellectual and creative, moral and disciplined individuals with positive attitude and healthy self-esteem, who have the skills and abilities to meet global challenges and become upstanding citizens.

Vision:

Scholastica has a vision of excellence. The management of the school pursues development and improvement relentlessly.

Beginning of Ascent Group

Over the years, Scholastica has developed remarkably. It has managed to fulfill Mrs. Yasmeen Murshed's vision by striving for the highest standards in education and

emphasizing on the development of their students through sports, arts and all kinds of other extra-curricular. From it also emerged a group of companies – AG.

With the introduction of this Group, the entire management of this organization had to adapt and learn to conduct operations with a corporate mindset. It operates in retail, technology, design and construction, training, and transportation industries.

Table 2: A list of subsidiaries of Ascent Group

Office and Home Solutions (OHS) Private Limited – provides architectural, construction and interior design services.
Services for Professional Education and Enterprise Development(SPEED) Limited – a professional training center.
Printcraft Company Private Limited - a printing company.
Scholastica Transport Services (STS) Private Limited – provides transportation services.
Etcetera Bangladesh Private Limited - a food and beverage company.
Imagine Technologies Bangladesh Limited - a software development company.
Ignite Publications Limited - a publishing house.
Coffee World – a coffee house in Dhaka city.

Mission and Vision of Ascent Group

Mission:

AG's mission is to work hard to have a positive effect on the lives of their customers, suppliers and employees. It aims to achieve this by: Providing the highest quality in the services and goods it provides.

Vision:

AG's vision is to be an invaluable partner to their customers, associates and suppliers, to be a world-class solutions-provider, and to be a leader in the industries they serve.

SPEED

SPEED, a subsidiary of Ascent Group, stands for Services for Professional Education and Enterprise Development. It is the T&D team of AG. SPEED is an education and training centre that provides courses to develop English Language, and Corporate Professional Development for professionals in numerous sectors including academic, corporate and retail.

This company began in 2005, by 2006 it was granted as a registered centre by Cambridge International Examinations. Since then, they have conducted trainings in more than 40 institutions for over 10,000 professionals.

The list of their partners continues to grow every day. SPEED focuses on developing relevant skills and abilities that is useful and applicable practically.

Mission and Vision of SPEED

Mission:

SPEED's mission is to provide training that incorporates international best practices.

Vision:

SPEED's vision is to be the premiere resource for the learning and development of professionals in Bangladesh.

Management Practices

The department of HR of AG plays a massive role in the culture and growth of the company. My first introduction to this company was through an HR personnel who was responsible for overlooking my recruitment process. Her professionalism, as well as kind nature, made me feel comfortable and like the environment of the company. Ever since I started my internship, I saw a reflection of her behaviour in every other employee, which only goes to emphasize the role of HR in the organization.

The HR department is also responsible for recruiting, screening, evaluating the employees as well as handling compensation. Their management is extremely layered and organized. During my internship, I have also been part of tours and outings arranged by HR for refreshment but with the underlying purpose of team building.

Company Culture

On my very first day my supervisor conveyed to me that the team I will work for is extremely positive, encouraging and give room for mistakes. At the same time, they expect honesty, hard work and pro-active employees. AG thrives on team work. They constantly strive to achieve high quality service.

My colleagues were all helpful and friendly. From the first day, I was included in all conversations and was being introduced as a team member of SPEED. There was a lot of flexibility and support from my supervisor. I had the space to make mistakes and learn from them. My superiors constantly encouraged me to be more creative, come up with better ideas and improve my overall performance.

AG has an extremely accepting and healthy environment. The company focuses a lot on growth and development, at the same time it allows employees to take a breather when needed.

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct is a guideline that defines the rules of how business is conducted as well as personal interaction between employees. All employees of AG need to sign Code of Ethics and Conduct upon their joining of the company and they need to abide by it.

The guideline is there to maintain good relationships between employees and preserve the company's reputation of fair dealings. These rules and their implementation shape a healthy company culture and is a means to solve conflicts.

Hiring and Recruitment

My recruitment process as an intern consisted of three stages. First was an interview, followed by a written and practical test, then I attended another interview with the person who would eventually be my Company Supervisor.

AG offers a diverse career prospect. They search for candidates who shares similar values, has ambition for a successful career and enthusiasm to develop.

They give similar effort to retain employees as they give during hiring. AG value high performers and they provide ample opportunities for growth – both personal and career wise

Employee Evaluation

AG constantly evaluates their employee performance to maintain the quality of their service. Each employee is accountable to their supervisors. Regular meetings are held between supervisors and management where employee performance is discussed.

Depending on the output of employees, it is the HR department that decides who needs training and on what.

Team Building

Team Work is an important part of AG, which is why heavy emphasis is placed on team building. The HR department regularly hosts company outings, picnics or retreats to refresh employee minds and develop strong relations. Management of AG not only promotes team work, but they encourage it.

Marketing Practices

Marketing is a means of delivering the information of a product or service, its availability, quality and use to its targeted customers in such a way that piques interest to consume it. The purpose of this department is to build relationship with its customers and to maintain them.

The marketing team is the bridge between a customer and its company. It engages them by monitoring their interests and behavior with the company's product or service as well as its competitor's.The marketing team of Ascent Group monitors its social media pages and websites.

Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

The Finance and Accounting department of AG keeps record of all the transactions that take place in the company. These records are then used to determine whether the company is at profit or loss, then subsequently for budgets and forecasting. This department is responsible for tracking Accounts Payable and Receivable. They also ensure that employees are paid correctly and within time, at the same time they monitor and ensure no financial fraud is being committed by any employee.

Operations Management and Information System Practices

The Operations Department of a company deals with planning, organizing, and supervising the manufacturing and delivering of products and services. It ensures that a company can efficiently take its input and process them into output.

As an Operations intern, I was most concerned with the workings of this department. As a service providing company, the Operations Department of AG is heavily involved in customer satisfaction. This department, specially SPEED, deals directly with customers. To maintain quality service, this department ensures that the service provided is timely and consistent.

SPEED's role in Operation Management

SPEED offers AG employees regular trainings on various topics – like language, teaching skills etc. to ensure that they are providing consistent service to their customers. Since no two customers are like, this department also makes sure that each customer – whether internal or external – is getting a service that is tailored to fit to their needs. As an example, SPEED always customizes their materials according to who they are providing training to. If they are training teachers then they include content regarding teaching, if they are training nurses then they include content regarding hospitals.

Industry and Competitive Analysis

Education Industry of Bangladesh

Education is the backbone of a nation. It is through education that a country can get rid of poverty and propel into its peak. Education increase people's competencies, knowledge of environment and politics, and the intellect to think of its sustainability.

Education has several stages – primary, secondary and higher. In the primary and secondary stages, focus should be on shaping students' minds, teaching them behavior and ingrain disciplines that will develop a knowledgeable and morally adept adult. In higher stages, there are two parts to education - one is to arm students with competencies that will prepare them for

their careers, the second is to make them aware and sustainable development oriented. Institutions in Bangladesh should aim to educate students about Society, Economics and SDG's so that they not only became quality employees, but also a responsible citizens concerned with its development – that is what the country is in dire need of currently.

The current education system of Bangladesh is highly subsidized by government. The government currently funds several school, colleges and Universities – even some privately owned ones. According to a law passed, secondary education is free of cost for students between the ages of six and eighteen. In the tertiary education sector, the government also funds more than 15 state universities through the University Grants Commission. Bangladesh completely follows the objectives of Education For All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and international declarations.

Along with public and private institutions, education institutions can also be categorized by religion. There are some school, colleges and even Universities that adhere to a religious system for their curriculum.There are also English Medium Schools, which follow the British board of education.

SWOT Analysis of Scholastica



Figure 1: SWOT Analysis of Scholastica

SWOT Analysis is strategy planning technique that lets a company understand their position in the industry and decide on what the next strategic moves should be that will bring them ahead of their competitors by assessing on these four categories:

Strength

Scholastica's most prominent strength is its **brand name**. It has developed a good reputation of providing quality education. It is, till date, considered to be one of he most respected English Medium schools in Dhaka.

Because it has already developed a reputation for itself, Scholastica gets a **huge pool of candidates** for recruitment. This allows them to choose from the best talents of the country as their employees. Scholastica has a **strong alumni base, which** consists of famous and successful candidates. This provides current and future students with a broad network and more increased recognition.

They also have their own **campus** with excellent infrastructure and modern facilities like gym and swimming pool.

Weakness

Due to its popularity, Scholastica accepts a large number of students per year. Too large of a student body runs the risk of threatening the quality of attention each student receives.

Opportunity

Aurora International School, which is Scholastica's sister concern, is a private school which is striving to achieve the standard of schools such as International School Dhaka. It only offers primary level classes so far, and has the opportunity to grow and offer classes till A 'Levels.

Threat

There are several English Medium schools that have been operating for a similar duration as Scholastica and provide similar services. So **competition** is high for them.

English Medium schools in Bangladesh are often **prejudiced** against by government run educational institutions. This can prevent students from getting admission into some of the top Universities in the country.

Summary and Conclusions

Education system of Bangladesh is highly subsidized and layered. The industry has grown tremendously over the years, but it still has room for improvements. This country requires for .

institutions to focus on shaping intelligent and intellectual individuals who are competent as

well as responsible citizens. Scholastica is one of the oldest and well reputed English Medium Schools in the country. Ascent Group works in an organized manner and its departments are all in coherence.

Recommendations

1. AG should try to make their marketing team more functional by focusing on attracting new customers as well as maintaining old ones.

2. AG should ensure that the marketing team is trying to create a larger social media presence since that could be used to keep parents constantly updated.

3. Scholastica should strictly monitor the number of student intakes. Otherwise this could make the campus congested, classes difficult to handle and overall quality of service to reduce.

Chapter 3: Litetature Review

Group Introduction

Scholastica's Role in Society

Scholastica was one of the first institutions to bring a new phenomenon to Bangladesh - English Medium Schools. These schools provided education following the curriculum of

British Board of Education, and even allowed students to sit for examinations in their country of residence. Scholastica has built a reputation for itself as one of the best English Medium Schools. They aim to provide quality education that would result in the most knowledgeable and well behaved students whom are also responsible citizens. They strive to achieve this by hiring excellent educators and being able to provide the best facilities for their students –

including well-equipped campuses, transportation, a functional counselling unit, a successful Student Placement Program and many more.

Scholastica was also the first English Medium School to provide facilities to conduct O' Levels and A' Levels examinations in campus so that students wouldn't have to anticipate about commute, along with the stress of exam.

Despite being an English Medium School, Scholastica places strong emphasis on Bengali. Not only do they provide lessons on the Language, but students are also encouraged to celebrate and cherish the Bengali culture through teaching of Bangladesh's history, as well as annual celebrations of national festivals.

Scholastica alumni have achieved success both within and outside the country - starting from getting admitted to some of the top Universities to securing highly sought after jobs.

With the emergence of English Medium Schools, rose a new way of intensifying the gap between social classes in Bangladesh. Not all English Medium students are wealthy, and not all Bengali Medium students are from Middle to Lower class; however, the high admission and annual fees of schools like Scholastica definitely creates a boundary that mostly Upper Middle Class and the Upper Class can afford to overcome; thus, encouraging the stereotype.

Definition of Training and Development

T&D is the process of acquiring the KSA that increases competencies. These include session or activities, the purpose of which is to improve employee's performance. T&D also increases employees' confidence and job satisfaction. It has been proven that it is more beneficial to companies than employees, since competent employees equal to more effective and efficient performance. Companies these days are focusing more and more towards this function because T&D has become an important tool in sustaining in our dynamic and global economy. Even though training and development are often used synonymously, they actually fulfill two different purposes.

Training

Trainings are often organized by organizations to arm employees with the KSA's required to do the job they currently held. It is the bridge that overcomes the gap between expected performance and actual performance.

Development

Development is the process of preparing employees for the roles they need to take in the future. It is an educational process and often can be a form of self-assessment. Development sessions are mostly for people in high managerial positions.

Perception of Training and Development in Ascent Group

AG places heavy emphasis on T&D. They do not view it as a cost, but rather an investment. Their idea is that if a company invests in an employee, this makes the employee feel valued by the company. It increases loyalty towards the company, increases job satisfaction and thus increase retention.

T&D also makes employees more able to do their jobs. This improves performance and subsequently results in better delivery of service. Continuous improvement is important to stay relevant in the market since the competition is higher than ever. T&D is an important function of the Operations Department because it eases employees through transitions.

AG understands that having a permanent T&D team benefits the company in the long run. It increases retention, reduces waste, equips employees for the future and enables a company to successfully beat competition – all of which works to actually save money for the company.

SPEED, the T&D team of AG, mainly offers two kinds of courses – English Language and soft skills. Two of their ongoing courses include – a course on Leadership for selected AG employees and an English Language course for Apollo Hospital.

Training Design Phase of Ascent Group

Training Design actually determines what training looks like. It is at this stage the objectives, training materials, methods of training and even the trainers are selected.

The first step to designing a successful training program is to determine its objectives. And it is done by using these inputs:

Learning Theory

SPEED understands people learn best through practice. So by keeping their lecture short or nonexistent, they focus on letting students practice though worksheets or activities.

Training Needs

Training needs are dictated by the HR department according to what they find employees to be lacking.

Organizational Constraint

The budget of the clients or the location of the training can often cause restrictions.

Determining Factors that Facilitate learning

At the design stage, it is crucial to take in consideration the factors that have an effect on trainee's learning.

Individual Differences in KSA's

Trainees might have different levels of KSA's at the beginning because of their backgrounds. SPEED takes a placement test before starting course. According to the test results they place trainees in different levels – Pre-beginner, Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced - and takes classes accordingly. This method is more expensive, however it ensures everyone can learn at their own pace and guarantees a higher rate of success of learning.

Differences in learning styles

SPEED uses a combination of visual aids, games, worksheets and audio clips for each class. Whether a trainee is a visual learner or an intuitive learner, this ensures there is something for everyone.

The Physical Environment

This is the factor SPEED has least control over. Classrooms are mostly provided by the clients. Trainings are sometimes held in SPEED's own campus. The Physical Environment can play a huge role in trainee's learning. SPEED makes sure the classrooms are free of any distracting objects and are at optimum temperature. However, if there is a construction going on outside, or if the room provided by clients do not have fire escapes and that causes anxiety in trainees and cause distraction – that is out of their hands.

Training Development and Implementation of Ascent Group

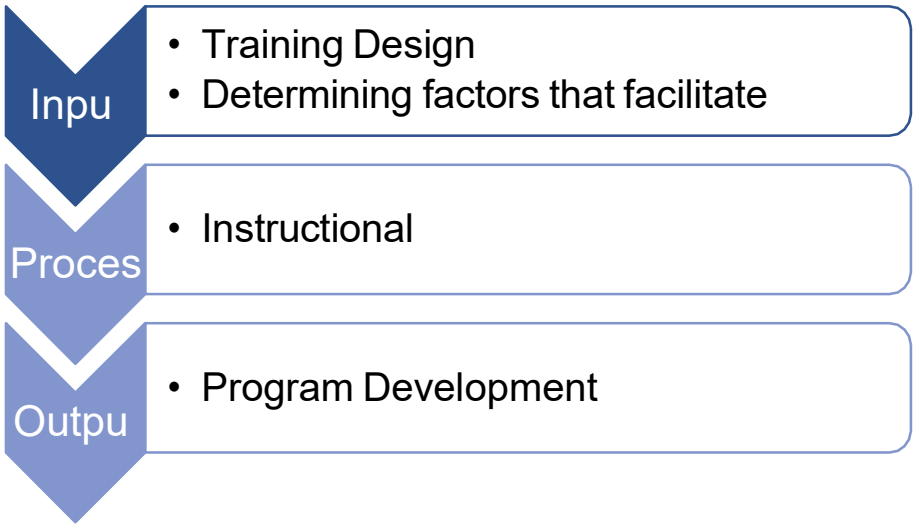


Figure 2: Development Phase of Training

Taking the Training Design as input, an **Instructional Strategy** is laid out. It is a guideline of how the training session will be conducted. It contains teaching methods, equipment, trainers, facilities etc. that will be used in the training.

When the Instruction Strategy is presented in an official written form, it is then called **Program Development Plan**.

At this stage, these are some of the components that SPEED takes care of.

Materials and Equipment:

This may include posters, props, markers, pens etc. whatever is needed according to the training session.

Trainer's Manual:

It is a guideline on how to take the training. This includes which activity comes after which, the duration of each etc.

Seating Arrangement:

There are two kinds of seating arrangement SPEED generally uses for their trainings:

Multiple Semi Circle

This is the ideal set up for classes. It gives students the opportunity to interact with each other and ample desk space for games and teamwork.. Trainer does lose some control over class with this type of setting, but it enables trainers to go around the classroom and help students individually.

Multiple Rectangle

The benches and chairs are usually provided by the party providing the training space, so at times SPEED does not have control over it. During some sessions this kind of seating arrangement is used if the class size is big. This seating still serves the same purpose as multiple Semi Circle. The benefit of this is. It allows more chairs in the room, thus accommodates more trainees.

Taking inputs from the development phase, the **implementation phase** is activated.

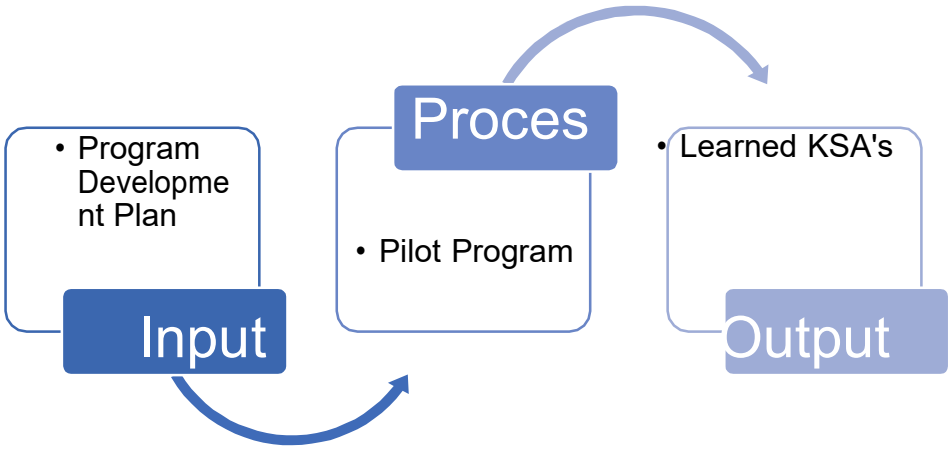


Figure 3: Implementation phase of training

The output from development phase is actually used at this stage and training program is launched.

Training Methods used by Ascent Group

Lecturette

SPEED rarely uses traditional lectures as a method of teaching, However, if taking classes for Pre-beginner or Beginner, or where a briefing is needed, the teacher will take some time to explain the topic to trainees before they can start classwork. For Intermediate learners, trainers give them light reading which never exceeds more than 20 minutes.

Discussion

Unlike lecture, discussion is a two way flow of communication. The trainer presents information, but the trainees participate as well. When the topic of the class is something everyone is familiar with, for example –an English course for Advanced Learners, there is no need to give a lecture. So the trainers just activate background knowledge using Discussion before continuing with course.

Games and Simulations

SPEED uses several different kinds of activities for their classes, depending on the course.

Business Games

This is a type of game where real life industry, companies or teams are simulated. This technique is used when the training is on a soft skill or on Leadership.

Inter-company games:

Trainees are divided into teams that represent 'organizations' in the same industry. They are asked to **compete** in a marketplace and have to make strategic decisions. The purpose of this game is to teach employees how decisions can affect each other.

Intra-company games:

Trainees are divided into teams that represent 'units' within the same company. They are then asked to make strategic decisions for the company. The purpose of this game is to teach employees to cooperate and promote **team building.**

In-basket technique

Trainees are given a basket where all the tasks of a particular job are written. They are then asked to sort the tasks according to priority. Their answers are then compared to that of a real holder of that job. The purpose of this game is to teach **decision making** and **time management**.

Case study

Case studies are real or made up business problems that are presented to trainees in written or video form. Trainees are then asked to come up with solutions. There is no right or wrong answers in case studies. The purpose of this is to see how a **trainee responds to a situation** and to measure **creativity**.

Role playing

Trainees are given a scenario and assigned different roles. This type of game requires trainees to physically act out the scenes. Role playing is not only used to develop decision making skills or to teach how to handle customers, but SPEED also uses it for their language courses. Trainees are given scenarios they are likely to face in real life and then they have to come up with the dialogues to practice their speaking skills.

Objective

The objective of the report is to study the Training and Development Process of Ascent Group and Measure its effectiveness.

Significance

The findings of this report will be useful to the following parties.

Sonargaon University

SU can use this report to conduct further studies on this company or this industry.

Ascent Group

AG can use this report to view their practices from a fresh perspective. This report, and the recommendations provided, will give them an opportunity to improve and grow.

Students

Students of SU and other Universities can use this report to study this company or industryand write future reports using it as a reference.

Limitations

1. Due to maintaining confidentiality, certain information could not be released.
2. Due to the outbreak of the novel Coronavirus, the last few weeks of internship had to be completed from home. The distance in communication with colleagues created difficulty to obtain certain information.
3. The Kirkpatrick model assumes that greater rating is equivalent to successful learning; which is untrue.
4. The Kirkpatrick model depends on trainee's evaluation – which can vary according to mood, personal choice etc.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary research has been used to conduct this study.

The first two chapters of the report are heavily dependent on secondary research. The third chapter is written basing more on primary research.

For secondary research, the websites of AG were used as well as a few online articles and journals relevant to my topic.

For primary research, several methods were used.

Methods used for primary research

Observation

During my time as an intern of AG, I had the opportunity to observe and receive first hand information about the processes of AG. Most of my work revolved around the Training Design and Development phases of their training sessions, thus, giving me the ample opportunity to see how those two phases were carried out.

Unstructured interview taken through telephone

An Academic Supervisor of Scholastic, and prior lecturer of SPEED, was interviewed for this study. The questions were all open ended and were regarding the Teaching Methods used by SPEED. Since the interviewee is also a Supervisor of Scholastica, questions regarding the Behavior Level for the Kirkpatrick model was also asked.

Active Participation

As an employee of AG, I was involved in launching and ensuring smooth operation of the training programs. I helped set up the classrooms when training was conducted in SPEED's campus, giving me knowledge about how they liked to set up their tables and why. While creating the materials, I had the opportunity to learn what they focused on while creating materials, how they made their content relevant and interesting while maintaining the

objectives of the training. I also helped with input of data of the results of the feedback forms and often the results of the tests as well, thus, giving me the information I needed for the Kirkpatrick's model.

Findings and Analysis

Kirkpatrick's Model

This model is the most widely recognizedtool for measuring the effectiveness of T&D programs. It analyzes the program on four levels, giving trainer's the opportunity to understand in which area they are doing well and in which area they need improvement.

Level 1: Reaction

This level helps to measure trainee's satisfaction with the training.

SPEED provides feedback forms after the completion of each course to understand the acceptance of training among trainees. The feedback form contains questions regarding both the training and the trainer. The training sections includes questions about the refreshment provided, the physical environment, along with other aspects of the training design. The trainee section includes questions about training methods and delivery of it.

According to AG's HR department and my personal observation, SPEED receives positive response on these feedback forms in an average. Separating the questions in sections allows the company to understand where they might be lacking. If SPEED receives a poor score on any aspect, they immediately work to fix it.

Level 2: Learning

This measures how successfully trainees have learned from the training.

SPEED conducts Pre, Mid and Post assessment tests throughout the training session to track the progress of trainees. The Pre assessment test is taken on the first class. The Pot assessment on the last.

The tests get progressively more difficult as more knowledge is provided to the trainees. The scores are then compared of each student individually to get an understanding of the success of the training program.

According to their HR department and my own personal observation, trainings lead to 50% improvement of results at the least.

Level 3: Behavior

This level measures how much of the training employees were able to transfer to their work. This level could be called the most important test in measuring effectiveness, since this relies on the improvement of trainee's attitude due to training.

AG conducts regular meetings between supervisors and higher management. In these meetings performance of employees are discussed and subsequently the improvement, or lack of behavior.

According to AG's HR department also the interview taken for this report, employee performance goes up on an average after training sessions.

Level 4: Result

This level determines whether the result of the training is satisfactory.

It is measured by increase in financial outcomes.

Sufficient data for this level couldn't be extracted due to the matter of confidentiality.

Analysis of findings

AG, being an education focused institution, believes in constant acquiring of knowledge and improvement. Thus its great emphasis on T&D. AG heavily invests on their year round training sessions across several subsidiaries of the organization.

Even more important than conducting training sessions is to determine whether the trainings sessions are actually proving effective. SPEED applies Pre, Mid, Post assessments, as well as these feedback forms, for all of their trainings. Results from each of these are taken seriously and are always evaluated.

By applying the Kirkpatrick's model, I learned that SPEED uses a combination of feedback forms and tests taken at different stages to determine the effectiveness of their training. These data from the feedback forms are later input as organized information, and are used to evaluate where they need improvement.

According to the information I was able to collect from their management, and my own personal observation while typing the data for reports, the overall results from the first three stages of the Kirkpatrick's model are positive. The results show that trainees in average all enjoy the training sessions, learn from it, and are able to transfer it to their daily work and improve their performance.

From my interview of the Academic Supervisor of Scholastica,employees do show improvement in behavior after their training sessions and feel satisfied with the training they receive.

To conclude I would like to say ,even though I was not able to collect data for the Result level of the model applied, from my observation I have seen that AG has a high level of job satisfaction and subsequently, job retention. Most of my colleagues had been working with AG ranging from 2 to 15 years. There are a large number of employees of AG who have been working with the company with more than 10 years. It is hard to pinpoint if training is the cause of this high retention rate, but it can be speculated that the focus on T&D has an impact on employee's job satisfaction, also on the fact that Scholastica has managed to stay relevant and maintain its reputation for over 40 years.

Summary and Conclusions

T&D is a crucial part of the growth of any organization. The benefits of training can not be emphasized enough. In today's day and world, with globalization more prevalent than ever and steep competition, it is important for organizations to constantly grow and improve in order to sustain in this competitive market against both local and Multinational Corporations. Scholastica is one of the pioneers of English Medium Schools in Bangladesh. It has managed to stabilize its place and create a pristine reputation in the market, and even more than 40 years later, it has held its place. From Scholastica has birthed many subsidiaries, and subsequently the formation of AG. T&D plays a great role in AG's culture and its continuous improvement as an organization.

To conclude, my experience with AG has been beyond anything I could hope for. The company has one of the healthiest and most tolerant work place culture to the best of my knowledge. The people are friendly and accepting, the organization encouraging and driving. I have learned how to be an employee and how to behave in a professional manner through my experience with AG. More importantly, I have grown as a person and learned how to always have a positive mindset as I steer through life.

Recommendations

Here are a few recommendations I have to offer AG.

1. SPEED should consider including a Dry run test in their Implementation Phase. They can gather a few of their employees and conduct part of the training sessions on them, just to test out their methods beforehand and to ensure a smooth and successful operation during the pilot of the training program.
2. SPEED should have a well-established Training Evaluation system to ensure thattheir

3. training programs actually benefitting the organization in achieving its objectives.

4. SPEED should extend their services to beyond soft skills and language, and start offering courses on IT skills and other competencies required to survive today's job market.
5. SPEED could also start doing Training Need Analysis for AG employees, instead of depending on HR. That way, they will have a better understanding of the needs of employees and will be able to set objectives and design training more effectively. This way, SPEED could also have more of a control on the class size