



Enhancing enterprise training performance: Perspectives from knowledge transfer and integration



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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 21 July 2013

Keywords:

Enterprise training
Knowledge transfer
Knowledge integration

ABSTRACT

Training is a way to achieve knowledge transfer among enterprise employees. This study designs an enterprise training system facilitating knowledge transfer so that enterprise training is more responsive to employees' demand through reasonable classification of staff. The individual tacit knowledge can be explicit by means of the selection of trainers, as well as the sorting and preparation of training contents by trainers in the process of training, while the individual explicit knowledge can become collective explicit knowledge through the explanation by trainers and the learning by trainees, and then trainees improve individual skills and apply them in practice to achieve the transformation from collective explicit knowledge to individual tacit knowledge when trainees master and digest knowledge. When an enterprise acquires knowledge through training, the acquired knowledge will be diffused and accumulated to become a valuable asset through a knowledge integration mechanism including human bridge, organizational bridge and procedural bridge, accordingly, the training performance will be enhanced.

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1. Introduction

Knowledge management is the development trend in the field of management, and an increasing number of scholars and the general public recognize that the organizational sustainable competitive advantages stem from its scarce but valuable resources, which cannot be completely imitated and substituted (Barney, 1991), such as technology, information, and knowledge and organizational procedures. The organization that masters the latest knowledge and the more knowledge, invents and creates the updated knowledge, produces the use value including more knowledge, will be able to obtain a superior position in the future competition.

Organizational knowledge not only can be created within the organization, but also can be obtained from outside organizations. The benchmarking management is the same reason, it is not necessary to consider whether the knowledge is created by the organization as long as the knowledge is good for the organization. Wiig (1993) claimed that the knowledge is acquired by means of individual intellect and analysis as so to extend the individual prior knowledge, and also by means of trials and errors. Learning is

the best way to obtain and create new knowledge. Learning itself is a process of integrating knowledge, absorbing new knowledge, capturing and internalizing new knowledge, combining new knowledge with original knowledge so as to create knowledge, and then use it in practice. Knowledge integration is regarded as a hierarchical activity, and also a process of organizational capacity establishment in the literatures of knowledge integration. The knowledge integration in different levels requires different capacity, hence the scope of knowledge in need is different, the higher the level of knowledge integration is, the broader the scope of knowledge integration (Grant, 1996; Nonaka, 1998). The learning performance of individual and organization is enhanced through the process of knowledge integration, in addition, the capacity of individual and organization is formed.

Training is one of the most important and reliable human resource techniques to enhance organizational and employee productivity (Bhatti & Kaur, 2009; Bhatti & Kaur, 2010). Enterprise training institutions not only provide multi-level and multi-functional business training as well as follow-up education for the entire staff of enterprise, these institutions are committed to the diffusion and use of knowledge, but also facilitate effective management and full utilization of enterprise knowledge.

Enterprise knowledge is generally divided into explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge can be definitely expressed by language and shared with others while tacit knowledge is subconscious knowledge that cannot be expressed in words or can partially be expressed in words (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

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Although many employees have rich knowledge, if they are unable or unwilling to apply the knowledge and share it in the enterprise, their knowledge will not create the wealth. Under the circumstances, the knowledge is human capital of individual employee, and cannot be effectively transformed into organizational capital of an enterprise. There are two noteworthy problems, namely, the information is asymmetrical between an enterprise and its employees, and employees may leave for the other jobs after they acquire core knowledge from the enterprise. Therefore, an effective mechanism for capital transfer is urgently needed in order to enhance the amount that employees' human capital is transformed into organizational capital, promote the creation of new knowledge, and popularize the new knowledge from individual level to organizational level. In the system of enterprise knowledge, effective measures should be adopted in order to achieve knowledge sharing, transfer and preservation, so that employees have the ability of learning and exchanging, and would like to share their knowledge. Training is an effective measure to reach the goal for the enterprise.

Training is an effective learning way for organizational members, the organization can achieve knowledge transfer and knowledge acquisition through training, and make acquired knowledge become valuable assets through knowledge integration. This study focuses on building a training system based on knowledge transfer, and enhancing the performance of training through knowledge integration.

2. Enterprise training tasks, stages and planning

2.1. Training tasks

Zhang (1999) claimed that training includes two concepts – education and exercise. Education is aimed at improving individual strengths and develop their potentials related with long-term, extensive, comprehensive and developmental learning with an emphasis on know-what, while the exercise can enhance the capacity of employees to adapt to the changes and adjustment of work content related with short-term, professional and functional learning with an emphasis on know-how. Therefore, training is a process for an enterprise to maintain the quality of staff and achieve organizational goals (Lu, 2003).

Raymond (2006) claimed that an organization systematically helps staff with obtaining capabilities related with their work, these capabilities include knowledge, skills, as well as abilities that ensure the achievement of work performance. The purpose of training is to strengthen employees' knowledge, skills and capabilities through training courses, and apply what they have learned to their daily work.

Training is an important means for an enterprise to acquire knowledge. Training expense is usually high, however, without the expense of training, the enterprise will pay more in the future. Far-sighted enterprises start human training a few years ahead. The key of future enterprise competition is human capital, enterprises can be sustainable only when human training is putted into effect.

Training should effectively utilize the knowledge that already exists in the enterprise, and try to continuously create and diffuse new knowledge to develop full potential knowledge to a greater extent. The task of enterprise training is mainly following aspects: (1) to create, share and diffuse explicit knowledge in the organization and build an environment of continuous learning and sharing for employees; (2) to create an effective training system, which can promote knowledge generation, diffusion, transformation and sharing and form a think-tank of enterprise; (3) to make employees' tacit knowledge into the open, accelerate the transformation

from tacit, experiential knowledge into explicit knowledge, and increase the content of enterprise knowledge in order to continuously enhance the competitiveness of enterprise; (4) to provide a framework for enterprise to change into learning organization, inspire employees to maximize the use of individual knowledge within the enterprise, and build a platform of organizational knowledge capital.

The means of enterprise training is various to meet the needs of enterprise development and human resources planning. The following sections discuss the relevant content of enterprise training in terms of training stages and training planning.

2.2. Training stages

General training tends to provide the skills for the new recruits so as to carry out their work (Mondy & Noe, 1993). The implementation of training aimed at new recruits is Orientation Training (OT), which is pre-service guidance for new recruits in order to reduce their maladjustment to new positions, and accelerate the socialization of the organization (Dessler, 2003). OT includes basic technology learning and objectives learning, strengthening their concepts and helping employees with their professional ability by means of advanced professional training courses so that they can quickly be handy at their jobs and work independently, and then obtained knowledge are shared and exchanged between organizational members, ultimately reaching organizational development goals through training. Therefore, a competitive advantage based on enterprise's core capacity is established by means of training (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990).

In Motorola, for example, all new Direct Labor (DL) must receive a complete pre-employment occupational training, in order to enable new recruits to adapt to the new environment as soon as possible, and ensure the implementation of operational activities in the workstation, so that they can independently engage in work after they are awarded professional certifications and certificates. If the new recruit fails in the internal Quality Assurance (QA) and examinations conducted by relevant department, and will not get the qualification for engaging in the job (Lin, Chen, Chen, & Zheng, 2006). After passing the certification of examination, the new recruit will keep being checked randomly by the auditor. When the new recruit gets out of line or below the certification standard, the certification for working in the workstation will be canceled, and the training needs to be re-implemented, re-evaluated and re-certificated to ensure the system of the Six Sigma Quality (SSQ). The tutorial system is adopted for new In-Direct Labor (IDL). New In-Direct Labor will be guided by the senior commissioner after they have been educated by the basic core courses.

In addition to OT of new recruits, the main training includes On Job Training (OJT), Off Job Training (Off-JT), Self Development (SD). As shown in Fig. 1, after 1 month learning of basic technology and basic objective arranged for new recruits, according to the specific needs, 2–12 months of professional basis training will be arranged, namely OJT, the main purpose of this stage is to make the organizational members have the basis ability and basic skills for problem-solving. After OJT, a professional practical training will be implemented, namely Off-JT, aimed at interpersonal skills and conceptual strengthening. The last stage is professional advancement, namely self development stage, organizational members will complete self development through professional technology seminars, knowledge sharing and exchanging.

2.3. Training planning

The enterprise should make training planning based on its needs, focusing on following four aspects when making training planning:

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