

Some vital questions you could ask yourself about any training programme you are considering

1. Is the competence of the trainees guaranteed? Yes No
2. Are the end results for the programme specified using objectives which are:
 - Linked to on-job performance? Yes No
 - Specific and measurable? Yes No
3. Is the competence of the trainees assessed and certified? Yes No
4. Is the programme suitable for the target group in terms of:
 - Matching their preferred learning style
 - Customised training resources that directly relate to the trainees' work
 - Timing the training to meet work needs
 - Trainers who relate well to the trainees
 - Matching the organisation's culture
 - Meeting the needs of the trainees for variety and fun
 - Using accelerative learning techniques? Yes No
5. Does the programme include systems to reinforce and monitor skill application back at work? Yes No
6. Does the programme operate with quality management systems? Yes No

If you can answer 'Yes' to each question, you can be confident that you have a superior training programme.
If you want superior training programmes, PACT can help you.

Your guarantee of quality

'PACT guarantees to meet agreed performance standards. In addition when providing training services all participants signed off as competent by PACT are guaranteed then to be able to perform to the competence standards or PACT will retrain at no charge'



Contact us now – we're ready to help

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One in a series of special reports from



Training programmes – can you tell the wheat from the chaff?

Think about this

Many people are dissatisfied with training programmes designed and conducted for them by training professionals. This has led to many managers seriously debating the value of training to their organisations. What do they get for their money? What is the return on their investment?

The quality of some training programmes can be poor. The training doesn't deliver the goods – or worse, you don't know if it has or it hasn't. Usually you can't get your money back after you buy a training programme – only the most professional trainers offer any sort of guarantee.

True, many organisations and managers have failed to specify what they want. Would you go into a restaurant, order a steak and when the waitress says, 'How do you want it?', respond with, 'I'll leave that up to you.'

Many millions will be invested in training programmes in the coming year. If this investment is to be worthwhile and make a difference to the organisation, then training programmes must deliver the goods. Only superior training programmes will do this.

To decide whether you are getting wheat or chaff please read on ...



HAS GUARANTEES

Many businesses that have faith in the quality of the service they offer are able to offer guarantees. Guarantees have not been widely used in the training industry, however; **some training organisations are now offering to give you a guarantee.**

Simple guarantees relate to providing trainers for training. **Of more help are the guarantees tied to the competence of trainees on completion of training** and in some instances the on-job performance of the trainees.

Having a training programme which guarantees the competence of trainees means that you know **you only pay for what you get.**

SPECIFIES THE END RESULT

Some training programmes have objectives. Often these are ill defined and unable to be measured. This means you won't be able to ever tell if they have been achieved. **A superior training programme has objectives which are:**

- **Specific and measurable**
- **Based on performance on the job**

You need to specify this end result. This means that you are clear right from the start on what the programme is to achieve and how the success of the learning will be measured.

ASSESSES COMPETENCE

Many training programmes give trainees some time to practise new skills. **A superior training programme will go further and assess and certify the achievement of competence by each trainee.**

This means you can be sure your **staff have the skills to do the job.**

Example

A multinational energy provider was replacing its computer-based information management system. A training programme was introduced to ensure that when it came online, staff would be able to carry out all the required functions. When the new system came online many staff were not competent. The programme did not check and certify that staff were competent.

Assessments of competence can occur during the training or back on the job. Superior training programmes offer both.

IS SUITABLE FOR THE TARGET GROUP

Training programmes need to **closely match the needs and requirements of the target group**, that is, the trainees. This can include:

- **Matching their preferred learning style**

Example

Practical doing-type people who do not read much or who have poor reading skills are likely to relate well to on-job training using real work examples.

- **Customised training resources that directly relate to the trainees' work**

Example

Trainees from a Government collection agency were learning to negotiate and were not impressed when they found that the training was based on a bank officer negotiating a loan. Most found it difficult to relate the training to their work.

- **Timing the training to meet work needs**
- **Trainers that relate well to the trainees**
- **Matching the organisation's culture**
- **Meeting the needs of the trainees for variety and fun**
- **Using accelerative learning techniques**

All this means that the training programme will be **well received, translate directly back to the job and be successful.**

HAS QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Superior training programmes have quality management systems covering:

- **Service delivery**
- **Training programme design**
- **Venue**
- **Programme administration**
- **Programme delivery**
- **Trainer performance**

Example

An energy company implemented what appeared to be a well-designed training programme to assist managers in the skills of performance management. The programme came from a respected source offshore. Unfortunately it was marred by a lack of standards for presentation. Poor presentation resulted in poor acceptance of the training and poor results.

You need to be able to **review the provider's quality management systems** so that you can be assured of their quality standards.

You also need to be able to **check past work** to satisfy yourself that quality systems have been adhered to in the past.

CHECKS ON SKILL APPLICATION

If you know that your staff are competent when they have completed the training the next step is to **ensure that they put their new skills back into action on the job on an ongoing basis.**

Example

A company trained its supervisors in staff supervision skills. One manager followed up the training and ensured all her supervisors applied what they had learned. She monitored their supervision of staff, gave feedback and rewarded those that performed well. Significant improvement was achieved in supervisor behaviour and in company results.

Another manager sent his supervisors on the same training course and did no more. Within two months the supervisors' performance had dropped back to the pre-training level.

A superior training programme includes **systems and processes to both reinforce and monitor the on-job applications of new skills on an on going basis.**

This means that not only will the **programme be highly likely to improve on-job performance but also you will have a way of measuring this improvement.**

