

## Some vital questions you should ask yourself

1. Do you know exactly what performance improvement you want to achieve?  Yes  No
2. Have you clearly defined this performance improvement?  Yes  No
3. Are you certain this performance improvement will have a positive impact on Company results?  Yes  No
4. Are you able to measure this performance improvement?  Yes  No
5. Have all possible means of achieving the desired performance improvement been considered?  Yes  No
6. Do you feel confident that the performance improvement you want will be achieved?  Yes  No

If you've been using the more 'traditional' approach to training needs analysis, chances are you may not be able to give an unequivocal 'yes' to each of the above six questions.

**If you're reconsidering your approach to 'training' and you want an effective range of interventions that will lead to improved performance and improved company results, a PACT Performance Improvement Analysis will assist you to get there. We'll be glad to help ... and to work with you to ensure ongoing success.**

### 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'



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One in a series of special reports from



## All training needs analyses are created equal ... or are they?

### Consider this for a moment

Everyone's familiar with training needs analysis ... but why is it that on so many occasions training simply fails to deliver the results that organisations want?

At PACT we suggest it's a lot to do with the basic methodology employed during the training needs analysis, and the preconception that simply putting a training intervention in place – in isolation – will provide the solution.

Consider the similarities between medication to improve your cholesterol levels and training to improve performance. Both the medication and the training offer the promise of a 'quick fix'. Both treat the symptom and not necessarily the cause. When taken in isolation neither is likely to work, but in combination with other initiatives they may produce outstanding results. **A training needs analysis focuses on one solution – namely, training ... and this is where the 'problem' usually starts.**

PACT recommends turning the training needs analysis on its head. Don't start by thinking 'training'. Instead focus on the desired end point – improved performance. Look at all possible 'cures'... a range of solutions. The difference between this performance improvement focus and the standard training needs analysis is that you will be starting with a clear 'destination' in mind ... and if you know precisely where your 'destination' is ... you're far more likely to get there.

To distinguish this approach from the more usual type of training needs analysis, we call it a 'Performance Improvement Analysis'. To find out more, please read on ...

## Performance Improvement Analysis

The process starts here

Define the improvement

Analyse the impact on company results

Decide how to measure the improvement

Develop improvement strategies

### DEFINE THE IMPROVEMENT

Whatever the reason for your analysis you must start by defining the improvement you require. This involves both analysing current performance and defining the desired performance.

The improvement must be something concrete, such as a specific improvement in performance on the job. For example, perhaps you require staff to carry out tasks they have not done previously, or perhaps they may need to do other tasks differently or to a higher standard.

#### Example

To achieve improved sales revenue the sales staff may need to behave differently. For example, they may need to plan each sales call, and they may need to close sales differently.

**This on-job performance improvement must be clearly defined down to the specific standards of competence expected of a competent performer.** This clear definition of performance is needed before deciding how to achieve the change in performance.

### ANALYSE THE IMPACT ON COMPANY RESULTS

To be confident that the performance improvement you are aiming for will be cost effective, you need to:

- Chart a clear link between the performance improvement and company results.
- Be sure the improvement will have a positive impact.

**If you are not able to identify a clear impact on company results, this signals a need to question any investment in the performance improvement.**

#### Example

Improving the performance of sales staff will directly link to improved company sales.

On the other hand, improving the typing speed of company executives may have no impact on company results.

### DEVELOP IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

**Skills are often a major factor in achieving desired performance improvement.** It is skills (including knowledge) that can be influenced by training. It is important, however, to consider all factors that impact on improved performance, not just skills. **Training on its own will rarely achieve improved performance.**

**Other factors that impact on performance improvement are:**

- Creating a **motivational** environment
- Providing **opportunity** for performance improvement
- Providing clear **direction** from management

To be confident of achieving performance improvement all bases must be covered.

#### 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.

### DECIDE HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPROVEMENT

If the desired improvement is defined and measured, you are able to monitor progress towards the desired result.

**By measuring the improved performance, you are able to get a true evaluation of training effectiveness.**

#### Example

Improvement in the performance of sales staff in closing sales can be monitored by observation on the job.

It is desirable, but not always possible, to also measure the impact of the improved performance on company results.

#### Example

Improvement in the selling performance of sales staff will impact on company sales figures.