In the design of training, consider two aspects: learning and transfer. To facilitate learning, the design must address the motivation of the trainees and the environment in which training will take place. Social learning theory and the Gagné-Briggs micro theory of design provide a framework for setting up each instructional event in a manner that is most effective. To facilitate transfer, consider issues such as type of practice, whole or part learning, overlearning, and similarity to the job. Also, using a combination of goal setting and relapse prevention helps trainees transfer the KSAs to the job.

The support of the supervisor and peers in the work group is just as important to transfer, and sit-ins by the trainer will help too. Finally, congruent reward systems and a supportive climate/culture need to be present to ensure transfer.

ET, a macro theory of design, is useful for determining the sequencing of events and just how to present them in a training context. This theory argues that one should focus on whole rather than part learning, but to make the whole as simple as possible at the beginning and then make it more difficult in stages until it reaches the level of complexity found in the workplace.

This chapter sets the stage for showing the link between the learning objectives and the methods used to provide training. Understanding what makes a good learning objective and the groundwork in terms of what facilitates learning and transfer on the basis of theory allow for an examination of the methods of training and the link between these methods and the learning objectives.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM (FABRICS, INC.)

This continues the description of the Fabrics, Inc., training program that we began in Chapter 4. Recall that Fabrics, Inc., grew quickly and experienced problems with its supervisors. In Chapter 4, we described how the consultant completed a needs analysis. From this TNA, the consultant determined a number of areas in which supervisors could use training. A partial list included a lack of KSAs in the following areas:

Effective listening
Communication
Conflict resolution
Effective feedback
Measuring employee performance
Motivating employees

For the purpose of this exercise, we deal with only one, conflict resolution. The first step will be to develop the learning objectives.

The Learning Objectives

Some of the learning objectives are as follows:

- The trainee will, <u>with no errors</u>, **present in writing the four types of active listening, along with examples of each of the types,** *with no help from reference material.*

- *When, in a role-play, the trainee is presented with an angry comment,* **the trainee will respond** <u>immediately</u> **using one of the active listening types. The trainee will then explain orally the technique used and why,** *with no help from reference material.* <u>The trainee will be presented with five of these comments and be expected to correctly respond and explain a minimum of four.</u>

- The trainee will, <u>with 100 percent accuracy,</u> **provide in writing each step of the conflict resolution model, along with a relevant example,** *with no help from any reference material.*

- *In a role-play of an angry customer,* the trainee/employee **will show concern for the customer by listening and providing alternative solutions, using the steps in the conflict resolution model,** *with help from an easel sheet that has the steps listed on it.* <u>The trainee must use all the steps and two types of active listening in the role-play.</u>

- *After watching a role-play of an angry person and an employee using the conflict resolution model,* **the trainee will,** *without reference to material, immediately* **provide feedback as to the effectiveness of the person using the**
(continued)

conflict resolution model. <u>The trainee must identify four of the six errors.</u>

Reaction Objective

The trainee will upon completion of training **respond to a 15-item reaction questionnaire with** <u>minimum scores of 4 on a 5-point scale.</u>

Transfer of Training Objective

When an angry customer approaches the employee and begins speaking in an angry tone of voice, **the employee will,** *immediately,* **use the conflict resolution model to** <u>calm the customer down.</u>

Organizational Objective

Three months after training, <u>there will be a 75 percent drop</u> **in letters of complaint from customers.**

Design Issues

We turn now to design issues. The conflict resolution model has four steps and requires attending to cues at verbal, vocal, and visual levels. From an ET perspective then, it is a complex task. The four steps in the model are as follows:

1. Use active listening.
2. Indicate respect.
3. Be assertive.
4. Provide information.

Further examination of the model reveals that the first part, active listening is a complex task by itself,[95] as is the total model. So the first decision is what mix of spiral/topical sequencing to use in the training of this model. Active listening, being a skill that can also be used on its own, suggests the use of topical sequencing to train employees in active listening first. Then we will use spiral sequencing to train the total conflict resolution model.

Teaching of the cognitive component of each of these skills will be completed before the skills training, but for brevity we will discuss only the behavioral component. Using SCM, as proposed by ET, we first determine the epitome (simplest version of the task that still embodies the whole task). For active listening, it will be to use the skill in an everyday situation, such as discussing which movie to see. In this situation, the initiator (person in the role of disagreeing with the trainee) will simply disagree regarding a movie the trainee wants to see. This situation has minimal emotional content and should require minimal monitoring of the initiator by the trainee, as it will not result in an argument. The same epitome used for active listening can also be used for the conflict resolution model because the latter simply takes the discussion to a different level.

The most complex task will require dealing with a great deal of anger on the part of the initiator of the discussion. Once these two extremes are conceptualized, those in between can be determined.

Let's now examine this training at a micro level using Gagné-Briggs theory. For the module related to teaching active listening, we want to begin by getting trainees' attention, as suggested by Gagné-Briggs design theory. This can be accomplished by showing a video of two people in a heated argument and then asking, "Has that situation ever happened to you? Would you like to have a better way of responding in such a situation so tempers do not flare?" This would allow you to introduce active listening. The next step in the theory is to inform the trainees of the goal. Presenting the learning objective related to active listening accomplishes this. The training would continue to be designed paying close attention to the steps in the design theory.

Now let's turn to the evaluation component as an output from the training design. To consider these, we turn back to the learning objectives, which are as follows:

- The trainee will, <u>with no errors</u>, **present in writing the four types of active listening, along with examples of each of the types,** *with no reference material.*
- The trainee will, <u>with 100 percent accuracy</u> **provide in writing each step of the conflict resolution model, along with a relevant example,** *with no help from any reference material.*

These, along with a number of similar objectives not shown, will require a paper-and-pencil test of declarative knowledge.

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