



EVALUATION OF SALES TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS IN PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR

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Abstract:

Business organizations invest a lot of money training towards the development of sales employees. The success of training programs depends highly upon a well-defined learning objective, skill, evaluation of change in knowledge etc. Hence, a training program is said to effective when training outcome matches with its objective and therefore evaluation is the most important means to determine the effectiveness of training. The training effectiveness may be assessed by considering the results or evaluation. In this study, both primary and secondary data were used. Secondary data was collected from journals, magazines, books etc. The secondary data and the data collected through personal interview were tabulated in various tables to the requirement of the study. It helped the researcher in studying the impact of various aspects. After completing the tabulation work, an analysis was made using statistical tools such as Chi-square test and percentage analysis so that factual position of the related aspects might be found out.

Keywords: training effectiveness, sales, evaluation, performance

1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that better sales skills produce better sales performance. In today's dynamic business environment, organizations are taking learning to a new

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level. Sustainability through skilled sales force serves as a primary rationale for organizations to invest in sales training. Organizations in today's market conditions are coping with globalization, competition, fast changing demographics, besides changing technology and the high pressure on sales force to perform better and better. Hence, sales force effectiveness is all about maximizing the performance of the sales team. The factors which contribute to sales force effectiveness can be broadly divided into two main categories. Firstly, the individual skills which includes product knowledge, selling skills, planning and targeting and attitude ie a positive attitude which is one of the most important attribute in a sales person and secondly, the factors to do with the team ie synergy between sales and marketing, morale, leadership, acknowledgement.

Therefore, productivity and skills of the sales force can be enhanced through training. The purpose of training is to enhance fundamental knowledge, skill and assertion. (Stavron et al 2004). In order to attract new customers, to meet their expectations, to retain customers, organizations are investing heavily on sales training. Many organizations believe that sales training is important to increase sales but now organizations have to think that sales training is to change the behaviors' and if apply consistently will lead to increased sales and thus the key challenge is getting sales professionals to change their on the job behavior. According to Oribabor (2000), with the span of time, the attitude and behavior of the people varies and thus the commitment of staff, their technical competencies and knowledge contribute to the advancement of the organization.

2. Literature Review

Isyaken, (2000) stated that the new challenge for organizations is to cope up with advance training and reiterated that training is revolving process. Olaniyan and Lucas, (2008) mentioned that productivity is an outcome of effective training and now the organizations are investing heavily on training the staff for the growth of organizations and to set the long term strategies for the organization. Lowry, Simon & Kimberley, (2002) concluded that to enhance employee commitment and to maximize employee potential, training is the most important factor as the training process is the most pervasive methods for the productivity of the individuals and thus to meet the organizational objectives. Training should be conducted in a way so that all the employees should perceive they are being treated equally during the process and also stated that training be designed to meet the requirements and needs of employees. (Schmidt Steven W. (2009)

The performance of the organizations is directly related to the aspects of success or failures and therefore the organizations are now more focusing on the training of the employees. Hameed & Waheed (2011) Goldstein & Ford, (2002) stated that training evaluation is a systematic process to collect the data and to determine whether the training is effective. Huque, A. S. & Vyas, L., (2008) affirmed that the performance of the trainees and their ability to put into action in their jobs determines the training effectiveness. The training effectiveness can be determined by training design,

characteristics and contextual factors, Scaduto, A. Lindsay Douglas & Chiabur S., Dan (2008). The effectiveness of the training program and its evaluation is important to find out as to how best the training objectives are met. Niraj Kishore Chmote (2010). Oribabor (2000) found that the source of the growth of the organization depends upon the competence, technical and managerial skills as well as mental capabilities. Bhatti & Querishi, (2007), stated that each individual require knowledge and skill to perform the given task and productivity can be increased through effective training. Barney (1995), the training activities now are recognized as being the sources of Competitive Advantage.

Attia & Honeycult, Jr., (2012) mentioned that there is improvement in the behavior of trainees than non-trainees and now the organizations are making the training more rigorous in terms of design, delivery, and evaluation. Karim, Huda & Khan, (2012) stated that managerial training is essential constituent of organizational performance. However, most training programs focus on finding the causes of lack of performance whereas training programs also try to enhance the skills, knowledge and behavioral changes of each employee/trainee. Thomas & Qui, (2012) in their research stated that effectiveness be measured on factors such as participation, pedagogy and association of individual and organizational characteristics. Long et al., (1999) concluded that the reaction of training was measured by factors such as relevance of course, enjoyment and the design of training be such that it increase pertaining motivation and decrease negative reactions of trainees after training. According to the study conducted by Bedinhanis, (1998) the trainer has an important role to play in determining the effectiveness of the program.

3. Statement of the Problem

It is important for the pharmaceutical companies to understand that sales force training is imperative for self-evaluation and self-monitoring and also for enhancing communication skills, persuasive powers, knowledge and intellectual capabilities.

3.1 Objective of the Study

- 1) To evaluate the post training effectiveness of the sales employees with target achievement.
- 2) To determine the sales force belief about the importance of training and the evaluation process.
- 3) To examine the pre training preparation for sales personnel.

4. Research Methodology

The study relates to Meerut City and the universe of the study is the companies of pharmaceutical industry. For the purpose of the study, 75 sales employees were selected from the pharmaceutical companies in Meerut region. All the 75 respondents are administered through a structured schedule. The schedule contains 18 questions.

In this study, both primary and secondary data were used. Secondary data was collected from journals, magazines, books etc. The secondary data and the data collected through personal interview were tabulated in various tables to the requirement of the study. It helped the researcher in studying the impact of various aspects. After completing the tabulation work, an analysis was made using statistical tools such as Chi-square test and percentage analysis so that factual position of the related aspects might be found out.

4.1 Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no association between gender and selection criteria

Ho2: There is no association between Age and participation of sales employees in training programmes.

Ho3: There is no association between Education and ability for improvement by participating in training.

5. Research Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Training Need Evaluation is Important

Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	47	63
Agree	24	32
Agree or disagree	3	4.0
Disagree	1	1.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Total	75	100

It is evident from Table 1 that 63 percent and 32 percent of the respondents strongly agree and agree that the training need evaluation aspect is important whereas 4 percent of the respondents were not decisive on the issue.

Table 2: Sales Training Provide Exposure to Modern Management Techniques

Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	32	43.0
Agree	38	50.0
Agree or disagree	00	0.0
Disagree	05	7.0
Strongly disagree	00	00
Total	75	100

From Table 2, it is clear that 43 percent and 50 percent respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that training gives exposure to modern management concepts while 7b percent respondents disagree with the view that training helped them learning management concepts.

Table 3: Pedagogy Used Does Facilitates Learning

Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	49	65.0
Agree	23	31.0
Agree or disagree	2	3.0
Disagree	1	1.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Total	75	100

From Table 3, it may be concluded that 65 percent strongly agree with the fact that the pedagogy used during training session such as video, case study, role playing, group activities etc has enhanced the learning and this has also been supported by 31 percent respondents as they agreed with this concept.

Table 4: Whether the Course Structure of the Training Program Relevant

Scale	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	27	36.0
Agree	36	48.0
Agree or disagree	4	6.0
Disagree	5	7.0
Strongly disagree	2	3.0
Total	75	100

From Table 4 that 36 percent and 48 percent of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively with the view that the course structure was relevant to the training provided whereas 10 percent respondents disagree with the relevance of the course structure.

Table 5: Association between Gender and Selection Criteria

Gender	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Male	8	9	6	5	4	32
Female	7	8	7	11	10	43
Total	14	17	13	16	15	75

The Table 5 indicates that Chi square for 4 d.f. at 5% level of significance is 9.49. The calculated value of Chi square is 3.56 which is less than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that there is association between selection criteria and gender.

Table 6: Association between Age and Participation of Sales Employees in Training

Age	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Below 25	4	6	5	2	4	21
26-35	5	4	1	3	5	19
36-45	9	3	2	2	2	18
45 & above	3	3	7	1	3	17
Total	21	16	15	8	14	75

The Table 6 indicates that Chi square for 12d.f. at 5% level of significance is 21.0. The calculated value of Chi Square is 13.5 which is less than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it is concluded that there is association between Age and participation of sales employees in training.

Table 7: Association between Education and Ability for Improvement by Participating in Training

Educational Qualification	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Intermediate	2	6	7	3	4	22
Graduation	3	9	4	5	5	26
Post Graduate	8	2	2	9	6	27
Total	13	17	13	17	15	75

The Table 7 indicates that the Chi square for 8d.f. at 5% level of significance is 15.5. The calculated value of Chi square is 15.12 which is less than the table value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected hence, it is concluded that there is association between Education and ability for improvement by participating in training.

6. Analysis

- 1) In amongst 75 respondents, 63% sales employees strongly agreed that the training need evaluation is important while only 3% respondents could not opined about the importance of training need evaluation.
- 2) 43% sales employees strongly agreed and 51% agreed that the sales training provided to them does provide exposure to modern management techniques whereas 7% respondents disagreed with it.
- 3) 65% sales employees strongly agreed and 31% agreed upon that the pedagogy used during the training programmes does facilitate learning.
- 4) 36% respondents strongly agreed while 48% respondents agreed that the course structure of the training programmes is relevant to them while 10% respondents totally disagreed with this aspect.
- 5) It is evident from table 5 that there is association between the gender and the selection criteria for sales training program.
- 6) The results also show that there is positive relationship between age of the trainees and their participation of sales employees in training programmes conducted by organizations.
- 7) It is clear from the results that there is association between the educational qualifications of the sales employees vis-à-vis their ability for improvement by participating in training programmes.

7. Conclusion

The factors identified through this study such as need evaluation, exposure to modern management techniques, pedagogy, course structure are found to be vital and relevant

factors which can influence the effectiveness of sales training programme .The method has helped in exploration of these parameters and the research has implication for HR Managers/Training personnel to identify the training need and select the participants thereof. It is only then the participants can draw some learning which will help them identifying the motivating factors in a training program. This paper will have implications not only for researchers but also for the trainers and corporate human resource professionals who are involved in defining, designing and delivering various sales training programmes.

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