

**DESIGNING AN EFFECTIVE TRAINING PROCESS  
A CASE STUDY  
AT SOHAR DEVELOPMENT OFFICE  
SUTANATE OF OMAN**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
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## ABSTRACT

Sohar Development Office (SDO), in the Sultanate of Oman, has invested time and resources on administrative training. Seemingly, this study explores the extent to which the seven conditions for a training process are being implemented at SDO so as to make the training effective. It specifically examines the relationship between the seven conditions which represent the independent variables and the training process. This research employed both quantitative and qualitative techniques, a questionnaire and an in-depth interview employing items that attempt to identify the respondents' perceptions of training. The seven conditions are needs assessment analysis (NA), readiness for training (RT), the learning environment (LE), transfer of training (TT), evaluation plan (EP), training method (TM) and monitoring and evaluation of training (ME). Based on regression analysis, NA, RT, EP, and TM are significantly related to effective training process while LE, TT and ME are not significant, thus confirming an earlier assumption that a poor traditional training design tends to thwart innovation and change. The study finally recommends an improved training process, with an action plan to overcome the deficiencies, among them include an improved job description that defines the job in terms of its purposes, key functions, and required tasks and competences that are necessary to carry it out. The study equally proposes that future research should look into the socio-cultural factors that impact training processes in the designing of effective training programmes. The investigation equally highlights the importance of on-the-job training, as a less costly and more effective alternative to off-the-job training, technical training, and e-training in matching high-end information technological tools such as modelling, instructions, and repairs.

**Keywords:** Needs Assessment Analysis, Training Design, Training Process.

## ABSTRAK

Pejabat Pembangunan Sohar (SDO), di Kesultanan Oman, telah membuat pelaburan masa dan sumber untuk latihan pentadbiran. Sehubungan dengan itu, kajian ini meninjau sejauh mana tujuh kondisi proses latihan, yang sedang dilaksanakan di SDO dapat membantu meningkatkan keberkesanan latihan. Kajian ini akan meneroka hubungan di antara tujuh kondisi latihan yang berfungsi sebagai pembolehubah bebas terhadap keberkesanan latihan. Kajian ini menggunakan teknik kualitatif dan kuantitatif di mana ia melibatkan penggunaan boring soal selidik dan temu bual menggunakan item-item untuk mengenal pasti persepsi responden terhadap latihan. Tujuh syarat tersebut ialah analisis keperluan penilaian (NA), kesediaan untuk latihan (RT), persekitaran pembelajaran (LE), pemindahan latihan (TT), rancangan penilaian (EP), kaedah latihan (TM) dan pemantauan dan penilaian latihan (ME). Berdasarkan analisis regresi, NA, RT, EP, dan TM mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan terhadap keberkesanan latihan manakala LE, TT dan ME adalah tidak signifikan. Hasil kajian ini mengesahkan andaian awal yang mengatakan bahawa corak perancangan latihan yang tradisional adalah cenderung untuk menolak inovasi dan perubahan. Hasil kajian akhirnya mencadangkan proses latihan yang lebih baik, dengan pelan tindakan untuk mengatasi kekurangan tersebut, di antaranya adalah menambahbaik deskripsi kerja terutama dari segi tujuan, fungsi utama, dan tugas-tugas dan kecekapan yang diperlukan untuk melaksanakannya. Kajian ini juga mencadangkan agar kajian akan datang meneroka faktor-faktor sosio-budaya yang memberikan kesan terhadap proses-proses latihan. Kajian ini juga cuba mengengahkan latihan di tempat kerja sebagai alternatif yang lebih murah dan lebih berkesan berbanding latihan di luar tempat kerja, latihan teknikal, dan e-latihan bagi menyesuaikan dengan perubahan teknologi maklumat.

**Katakunci:** Analisis Keperluan Penilaian, Proses Latihan, Reka Bentuk Latihan

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

GIS:	Geographical Information System
IPA:	Institute of Public Administration
ISD:	Instructional Systems Development
IT:	Information Technology
LSC:	Legal Services Commission
MCS:	Ministry of Civil Service
MSC:	Manpower Service Commission
NIOSH:	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NVQ:	National Vocational Qualifications
PDO:	Petroleum Development Oman Company
PJDP:	Pacific Judicial Development Program
RO:	Rial Omani
SDO:	Sohar Development Office
SEPO:	Systems Engineering Process Office
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TD:	Training Department
TIER:	Training Interventional Effectiveness Research

## **PREFACE**

Khadeem Ali Dhahi Al-Omrani is a Civil Engineer. Right after his graduation from the University of Wales —College of Cardiff— UK in June 1991 he joined the Water and Landscaping Department of SDO, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Diwan of the Royal Court, as an Area Engineer. His duties involve looking after technical issues such as house water connection work, water wells drilling, pumps installations, projects supervising, projects implementation, preparing BOQs, selecting materials, as well as maintenance works. In 1997 the above Department split into the Water Department and the Landscaping & Gardening Department. At the same time he was appointed both as Deputy Director of the Water Department, which added administrative work to his responsibilities, and as an Engineer at the Landscaping & Gardening Department looking after technical issues such as irrigation pumps installation, landscaping maintenance, project supervision, preparing BOQs, planning projects, selecting materials as well as other administrative duties.

In February 2004, he registered for an MBA at his own expense at the School of Business, University of Hull, UK and graduated in July 2006. In June 2006 he was appointed Director of the Water Department and Supervisor for the Landscaping & Gardening Department. He is equally a member of the following committees: the Tender committee, the Technical committee, the Projects Supervision committee, the Five-Year Planning committee, the Human Resource Development committee, the Advance Metering Infrastructure committee within the Public Authority for Water and

Electricity", the Industrial States Water Study committee within the Industrial States Authority. He is equally heads the Social Housing Committee in SDO, and co-headed the study and building of several dams in the Sohar Area within the Regional Municipalities and Water Resources.

In June 2008, he registered for a PhD at his own expense at the Faculty of law Government and International Studies, University Utara Malaysia.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In today's environment of increased accountability, training becomes part of a global organizational management. Organizations administering the training programme are not only accountable for what employees learn, they also are accountable for ensuring that employees transfer their knowledge to their work performance reducing by so doing the employees complaint that they are not offered the opportunity to handle new technology. But the high costs of training and development led some organizations to disregard training for their employees. Other organisations, however, have no choice but to send their employees to training. For many years the field of training adopted a conventional trainer-centered approach whereby the trainer represents the focal point around which the entire training process revolves, while learners were relegated to a passive role. However, the field is undergoing many rapid changes in an effort to adapt to an ever changing world and galloping technology. To meet these challenges, new learning process and methods are devised to cover what have become essential work-related skills, techniques and knowledge. However, to be achieved, these changes have to be followed by an evolution in corporate attitudes and expectations about what 'training' is, a not so easy task in the light of the inertia affecting most organizations' perception of 'training', a perception that typically confines training to work skills.

Training and efficiency are directly proportional. When trained appropriately, employees are able to perform more efficiently. Conversely, an institution that has little

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