

Throughout history, on-the-job training has been a foundational method of instruction, where experienced mentors pass down essential skills to apprentices, enabling them to progress and eventually master their craft. Dating back to prehistoric times, this form of training involved adults imparting crucial skills like hunting and fishing to prepare children for adulthood. Today, the training specialist field is intertwined with the study of educational history.

A pivotal moment in the development of the training specialist role occurred with the introduction of factory schools in the late 19th century, exemplified by initiatives led by companies like Hoe and Company. These schools revolutionized training by offering on-site instruction for employees, formalizing training programs within corporate environments. As the mid-20th century approached, there was a growing recognition of the indispensable role played by training and development in organizational success, especially in the aftermath of World War II. This acknowledgement was fueled by factors such as technological advancements and the evolving demands of various industries. In response to the urgent need for skilled labor during the war, both civilians and military personnel were swiftly trained to fulfill specific roles, highlighting the necessity and effectiveness of organized training programs. The post-war period witnessed the establishment of structured training initiatives in military and civilian domains, alongside the emergence of professional organizations and academic programs dedicated to training and development. This era marked the onset of modern training and development practices, characterized by a methodical approach to enhancing employee learning and skills to bolster organizational achievements.

During the 1960s and 1970s, human resource development (HRD) emerged as a distinct discipline within organizational management, covering functions like training, career

advancement, and performance evaluation. Training specialists played a vital role during this period in creating and executing training initiatives aimed at enhancing employee skills and performance.

Charles R. Allen, a significant figure in the field, made notable contributions to adult learning theory and the development of training programs. His creation of the Allen Model around the early 1900s underscored the importance of assessing training needs, designing effective programs, and evaluating their impact on organizational goals.

Moving into the late 20th and early 21st centuries, technology advancements spurred the evolution of self-paced e-learning, providing a blended learning experience that doesn't necessarily require a traditional teacher-student environment. However, despite these advancements, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift to virtual learning, leading some companies to undervalue job training as an investment. In order to understand the repercussions of the sudden cessation of in-person training, Simplilearn conducted a survey to investigate the impact of the pandemic on employee training programs. Professionals in the learning and development with human resources sectors worldwide were questioned regarding various aspects of their current and future training plans in light of the pandemic. Simplilearn received survey responses from a diverse range of locations, the United States accounted for 41% of the survey results. Nevertheless, it's crucial for organizations to recognize the long-term benefits of continuous learning, as acquiring new skills and adapting to change remains essential for personal and professional growth.

Sources

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Allure Barnes

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