Awakening to reality

Management training for magistrates' clerks: human resource development perspectives

Tahira Nazir[1], Syed Fida Hussain Shah[2], Khalid Zaman[3] and Samina Nawab[4]

[1]COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Wah, Pakistan.
[2]COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Abbottabad, Pakistan.
[3]Department of Management Sciences, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Abbottabad, Pakistan.
[4]COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Wah.

ABSTRACT

The Magistrates' Courts Service is a local service. People working here are solicitors or barristers; they may have an arts or social sciences background. Addition to these qualifications their verbal communication is excellent but they have low in analytical and numerical skills. After deeply analyzing the given case about Magistrate Courts Service, certain issues which need to be addressed through effective development program in this study. These issues include lack of skills (mainly analytical and numerical), lack of coordination and consensus in most of the decision and activities performed, low coordination, more than required level of independence. Beside this the information on hand, differs greatly in nature and quality which makes it quite unreliable. Investigation report regarding the Magistrates' Courts Service has proposed a number of options for change in order to improve the working. These changes are required for the management and administration of courts services in more effective way.

1. Introduction

The Magistrates' Courts Service is a local service; it is administered by 105 magistrates' committees. The responsibilities they perform include, providing legal counseling to lay magistrates in court hearings, training the magistrates, and also management of the courts. Investigation report regarding the Magistrates' Courts Service has proposed a number of options for change in order to improve the working. Most important proposals include the moving the Magistrates' Courts Service to the Lord Chancellor's Department, and a decrease in number of Magistrates' Courts Committees, with Chief Justices possessing a legal qualification to be placed in each region. These changes are required for the management and administration of courts services in more effective way. These proposed changes will not only current working but also the management and administration processes so far in use.

A senior management development program, (to HR manager) for Justices' Clerks and other senior staff is designed and presented in this study. This development program will be of six months duration and is required to enhance the managerial skills and capabilities of not only lawyers abut also other service staff both incurrent and new responsibilities performances. The Magistrate Courts Service is facing some difficulties in managing the quality of performance and also some skills are also missing in staff members. These problems are needed to be addressed in proposed HRD program. HRD is "organized learning activities arranged within an organization in order to improve performance and/or personal growth for the purpose of improving the job, the individual, and/or the organization" (Gilley and Eggland, 1989). The suggested training and development program for addressing the above mentioned problems is base upon the HRD interventions and learning theories and are underlying the objective of improving the skills

of targeted staff and improving the performance of Magistrate court service. Success level of the proposed plan can be judged through changes in behaviors, improved skill level, improvement of coordination in activities, sharing the information in reliable and effective way, and quality of service.

2. Key Issues to be addressed

The Magistrate Court Service is basically a public sector organization working in area of law and justice. The staff consists of knowledge workers. Major issues that are needed to be addressed by the HRD program are to standardize the practices and improve the skills specially the analytical and numerical ones in order to make the senior staff and management perform their functions in more effective way. For this purpose it is necessary to get the involvement of staff in the process of development so that they should be convinced about the importance of this learning process and are ready to go through the development process.

The importance of learning activity should be clear to the targeted staff and expected outcomes should be shared to enhance the acceptance level of HRD program and reduce the resistance towards change adoption as well. Because these are public sector workers so they can show resistance towards changes that are taking place in the organization and can also feel the HRD process unimportant and impractical. The learning materials and training process should be designed in such a way that it can reduce the problems and make the staff more effective.

i) Target Audience

Keeping in view the ability and characteristics of the trainee is very much crucial and important while designing the training and development program. To have effective HRD program, we should be having information about the target audience or the targeted staff for which we are designing all these activities, the

effectiveness of training is also dependent upon the trainees or individual characteristics. So we should be having comprehensive information about the target trainees. This will be helpful in making the learning process more successful. At the same time the limited resource availability i.e in the public sector, we have to be very much selective in selecting the trainees for development process.

We can select the 18 trainees at first time and they would be trained in a way that is not developing only those selves but they can be used as resource persons for developing the remaining staff. So the selection can be made on bases of some characteristics that can show the ability of learning ability to share knowledge sort of things so that we are not training the individuals but training and developing the developers and trainers for future.

ii.Learning Philosophy

Organizations are continuously changing and reinventing due to changes in external environmental factors, these changes require learning for the survival of organizations. The major challenge in this context requires the attitudes and behaviors which are really necessary for true learning and also for applying that learning interventions to employees. Learning not only makes people to learn about themselves, but also their organization and their environment for increasing the individual's skills and competencies, and performance of organization. The dilemma is that adults who are occupying senior positions in corporations hold strong perceptions about how they should learn in the organization, (Tsoukas & Vladimirou 2001). The major challenge is how to effectively keep individuals in learning and to enhance their capacity to learn and increase the competencies which are very important for the organizations. Table1 shows some skills which should have to be possessed by effective managers.

Table 1: Skills need to be possessed by Effective Mangers

Technical – "ability of manager to use specific methods and techniques in doing the managerial work, planning ability etc".	Interpersonal –"manager needs to know how to lead people, it requires abilities to motivate workers, resolving conflicts, communicating and interacting with people".
Conceptual –"This is the ability to "grasp the whole picture". See the organization as one whole linked with the surrounding environment and should know about relevant priorities and important issues".	Communication – "Ability to disseminate and receive information is thus important tool, it is not only verbal communication, but the manager should be able to distinguish non verbal signals, mood and feelings to filter the right information".

While designing the program for the workers at Magistrate court service we need to keep in mind that we are designing program for knowledge workers who are enjoying independence and self directed performances and are adult learners. It shows that their learning requirements and arrangements will be different from the traditional learning processes. They will be ready to learn the new behaviors and new ways of doing things only if they think it is important for them and will create some positive opportunities especially like career development. So they can not be trained in conventional or traditional ways and we need to incorporate the andragogy in development process. The learning process or development process should be felt important intrinsically by these workers; they are having knowledge and expertise in their areas that can enhance the effectiveness of their learning

There are three approaches to learning (Huberty and Kramlinger, 1990) which include as: (1) behaviourism (learning

through the reinforcement of desired reactions), (2) humanism and (3) cognitivism (learning on revelation of information) (Lisa A,1998). Andragogy` is the process of engaging adult learners in the structure of the learning experience. The term was originally used by Alexander Kapp (a German educator) in 1833. Andragogical methods are best to be used in community and corporate situations that are helpful in self directed learning. So in situation under discussion we can recommend that this methodology can be used for the development of staff at the Magistrates' Courts Service. Major assumptions of Andragogy include (a) adults need to know why they need to learn (b)Adults need to learn by experience (c)Adults take learning as process of problem-solving (d) Adults learn best when it is valuable.

iii) Learning Techniques and Designing the development program

We are available with various learning and development techniques like coaching, mentoring, self paced learning, case studies, behavior modeling etc, all of these have positive and negative aspects and no method is perfect. Keeping in view the target audience this report suggests to use the action learning, group based learning, and self learning. Detailed design regarding the learning techniques is presented in appendix.

The proposed development program is named as Professional Development Program with specific aims including:

❖Make people comfortably adjust to changes and reduce resistance level

❖Improve the skills of magistrate clerks and other senior staff to have better administration of justice of the staff at magistrate court service

❖Make people ready to share knowledge and responsibility and to perform the functions and respective responsibilities in more coordinated way.

❖Training people in a way so that they can train the remaining staff members

a) Development Design (Methods)

As mentioned earlier that proposed HRD plan is to be used for the knowledge workers and executives working in Magistrate Court service so we should be adopting a combination of the development methods that can best transfer the knowledge from the trainers to trainees. Below described techniques are chosen to serve the purpose:

❖Breaking the ice brining in the change: As the trainees are the adult learners and they are convinced that what ever skills they possess is enough for them and they're the expert of the area. This behavior will be acting as greatest hurdle and resistance in successful implementation of the HRD activity so these trainees should be gone through the session with change management consultants to attain the acceptance for this HRD program at trainee's level. One month session comprising of lectures and seminars for the first four weeks can be utilized for this purpose. Effective change management consultants will be speakers for these sessions who will communicate the importance of the structural change required at the Magistrate court service and also the need, and desirable outcomes of the HRD program to the trainees. These sessions will help the trainees to unlearn the previous experiences and behaviors and will facilitate the process of developing new desirable behaviors.

❖Lectures: Lectures are the oral presentation made by the presenters (trainers) and are supported by other printed materials and audiovisual aids as well. It will be good choice because it can train many people in one session. by selecting the speakers for lecturing at Magistrate court Service, great deal of care is

required because the trainees are autonomous and independent working conditions so they will listen to only renowned people who are expert in their area other wise these lecturers will be considered less important by the trainees.

❖Audiovisual techniques: like television, videotapes and films are being used very effectively for training the employees. This method can be used at Magistrate courts to share the information about ideal ways to serve the people who use courts services and other ways of better administration and management at the court. These presentations can be repeated again and again without any additional cost so it is cost effective as well.

❖Self-Learning Material: this method can be used by providing the required learning materials in the areas in which skills are need to be improved. Trainees can use these materials as per their own ease and can be evaluated through feed backs asking questions regarding the learning they have achieved by going through the provided materials. These can be computer based or printed materials and can be accompanied with structured exercises for the self evaluation by the trainees.

❖Group based Coaching: We propose that HR department should hire management consultant as coach to provide consultancy to the trainees for improving their managerial skill. This coaching will be provided on group of three trainees at a time. To have a good coaching session it should have proper purpose and rules, the process should be open to new ideas purpose, (2) establish ground rules, (3) keep focused, (4) avoid monologues, (5) speak clearly and simply, and (6) stay open to new ideas. Let's look more closely at each of these six elements of a good coaching session.

❖Action learning workshops: An action learning program or method is based upon the development and determination of learning materials instead of just proving these materials. By using the trainees experience and determined materials trainees can improve their skills. This is group based so it will enhance the coordination among trainees also.

❖Skill building Workshops and seminars: 12 workshops days each and six seminars by the renowned speakers should be conducted to help trainees in areas of building their analytical, interpersonal, leadership and decision making skills. These sessions will start after attaining the acceptance and settling of participants in this HRD activity.

❖Developing the Future Trainers: it is recommended to conduct the workshops and seminars based training sessions that should besides building the basic skill required should also improve the capability and capacity of the trainees in terms of making them able to train their remaining colleagues. This is planned to be conducted after the trainees have acquired the required level of skills in terms of analytical, numerical, administrative and managerial contexts. This exercise will make the development activity cost effective because if this group of trainees is able to train the remaining people than organization needs not to hire people from outside for training and development purpose.

b)Evaluation and Effectiveness of Training

Training evaluation is a process of measurement of learning outcomes (Christina M. Garofano 2004). Training evaluation is a process of appraising the learning outcomes and measuring the success of training program (Alvarez, K. *et al*.2004). Training process is mainly influenced by the characteristics of individual, training and organization, therefore these can also determine the effectiveness of training before the process after the process and during the process as well, and before the start of training process the training need analysis determines the effectiveness

(Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001). To evaluate the training and development process we propose here the use of Kirkpatrick's four-dimensional Measurement model (these are, reactions, learning, behavior, results), the reason behind this selection is the simplicity and better understanding of the model. Table 2 shows detailed action plan for magistrates' clerks.

Table 2: Detailed Action Plan

Phases	Major Activities
Need Assessment	• The assessment phase consists of activities regarding self-assessment • and organizational one • to identify employees' strengths and weakness and also the availability of resources by organization
Designing the Program	• arrange trainers • Choosing the methods of development from the available options • Organize the developmental materials
Implementation	• Implementing the methods using different mediums • Delivering the training • Transferring the knowledge from trainers to trainees
Evaluation	• Assessing the effectiveness of process • Assessment through difference in knowledge before and after the development program • Assessing the effectiveness in of monetary terms

The evaluation process makes it possible to judge the effectiveness and advantages of overall development process. Effectively designed training evaluation process can help organization in acquiring the information required to improve both development program delivery and organizational performance through improvement. Consider the following suggestions for evaluating the development process:

❖Prior to Implementation Phase

Before the start of training process the training need analysis determines the effectiveness (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001).

❖On going (During Implementation of Development)

• We can evaluate the training process in continuous way by:
• Asking the trainees how they're doing. Do they comprehend what's being told?
• Occasionally short tests can be conducted to check the knowledge level.
• Can be judged through excitement and enthusiasm of trainees shown from their involvement in process.

❖After Completion of the Training

• Effectiveness of training can be judged by using the following techniques:
• Testing the knowledge before and after the training and development and then comparing the results to find the difference.
• Interviewing the participants to know about their own experience of learning
• Observing the actual performance after training
• Using some expert outside the company to appraise the learner's knowledge, skills and expertise acquired after training.

3. Conclusion

The primary objective of HRD intervention in Magistrates Court Service is to create an effective and efficient senior management system with enhancement of skill level of the staff. This will be resulting in improved behaviour and skill level of employees enhances the effectiveness of management and

administrative activities and of magistrate clerks and senior staff at Magistrate courts service. Organization needs to have separate independent HRD function performing staff that should working in HR department and should be available with qualified HRD professionals and physical facilities like conference room, with required equipments (audio visual aid like multimedia etc). To have effective HRD programs organizations are required to be learning organizations. Learning organization means those organizations which have learning cultures and that learns continuously (Marsick and Watkins (1994) and organizations in today's dynamic environment need to reply upon continuous training and development programs for their better survivals.

Management development is a planned endeavor to improve both the learner's capability and capacity to run and manage the company and also themselves. The most frequently mentioned skills of effective managers include : effective communication and interpersonal skill; able not only to identify and analyze but also provide solutions to problems and motivating and leading the much of these aforesaid skills can be acquired through training and development programs, therefore in order to improve the functioning of the Magistrates' Courts Service, management development program can be used that will not only improve the present skills of all the senior people but will also make them able to carry out new responsibilities that are placed upon them due to changes in the organization in more effective and efficient way.

4. Recommendations

After comprehensive and deep analysis of given situation and going through the intensive literature available in the area. This study may able to make some recommendations which if considered and practiced by Magistrate Court service, would surly make the difference in performance of individuals as well as the over all organization.

i) Independent HRD with appropriate staff and physical facilities is required

ii)The HRD program is very much required to overcome the skill gap and improve performance.

iii) Proper need assessment and using the appropriate training and development methods as per need analysis and organizational requirements are needed to be designed and implemented to overcome the issues being faced due to lack of skills and over independence being enjoyed by staff at court

iv) The Magistrates'Courts Service should continuously assess the structure of organization and skill level of the people in order to know about the skill gap.

v)Learning interventions specially the adult learning theory should be applied for effective learning through the program

vi) Skill gap founded should be addressed timely and should be removed by using the appropriate training and development methods, so that the working of services should not suffer.

vii) The management development programs in use should be reassessed on continuous bases in order to incorporate than changes required responding to both internal and external environment of organization.

viii) Trainees' involvement and participation should be ensured in process for best results of the process.

ix) Continuous monitoring of the program, comprehensive feed back from the targeted trainees and evaluation of the program after completion of development activity is suggested to enhance the utility of spent resources.

x) To make the devolvement program more effective the supportive organizational climate, management and supervisory support and involvement is required to be ensured.

xi) The training materials for proposed training and development program should be designed in a way that can make the learning more effective and interesting activity and should be comprehensive enough to address all the issues and problems.

xii) It should be kept in mid that the targeted trainees are the knowledge workers and more interactive methods like seminars workshops, group discussions should be used as development methods and approaches.

Table 3 shows the proposed training and development design for Magistrates' court service.

Table 3: Proposed Training and Development (T&D) Design for Magistrates' Court Service for Senior Management Development Program

Designing T&D	Target staff, 18 workers
Budgetary Approximations	Expected/estimated total cost : £ 40,000/-
Implementing Methods	Process will use combination of behaviour modelling method group based learning, seminars and workshops based learning, through coaching discussion lecturing and seminars and workshops
Evaluating the Process	Process can be evaluated through changes in behaviour, improvement in skill level, and performance appraisals after completion of raining and development process, impact on career development and growth, improved ability.
Proposed training time	4 hours per day
Accountability Measures	The Magistrates' Clerks and Senior Staff, trainers and HRD professional should stand accountable for the effectiveness/ ineffectiveness of process

References

1. Speck, M. & Knipe, C. (2005) *Why can't we get it right? Designing high-quality professional development for standards-based schools*(2nd ed.).
2. Gilley, J.W. & Eggland, S.A., Principles of Human Resource Development, Addison-Wesley, NY, 1989, p. 5.
3. Kelly D, 2001, Dual Perceptions of HRD: Issues for Policy: SME's, Other Constituencies, and the Contested Definitions of Human Resource Development, http://ro.uow.edu.au/artspapers/26
4. Nadler L Ed., 1984, The Handbook of Human resources Development, John Wiley and Sons, New York.
5. Elwood F. Holton II, James W. Trott, Jr., 1996, Trends Toward a Closer Integration of Vocational Education and Human Resources Development, Journal of Vocational and Technical Education, Vol. 12, No. 2, p7
6. Granovetter, M. (1973), "The strength of weak ties", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 78, pp. 1360-80.
7. McAllister, D. (1995), "Affect- and cognition-based trust as foundations for interpersonal cooperation in organizations", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No.1, pp.24-59. David Preece, Paul Iles, (2009) "Executive development: Assuaging uncertainties through joining a leadership academy", Personnel Review, Vol. 38 Iss: 3, pp.286 – 306
8. Piškanin, A. – Rudy, J. et al. (2006): Introduction to management [Slovak version]. Bratislava: Comenius University
9. Weinberger, Lisa A.(1998) 'Commonly held theories of human resource development', Human Resource Development International, 1: 1, 75 — 93

10. Collinson, D. (2003), "Identities and insecurities: selves at work", *Organization*, Vol. 10 No.3, pp.527-47.

11. Marsick, V. and Watkins, K. (1994) 'The learning organization: an integrative vision for HRD', Human Resource Development Quarterly 5(4): 353-60.

12. An Integrated Model of Training Evaluation and Effectiveness Human Resource Development Review, Kaye Alvarez, Eduardo Salas and Christina M. Garofano 2004 3: 385, DOI: 10.1177/1534484304270820