



TRAINING AS A TOOL TO ENSUE CHANGE: A CASE OF PERSONA PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT SERIES

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Abstract

Change is the order of present times and is one of the permanent elements. Change can be planned and sometimes in planned events changes ensue. The result is seen and experienced. Organisations are focusing on change management wherein it is an approach to transitioning individuals, teams and organisations to a desired future state. Training is an effective HR tool and professionals agree that training is a complex human resource practice that can significantly impact any desired change. There are various factors like training, motivation, technology, management behavior, working environment where each factor contributes to the overall performance of individuals both in an organisation and even in society. There is positive relationship between the individual's performance and training followed by motivation that a person receives. Thus training has a positive impact on work and achievement of individuals. This paper deals with the transitioning of individuals. The paper explains the change that is found in individuals who underwent planned training. The training program by the name Persona: Education is Progress (EIP) was conducted for adult learners interested in personality development. After the training of three months that was conducted for six hours weekly by the authors on various aspects of personality development, the change in these individuals was measured and results notify that these beneficiaries have done exceptionally well in their walk of life. Although the future state of change was not planned by the trainers in this Persona series, results shown after the training program indicate a drastic positive change. Thus the authors emphasize the fact that training is a tool to effect change and if change is planned and the desired results are structured then training as an HR tool can be effective to bring about the change that is desired.

Key words: Training, Persona, Change, beneficiaries, Personality Development, Transitioning.

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Introduction

Competencies must be acquired by all in society in order to perform better. One of the ways to enhance individual competencies is by attending workshops that give training and are development oriented. Training and development are the two sides of a single coin. Through training and development, learning takes place and it will have a relatively permanent impact on the life of individuals as is shown in their work and other work related aspects. Thus it is a fact that training and development helps in optimizing the utilization of human resource that further helps the individuals to achieve the organizational goals as well as their individual goals.

Training cum Development helps in inculcating the sense of team work, team spirit, and inter-team collaboration. It helps in inculcating in individuals the zeal to learn. It helps in improving upon the quality of work and work-life. Training and Development helps in developing leadership skills, motivation, loyalty, better attitudes, and other aspects that successful workers and managers usually display.

The question arises as to why these skills are required and why they need to be updated by individuals. The reason is quite obvious. It is the continuous changes that act as a force to keep individuals on their toes and they need to be equipped. Change is constant and these changes are here to stay.

At its most basic level, change is a movement out of a **current state** (how things are today), through a **transition state** and to a **future state** (how things will be done). Change happens all around us - at home, in our community and at work. Changes can be internally motivated or externally motivated. The change can be a dramatic departure from what we know or it can be a minor one. Changes can be anticipated or unexpected. But in all cases, the **fundamental nature of change** is a movement from the current state through a transition state to a future state.

However, change management is necessary because organizational change - moving from an organizational current state to an organizational future state - ultimately impacts **how people do their jobs**.



While change is about moving to a future state, change management is about **supporting individual employees** impacted by the change **through their own transitions** - from their own current state to their own future state that has been created by the project or initiative.

To bring about this change, one of the most productive tools of HR is training. Training is the action of teaching a person a particular skill or type of behaviour.

'Training' implies putting skills into people, when actually **we should be developing people from the inside out, beyond skills**, i.e., facilitating learning. Thus the focus is on **facilitating learning**, not imposing training. **Emotional maturity, integrity, and compassion** are more important than skills and processes. Thus talk about **learning and focus on the person, from the inside out, not from the outside in**, and offer opportunities to people to develop **as people** in as many ways as possible.

Literature Review

According to **Raja et al (2011)**, training and development is a very important tool for an organization to compete in this challenging and changing world. Their empirical study reveals that there is a positive relationship between training design and organizational performance. Importance of training has been documented for variables other than organizational performance. However, many of these additional outcomes are related to performance indirectly. Training and development is basically directed at employee but its ultimate impact goes to organization, because the end user of its benefits is the organization itself.

Training and development has been acknowledged to be a very important component of organizational performance. However, it is not an end goal, but rather training is characterized as a means to an end – the end being productive, efficient work organizations, populated by informed workers who see themselves as significant stakeholders in their organizations' success (**Byrne, 2009**).



Training will have the greatest impact when it is bundled together with other human resource management practices and these practices are also implemented following sound principles and practices based on empirical research (**Abang et al, 2009**).

Herman and Kurt, 2009 study garnered support for the benefits of training for organizations which include improved organizational performance (e.g., profitability, effectiveness, productivity, operating revenue per employee) as well as other outcomes that relate directly (e.g., reduced costs, improved quality and quantity) or indirectly (e.g., employee turnover, organization's reputation, social capital) to performance.

Persona Series

Persona is a personality development series which is initiated by the Freston Knowledge Foundation. It is a platform that encourages adult learning. It has a motto called EIP, that is, education is progress. Enthusiastic purposeful learners come to this forum and attend personality development classes. There is no fee charged. In the personality development classes of persona topics are structured on the need of the individuals. They decide on the topic to be discussed in the next week; however broad guidelines of the topic are given well in advance. Some of the issues that are discussed are motivation, communication skills, presentation skills, reading and writing skills, body language, personal and interpersonal effectiveness, public speaking, decision making skills, savings and investment patterns, tax management, national peace and harmony, cultural differences, parenting skills, creativity, group discussion and many more. The pedagogy practiced in the series range from lectures to role play, group discussion and exchange of views using multimedia tools. Individuals come to the sessions on their own free will and interact with all during the sessions.

Research Methodology

4.1 Statement of the problem:

Present study focuses on the impact training has on the facets of personality of the respondents. The respondents of the study voluntarily joined the training series and underwent weekly six hrs of training on various aspects of personality development ranging from basics to advanced facets. The immediate output/impact of the training was

evaluated through various test sheets with the total score out of hundred. The study also measures the partial advanced impact of this training series on the lives of respondents.

Scope of the Research

The scope of the study was restricted to respondents who were the participants who voluntarily joined the Persona Personality Development Series during April to June 2014. Respondents who undertook all the test at varied periods were the sample of the study.

Objectives of the Study

- (i) To study the impact of purposeful learning.
- (ii) Examine whether trainees enhance their work efficiency after undergoing training.
- (iii) To assess the impact of the training on the skill set of individuals

Research Design

The present study is exploratory in nature. This also includes the descriptive study which involved the researcher in collecting the primary data by making use of the scores of the research instrument to a very large extent for the purpose of the study.

Sampling Design

Sample design is a plan for drawing the samples from the population. Following steps were followed in the sampling design.

Sample Unit

Individuals who voluntarily joined the Persona training series were the respondents for the study.

Sampling Frame

The study was restricted within the city limits of Mangalore.

Sample Size

As per the decided sampling frame, the sample sizes obtained for the study were 50 respondents. However, three individuals were not available for continuous assessment and hence the sample size is restricted to 47 in total.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

- As the respondents of the group were heterogeneous in their demographic profile, the overall impact of the training programme cannot be evaluated. However, only individual growth and development of the respondents can be highlighted.
- The training programme was a semi-structured one and only interested individuals joined the same. Hence the motive and purpose of they joining this series is varied.
- The research instrument used to assess the impact of training pregame at various intervals was independent, wherein the assessment was from basic to advanced levels.
- This study made used only the scores of research instruments which have a limited implication. Further studies can be undertaken using advanced methods of testing the effectiveness of training programs.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1
Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Gender				Marital Status	
Options		Frequency		Options	Frequency
Male		34 (72%)		Married	29 (62%)
Female		13 (28%)		Unmarried	18 (38%)
TOTAL		N=47		TOTAL	N=47
Occupation		Age		Qualifications	
Options	Frequency	Options	Frequency	Options	Frequency
Students	6 (13%)	15 years - 24 years	5 (11%)	Up to 10 Std	3(6%)
Businessmen	21(45%)	25 years - 34 years	9 (19%)	10 Std to PUC	8 (17%)
Private Sector Employee	11(23%)	35 years - 44 years	17 (36%)	Graduate	14 (30%)
Govt. Sector Employee	3(6%)	45 years - 54 years	8(17%)	Post Graduate	1 (2%)
Housewives	4(9%)	55 years - 64 years	7(15%)	Vocational/ Technical	19(40%)
Retired	2(4%)	More than 64 years	1(2%)	Others	2 (4%)
TOTAL	N=47	TOTAL	N=47	TOTAL	N=47

Source Primary data

Interpretation Demographic profile of respondents highlight that larger sector of respondents in the sample were males (72%) and a large percentage of the respondents were married(62%). Regarding the type of occupation, majority were businessmen (45%). Almost 36% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 35-44 years, followed by 19% of respondents in the age group of 25- 34 years. The distribution on education revealed that most respondents in the study were **Vocational/Technical** qualified (40%) followed by about 30% being graduates.

Table 2a Dependent Sample T-Test:

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1	Before the training program (On April 1 st 2014) (Period-1)	60.40	47	11.723
	After the training program (On May 15 th 2014) (Period-2)	66.38	47	9.405
Pair II	Before the training program (On May 15 th 2014) (Period-2)	66.38	47	9.405
	After the training program (On June 30 th 2014) (Period-3)	74.19	47	8.19

Interpretation Above table labeled Paired Samples Statistics gives descriptive statistics in two pairs of data. When period-1 and period-2 are compared based on the average scores, it can be concluded that the average score after training (66.38) is higher on an average as compared to before training score (60.40) highlighting the lower standard deviation (9.405).

When period-2 and period-3 are compared based on the average score, it can be concluded that the average score after training (74.19) is higher on an average as compared to before training score (66.38) highlighting the lowest standard deviation (8.19).

Thus it can concluded that Persona training programme has a lasting impact on the personality facets like body language, motivation, communication skills, intra and interpersonal effectiveness, human relation skills, creativity, problem solving, decision making and analytical thinking.

Table 5b Paired Samples Correlations

PAIR	N	Correlation	Sig.
PAIR-1 {Period-1 & Period-2}	47	.639	.000
PAIR-2 {Period-2 & Period-3}	47	.653	.000

Interpretation: The above table labeled Paired Samples Correlations gives the value of the correlation coefficient between the two variables and significance level for the two-tailed test to assess the hypothesis that the correlation coefficient equals zero. Correlation value indicates that there exists high degree of correlation between scores before & after training & since p-value $0.00 < 0.05$, correlation coefficient is also significant.

Table 3 Paired Samples Test

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference in the ability of trainees after a specific training.

H₁: There is significant difference in the ability of trainees after a specific training.

PAIR	Paired Differences		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation			
PAIR-1 {Period-1 & Period-2}	-5.979	9.223	-4.444	46	.000*
PAIR-2 {Period-2 & Period-3}	-7.80851	7.40634	-7.228	46	.000*

**Indicates that the values are highly significant at 5% l.o.s*

Interpretation The above table labeled Paired Samples Test gives the results of the analysis. Observing the two-tailed p-values for both the pairs (pair 1 and pair 2) are < 0.05 , the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected at 5% significance level and it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the ability of trainees after a specific training which means that the average output of the respondents has changed after attending the training program.

Conclusion

The study identifies the impact training can have on adult learners who are in reality focusing on purposeful learning. The present study deals with the transitioning of



individuals. The paper explains the change that is found in individuals who underwent semi-structured training. Majority of the respondents expressed that there is a change in their outlook towards life and they have benefitted from these training sessions and the impact is felt. With the increase risk taking propensity and challenging decisions, a few of the respondents have changed the outlook of their life and have succeeded by leaps and bounds in their personal and professional life.

The findings of the study indicate that Persona-Education is Progress (EIP) series was highly effective and significant between the periods of study. Thus the authors emphasize the fact that training is a tool to ensure change and if change is planned and the desired results are structured then training; an HR tool can be effective to bring about the change that is desired.

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