

A STUDY ON TRAINING STRATEGIES IN FACILITY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES OF PUNE

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Abstract: This paper is explorative study on the training strategies of facility management services in Pune city. Facility management is a prevalent concept in developed countries from last many decades and is introduced to India in the last 2 decades. It includes providing a whole range of services to clients for their needs related to physical infrastructure security, housekeeping & cleaning services, food services, technical maintenance services, pest control, transport services and all other secondary requirements for clients. This is all done through agreeing and signing of service level agreement (SLA) between the client and the service provider. Their training requirements for facility management companies are unique as most staff need be multi-skilled to take the challenge of role change or client change for fulfilling the professional requirement of the clients. A structured questionnaire was used to seek response from the working level and supervisory level staff of the service provider companies. The results indicate a lot to be done in terms of soft skills and technical skills should be imparted through more on the job trainings as each client requirement is different.

Index Terms - Facility services, facility management, Training, facility management companies, training strategies, types of training.

I. INTRODUCTION

‘An analysis of training strategies adopted by Facility Management companies for their Ground and Supervisory level staff. (Communication skills, body language, Hygiene & grooming, Soft skills, technical knowledge and attitude)’.

The major objectives of the study were:

- To study different training strategies carried out in the sample organization.
- To identify the training needs of facility operations management ground and supervisory level employees.
- To analyze the impact of current training strategies.
- To identify the training strategies which are be suitable for the organization.

In order to achieve the foresaid objectives, the tool that was devised and used for the different levels of the operations division was:

❖ Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model

If we deliver training for team or organization, then we probably know how important it is to measure its effectiveness. After all, we don't want to spend time or money on training that doesn't provide a good return. This is where Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model can help you objectively analyze the effectiveness and impact of your training, so that you can improve it in the future. Donald Kirkpatrick, Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin and past president of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), first published his Four-Level Training Evaluation Model in 1959, in the US Training and Development Journal. The model was then updated in 1975, and again in 1994, when he published his best-known work, "Evaluating Training Programs."

The four levels are:

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|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Reaction. | 2. Learning. |
| 3. Behavior. | 4. Results. |

II. INDUSTRY PROFILE

Let's take a closer look at the Facility Management (FM) industry, where it began and how it continues to mature and evolve. The facility management industry's humble beginnings began with the concept of service bundling – where companies sought to externalize services as well as soft and hard facility management outsourcing. The story of the industry's technology and growth roadmap towards Service Integration, then to Total Facility management, Sustainability Management and now to what we refer today as Complete Workplace Management.

Recent research shows that management within facility management industry needs to better center its activities to providing more customer-oriented approaches towards service delivery. So, as service-centered workplace managers of the future, facility management providers must understand the opportunities and challenges facing their core organizations. Ensuring that the workplaces continues contribute to the core organizations' strategic objectives in a fast-changing, increasingly competitive,

globalized economy will be at the forefront of how core organizations determine the quality of facility management providers service offerings.

III. TYPES OF TRAINING

Various types of training can be given to the employees such as induction training, refresher training, on the job training, vestibule training, and training for promotions. Some of the commonly used training programs are listed below:

1. Induction training: Also known as orientation training given for the new recruits in order to make them familiarize with the internal environment of an organization. It helps the employees to understand the procedures, code of conduct, policies existing in that organization.

2. Job instruction training: This training provides an overview about the job and experienced trainers demonstrates the entire job. Addition training is offered to employees after evaluating their performance if necessary.

3. Vestibule training: It is the training on actual work to be done by an employee but conducted away from the work place.

4. Refresher training: This type of training is offered in order to incorporate the latest development in a particular field. This training is imparted to upgrade the skills of employees. This training can also be used for promoting an employee.

5. Apprenticeship training: Apprentice is a worker who spends a prescribed period of time under a supervisor.

IV. TRAINING: A MAJOR NEED

Training is a major responsibility. There's no doubt that employee training is an ongoing need in every company. Unfortunately, however, it's not always a top priority. One of the first challenges trainers face is a resistance to training from both employees and management. Employees are frustrated at taking time away from their jobs, and managers aren't convinced that time spent training is time well-spent.

We need to convince both groups that training is crucial by proving to them that training doesn't take employees away from their work, that training is, in fact, a crucial part of their work. In order to remain competitive in today's global marketplace, it is vital that company's workforce maintains the best skills and know-how to produce the best products and services. That means initial training to get up to speed and continual training in all new technologies, systems, or methods that bring more efficiency, more features, and better services.

Conversely, a poorly trained workforce is more likely to turn out poor-quality products. Even if employees receive top-notch initial training, your company can fall behind in the competitive marketplace if employees don't continue to learn how to do their jobs better.

Training affects the bottom line in the company. Here are a few ways:

- More-efficient employees save costs.
- Training improves productivity—which increases profits.
- Up-to-date training gives you an edge over competitors.
- Career training aids employee retention.
- Proper procedures avoid accidents, lost workdays, and workers' compensation costs.

In short, an effective overall learning program is a good return on investment (ROI). In fact, ROI analysis is an integral part of effective training evaluation because it gives specific measurements to the financial impact of training on the company's bottom line. ROI answers the question "For every rupee the company invests in training, how many rupees the company gets back?"

V. OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM

This study is an important one when looked at from the Organization's perspective. That is because at any given time, the employees can become more and more skilled and competent through the identification of their training needs so that they can contribute better to the organization's growth and sustenance. This particular process of understanding the training needs and studying training strategies will enable Management people to understand, discuss and apply the appropriate training strategy for employees. This study gives the organization a lot of concrete data regarding the employee skill level and accordingly training requirements which can be further used to plan the training content for the employees.

VI. OBSERVATION AND FINDINGS

The observations and results that were gathered from the survey for ground and supervisory level employee's of facility management companies in Pune. The major findings from the exercise were as follows (the findings are for 2 levels that is ground and supervisory level employees which were included in the exercise):

- ❖ The current level of the employees in relation to knowledge, skills, attitude and aptitude was available to the organization for use.
- ❖ The effectiveness of the trainers as per employee's feedback came to the knowledge of the organization.
- ❖ The focus of training strategy came to the forefront for the senior management to know about, and take corrective measures.
- ❖ The major focus of trainings was on technical knowledge and was negligent on the most prominent requirement of Non-verbal communication learning.
- ❖ The difference of ground and supervisory level employee's expectation regarding training and trainer.
- ❖ The other factor being more young employees in the organization who can be easily trained and can be motivated for career planning through effective training.
- ❖ Training for ground and supervisory level employees should be conducted through trainers who are proficient to communicate at employee's level of language skills.

- ❖ The employees who are capable in their skills and competencies are nominated for succession planning.

VII. LIMITATIONS

The limitations that were felt during the course of this study are as follow:

1. Due to lack of time, only the ground and supervisory employee's self-ratings could be taken. The study would have been much better in quality if the employee ratings for other employees were also considered like a 360 degree rating. It would have brought a lot more accuracy and authenticity to the ratings.
2. It was observed that in many teams the complete seriousness of the exercise was not understood. This was reflected in the type of ratings that were provided.
3. A part of the employees could not be included in the exercise as they were out of the site due to sick or temporary work on other sites.
4. The over confidence or the under confidence of the employees in their self-ratings caused some amount of inaccuracy in the overall picture that emerged.
5. The sharing of the results with the employees has not been done and so it leaves a doubt as to whether the full effect that could be achieved by the employee direct involvement is being achieved.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations based on the observations and results gathered from the research:

1. Employees should be clearly explained regarding the objective of conducting the training and also the importance of such exercise to their own selves, so that there is a cent percent involvement from the employees' side. This would also help in speeding up the training as the doubts regarding the content, mode and the expectations after it, could be cleared out in the initial phases itself.
2. Training should be carried out in 360 degrees by taking the feedback immediately after the training as it would strengthen the authenticity of the trainer and would give a clearer picture as to the exact learning levels of the employees.
3. The training should be carried out with the involvement of the senior management as it would bring more quality to the learning objectives of the employees for the company.
4. Frequency of training should be improved from half yearly schedules towards quarterly schedules.
5. More focus should be given to training on topics related to non-verbal communication like body language, attitude and service orientation.
6. To introduce a training card for all employees stating the levels of training attended and to be kept with them. Employees need to get it signed by trainer for each training. This system will help in keeping a track of employee training records to be verified at any point of time.
7. The trainings should be planned with the involvement of the employees as well (not only the team leaders) so that there are no low yield trainings being held. This would cut down the costs of training further.
8. Experts from the same site team should be encouraged and trained to give training which would be more effective due to ease in understanding the trainer's language.

Further, the findings of the exercise could be shared with the employees in a manner deemed fit by the senior management, so that the employees are clear about the areas in which they are lacking, and thus from their own side can start working on it.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

The process of identifying the best training strategy were successfully developed and analysed for the use of facility management companies. The data provided can be used by the organization for planning its training and development programmes for the year ahead. The submitted sheets also provide a good insight into the current position of the training levels and effectiveness for employees as far as knowledge, skills, attitude and aptitude are concerned and also an idea as to how to use them for the benefit of the organization.

The exercise carried out this time has some limitations which are also mentioned in detailed in the report. It would be advantageous if these limitations are overcome the next time. It would improve the quality of the exercise by leaps and bounds.

The research was carried out in a good manner and has met the objectives of the study, though it still has quite some scope for improvements which could be incorporated subsequently.

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