

# Learning Needs Analysis

## – Activity Summary –

### 1. Don't Worry, It's Not Rocket Science

This activity explains the importance of Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) in the context of a basic model of the Learning and Development Cycle. It also uses the Keep It Simple and Straightforward (KISS) method to demystify Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA), LNA and the performance gap. An activity that emphasizes the common-sense aspects of identifying learning needs.

### 2. Examining the Business Needs

Participants will consider ways of gathering and analyzing information to ensure that planned learning supports the business needs of the company or organization. They will examine their Mission Statements, Departmental Objectives and performance indicators as well as utilizing SWOT and PEST analysis.

### 3. When to Carry Out Learning Needs Analysis

An activity to help participants think about when analysis of learning needs should take place, and to ensure that they learn to adopt a proactive approach to planning their LNA programs. This will cover analyses of both individual, departmental and company-wide needs.

### 4. Planning the LNA Project

Conducting an LNA project requires the resources of time, manpower and accurate planning. During this activity, the participants explore various planning methods before moving on to specify the tasks, time and people required as they plan their own specific LNA project.

### 5. Presenting Your Case

This activity involves the development of a presentation to be delivered to senior management, with the goal of gaining support and approval for a proposed LNA project. It will concentrate on content rather than presentation skills, emphasizing the benefits to be gained from conducting the project. The key points of the presentation can be used as the basis for informal meetings if this approach is more appropriate.

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## **6. Staff Briefings**

An LNA exercise will produce best results when staff are interested, committed and aware of the benefits it can bring. During this activity, participants will work on developing briefings designed to ensure that staff 'buy in' to the LNA, minimizing resistance to change. Key points of the briefings can be used as the basis for one-on-one meetings if this is more appropriate.

## **7. LNA Methods: What's Available and When Should it be Used?**

An opportunity to briefly examine the wide variety of LNA methods available. Methods can range from casual conversation in the staff lounge to the use of Assessment Centers. This activity explores the advantages and disadvantages of selected methods and discusses constraints such as cost and time.

## **8. Analyzing the Job**

A step-by-step guide to specifying the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to fulfil the requirements of a given role. A crucial task that lies at the foundation of assessing the performance gap.

## **9. Designing the LNA Questionnaire**

This workshop-style activity provides an examination of the dos and don'ts of questionnaire design along with the possible pitfalls that face the designer. Using this knowledge, the participants then construct a Learning Needs Analysis questionnaire that is appropriate to their needs.

## **10. Piloting the LNA Questionnaire**

An activity that guides participants through the pilot stage of the questionnaire, and the identification and amendment of any resulting problem areas.

## **11. The LNA Questionnaire: Distribution, Completion, Return**

A detailed examination of the issues surrounding the distribution, completion and return of the LNA questionnaires. Topics covered by this activity include: the internal mailing system (electronic and manual); preparing for impromptu interviews; enlisting support to ensure that deadlines are met.

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## **12. Analyzing the Questionnaire**

By making use of colour coding, flowcharts and carefully designed summary sheets, this activity supplies the structured approach necessary to analyze the questionnaires successfully. It also gives the participants an opportunity to practice the recommended procedures.

## **13. Technical Tests**

An excellent way to identify performance gaps in technical areas such as product knowledge and Health and Safety. This activity uses a checklist to guide participants through the development of technical tests. Topics covered include: acceptable standards; test conditions; the best person to devise the test.

## **14. The One-on-One Interview**

Discussion and role-play help participants to focus on the key elements of the Learning Needs Interview.

## **15. Focus Groups**

The people who actually do the job are usually those who are most aware of problems and learning needs. During this activity, participants explore the initiating, facilitating and observing of focus groups.

## **16. Using Appraisal Documentation to Identify Needs**

A look at the investigation of learning needs using appraisal documentation. Participants explore: the objectives of carrying out LNA of appraisal documentation; two-tier analysis – the needs of appraiser and appraisee; departmental, organizational and role-related learning needs. Participants work on case studies using appraisal documentation to practice their skills.

## **17. Using Observation and Work Sampling to Identify Needs**

Sitting in on the sales interview; spending time working in the administration department; checking files; sampling letters. This activity examines various methods of identifying needs through observation and work sampling in a truly 'hands-on' style.