DESIGNING HUMAN SETTLEMENTS TRAINING IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

Volume 1: Case Study

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FOREWORD

Owing to the rapid pace of urban growth in the developing countries and the scarcity of resources, the need for competent managers rises dramatically each year. For this reason, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has, for more than a decade, been offering training programmes for urban managers aimed at closing the skills gap and promoting new approaches, methods and techniques. The need for training, however, far exceeds UNCHS (Habitat)'s capabilities. Further, many local training institutions are not used to and, in some cases, are reluctant to design training programmes that respond adequately to the emerging requirements of human settlements managers. The problem is compounded by a general absence of information about designing training programmes that promote learning - programmes that, therefore, have high potential for bringing about the needed changes in work performance.

This publication, in two volumes, is intended to close the training information gap. *Designing Human Settlements Training in Asian Countries* was written by Fred Fisher and David W. Tees of the International Development Institute for Organization and Management (IDIOM), in collaboration with UNCHS (Habitat) Training Section staff and with Professor N.S. Patil, who assisted in preparation of the Asian version of the manual. The training materials were produced within the Settlements Management Training Programme Capacity Building Project funded by the Government of the Netherlands and were field-tested in the UNCHS (Habitat) training courses in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

This manual is a contribution to human-resource development and institutional capacity-building needed to facilitate best practices in settlements management and development, one of the key objectives of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul in 1996.

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INTRODUCTION

This case study and the accompanying tool kit are based on many assumptions about training (or what we like to call facilitated learning) and related matters such as management and organization development. While most of these assumptions will become clear, as you and others use the case study and "tools, we want to comment on a few we believe are fundamental to the design of effective training interventions.

First, experiential learning designs (those that provide an opportunity to learn from and through experiences) are almost always effective, and they tend to be effective regardless of the cultural context in which they are applied. People the world over learn, in one way or another, through experience. Unfortunately, this piece of conventional wisdom seems to escape the attention of many trainers when they sit down to design a training event.

Secondly, training can be a very effective management tool. While most training is not designed to be carried out in-house, or with work teams, it is a practice to be encouraged. This case study is written around the needs for, and opportunities related to, in-house training. It will rigorously pursue the opportunities to learn on the job. In so doing, it will make the potential of training as a management strategy increasingly clear.

Thirdly, there are a lot of myths, about what works and doesn't, when it comes to designing and conducting training. These myths can get in the way of our efforts to design more effective learning experiences. The best way to demystify these myths is to expose them to experience.

Finally, when designing training programmes, it is important to trust your instincts and experience - and, of course, to be willing to take a few risks. To paraphrase C.S. Lewis, *"A trainer with good instincts and experience is never at the mercy of a few participants with only theory at their command"*.

What -- another training manual?

Good question, and it deserves an answer before we go any further. First of all, there's a lot of dull, mediocre, and ineffective training being conducted around the world, and we might add, at a horrendous expenditure of human and financial resources. We must all strive to achieve more with the resources we have available. For trainers, this means being more diligent when we design learning programmes for our clients. All too often, the blame for mediocre, dull and unsuccessful training can be attributed to bad design.

We suspect nobody starts out to produce a bad training design. They, most likely, result from a lack of awareness, knowledge and skills on how to design more dynamic, client-centered, results-driven learning experiences. This case study and the companion tool kit are all about increasing your awareness about, and knowledge and skills in creating contemporary training designs.

The design of training events doesn't happen in a vacuum. It's simply one step in a long train of events that determine how successful your training interventions will be. For example, if you don't have well defined training objectives, it's nearly impossible to design a well-targeted training programme. "*If you don't know where you are going, a good design probably won't get you there"*.

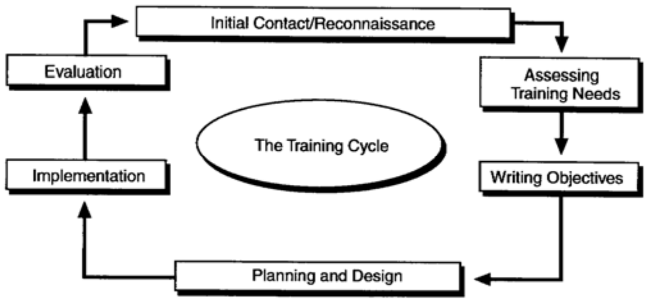
Another factor that affects training designs and training objectives is the absence of any training needs assessment data. If you don't have reliable information on training needs, it's almost impossible to know what kind of objectives to write. And without needs assessment information, you can't design training interventions that will achieve objectives based on real needs.

In training design and implementation, everything is tied to everything else. Well, almost everything. Or, to say it a bit differently, training is systematic. Just about every aspect of training is linked to every other aspect. We try to convey this message in this case study. Not all training design publications make the connection.

To help you think systematically about training, we have included a graphic representation of the training cycle. The cycle is shown with six phases that correspond to the major events in planning and carrying out a training programme.

We also believe training designs must have a conceptual anchor, an anchor that is firmly placed in learning styles and adult learning theory. Again, we have tried to act upon this belief.

Finally, the design of training interventions is a behavioural act, based on the application of training design skills. In other words, training design is a skill-oriented behaviour that can be learned. This case study and the accompanying tools can help you and others learn these skills.



A quick tour of the case study and tool kit

This set of materials is a bit different from most. It has a story line. It tells a tale of training. As we thought about how to write a manual about training design, we realised it needs to be more than just a tool kit of various devices that one takes out and applies to a training challenge. While each tool in our kit comes with instructions for its use, the case study attempts to help you, the reader, decide which tool or tools to reach for, as you take on the design challenge.

To pound a nail, you need a hammer. But to build a house, you must have a full complement of tools. And, it helps to have a set of blueprints. So it is with training. You can't build an exciting training programme if all you have in your tool kit is a set of lecture notes.

The Case Study

The case study is a blueprint of sorts. And "Peter" and "Uma," who play prominent roles in the case study, are the architects. They provide us with a set of plans. The case study (our story line) is interrupted from time to time with questions. We would like you to ponder and answer each of these questions for your own learning enjoyment. We also have provided some thoughts of our own - what we call commentary - to explain at times what is happening to our training colleagues at GTI (the mythical institute where Peter and Uma work). To the extent possible, we have cross-referred the case study with the tool kit.

Another aspect of the case study, to keep in mind as you read it, is the shift we make from a more conventional approach to training design and delivery (e.g. workshops) to activities that focus on institutional development. The case study, in the beginning, provides a thorough review of the Training Cycle, as experienced by the trainers. The initial work of our trainers is focused, more or less, on conventional requests for training, although the responses are not necessarily conventional. Once they have mastered the basics of good training design and delivery, we thrust them into a new challenge, helping their client develop both the work organization and an in-house training capacity. Given this change of focus, the trainer's attention, in the case study, shifts from individual skill development and specific problem solving - to some fundamental aspects of organization development. When this shift is made, we spend little time or effort on addressing the steps in the training cycle, although they continue to be important in the design of organizational interventions. We have made the assumption that both you and our case study trainers have internalized these basics by this time and are applying them without being reminded of their importance to the overall process.

The tool kit

The tool kit is just that, a set of tools that will help you build successful training programmes. The tools have been arranged in such a way that you will know which one works best for what task. On the other hand, we also recognize that some tools can be used to perform a wide range of tasks. So, don't be fooled into thinking that each performs only one function.

We haven't, of course, included every training design tool on the market. Our tool box and your patience as a reader aren't big enough for that. In fact, we have limited the tools to a few basic ones that seem to work well in a wide variety of situations. The challenge is to get to know all of them well and adapt them, when necessary, to meet your specific needs.

Who should use this material?

This manual has been written for a diverse audience

- New trainers who may still need a tool kit handy when they design
- Seasoned veterans who feel they've worn a rut to the lectern and want to get out of it

- In-house training teams who might want to rethink how they design training ventures and decide to use the manual as a Friday afternoon study guide; or,
- A group of trainers, convened by an institution such as UNCHS (Habitat), who would attend a five to 10-day workshop, focused on the training design task.

When should it be used?
If this manual/tool kit is any good, it should be pulled from the shelf rather frequently: as a guide for quick reference; as a reminder of what to do next; as a workbook that forms the basis for a residential workshop; or any time you think it might help you and your colleagues design a more exciting, relevant training experience.

To summarize, we have written these materials to help you become a better trainer and to assist you when a mental block stands between you and your next training programme. It also provides an in-depth look at how design fits into the training cycle and how the training cycle is a vehicle for taking you into some new ventures as a trainer. As we have said before, the training cycle starts from the initial indication from the client that your services might be needed and ends with the impact these services have on individual and organization performance.

THE TRAINING CYCLE

1. INITIAL CONTACT/RECONNAISSANCE

Case Study
17 July, 3:30 p.m.
Asif Khan, the CMO of Daspur, put down the phone, leaned back in his chair and smiled. The call was from a Scandinavian donor with whom he had been negotiating for some months. The donor finally agreed to provide funds to upgrade Daspur's municipal markets. It was part of a low-income housing improvement programme on which the city had embarked during the previous year.

As usual, there were strings attached or "conditions precedent," as donors like to call them, but then, he thought, there are always conditions precedent, aren't there? The donor wants to see changes in the operation of the markets before the grant is finally approved. One was a 15-percent increase in market revenues in the next 12 months. Shouldn't be too hard to accomplish, Khan thought to himself.

Then, there was the Market Vendors' Association -that group of women vendors who were always wanting something from the city. The donor had talked about collaboration with them -maybe a community- development programme. Well, Khan thought, our market officers and revenue collectors have never been very effective when it comes to working with citizens. Maybe, we should consider sending them off for some community-development training.

18 July, 9:21 am
The next morning, Khan called the South Asia Training Institute in Vivat. SATI was just eight kilometers down the road, and some of the city's, administrative secretaries had been trained there. The CMO had also lectured at the institute a few times.

The principal was not in. Khan asked for the head of Local Government Training. He was not available either -- off on some long-term training course in the United Kingdom. Finally, he reached a young man by the name of D'Souza, Peter D'Souza, a relatively new lecturer on the local-government training staff. "Peter this is the CMO of Daspur, Asif Khan".

"Yes, Mr. Khan, what can we do for you?"

"We need to train some of our market officers in community development. What can you do to help?"

"Well, sir, we have a six-month programme scheduled for late next year. It's primarily for social workers but includes several sessions on community development. I think it might meet your needs".

"Next year! We can't wait that long, and we certainly can't send our market people off for six months. We've got a donor who wants some action now! They may even be willing to pay for the training. Can we count on you or not?"

"Kdi baat nahin, Mr. Khan. No problem. We can put together a programme for you. Community development, you say?"

"Community development - or something like that. Anyway, something short -- can't spare these officers for long. Why don't you send me a proposal? Can I hear from you by next week?"

"No problem".

"Thanks. I'll expect to hear from you".

Questions to reader

- What has Peter learned about the CMO's training needs?
- What does Peter need to know that he didn't find out during this initial discussion with the CMO?
- What would you have done differently in discussing this training request from the CMO?

Commentary

"I keep six honest serving-men (They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When;
and How and Where and Who".
-- Rudyard Kipling*

*Famed late 19th and early 20th century British novelist, short story writer and poet. The quoted verse is taken from "The elephant's child," one of several fantastic children's tales published together as "The 'Just-So' Stories" (1897).

Kipling's serving men can also serve the trainer well, particularly in the initial contact with a potential training client. Peter's discussion with the CMO was full of missed opportunities to: (a) become informed about what the CMO wanted; and (b) put Peter in a position to serve the CMO and the city of Daspur.

By calling on Kipling's "six honest serving-men," Peter could have learned from Khan many of the basic facts about the situation. Here is a brief look at the kind of information Peter could have got from the discussion by asking a few probing questions.

Who?

All Peter knows from the brief conversation he just had with the CMO is that Khan wants some market officers trained in community development. Who are those market officers? What do they do? What are their duties and responsibilities? How many officers are to be trained? These are all legitimate who questions. Any of them would have helped define clearly the parameters of the training request.

Why?

Why does the CMO want these officers trained? About the only clue Peter has at this point is that a donor "wants some action now." But why? This is not enough information for Peter to sit down and design a training programme for them.

The "why" -- type questions quickly lead to a discussion of what - what the training might ultimately cover in terms of content.

What?

On this aspect of the training request, Peter is also in the dark. Khan mentioned "community development," but what does this mean? As we shall learn later in the case study, the CMO was referring to a very specific situation he believed could be addressed through "community-development" training, but "community development" means different things to different people. When words or phrases tend to be ambiguous, it is useful to probe further - to find out what the client means and to resist the temptation to give such terms our own interpretations.

When?

The CMO opened the door for another of Kipling's honest serving men, but Peter declined the invitation to have him enter. "We've got a donor who wants action now!" What does "now" mean? Tomorrow? Next week? Also, Khan said he could not wait until next year to train his officers but Peter neglected to find out what timeframe would be acceptable to Khan - yet, such information is important. If SATI and its staff are fully booked for several months, it may be impossible for them to deliver the training. At this point, Peter has only a vague notion about the time parameters within which the CMO is willing to accept the training.

Where?

Where might the training be held? While this query is not as important as others, it is useful information to have in the initial stages of planning. For example, Peter may be thinking in terms of residential training at SATI. Khan, on the other hand, may have in mind some kind of in-house, on-the-job training programme. If their unspoken assumptions about training locations are this far apart, there could be misunderstanding later. It's best to clarify these assumptions early on. Location affects many things in training - cost, logistics, staff availability, timing and, not the least, training design.

How?

The only question that is not always germane at this time, from the trainer's perspective, is "How?" Yet, the client can and should make such inquiries. The CMO, in this case study, could have asked Peter about his approach to training. "How would you go about training a line officer, like our market manager? Would it involve mostly lectures? Or, skill-development exercises? Or, some other approach? I've seen too much academic training in my career in local government and it's just not effective. So, I'm interested in how you might go about training our officers." As consumers of training, managers have as much right to ask about how the training will be delivered as how a piece of machinery they are planning to purchase works.

From the trainer's perspective, the how question, at this point in the contact, needs to be answered philosophically - or from a set of values about how to train and how individuals learn - and not in detail about the training design. The how of training is a function of several variables, including:

a. The need for training as identified through some systematic assessment process;

b. The constraints placed upon the training (e.g., finances, time);

c. The number of people to be trained, their skills, job positions, experience etc.;

d. The learning objectives or outcomes to be achieved through the training. These aspects of the training situation, and more, will ultimately answer the "how" question.

We have spent considerable time just now talking about Peter's first telephone conversation with the CMO, more about what was not said than what was said. This discussion points out the importance of the initial discussion with the training client. Not only does it provide the trainer with an opportunity to gain valuable insights into the circumstances surrounding the training request; it also provides an opportunity for the trainer to establish his or her credibility with the client. Part of this credibility is knowing how to ask the right questions.

The initial discussion might also represent the decision point of "go/no-go". No training institution is equipped to meet all training needs. The trainer, in the initial contact with the training client, should try to determine whether the resources he or she and the training institution represent are compatible with the potential client's needs. If clearly not, a suggestion should be made on alternative sources of training which are appropriate to the client's needs.

If you, as a trainer, decide that you and your organization can be of service, given the training needs expressed by the client (e.g., the CMO in this case study), it is important to get as much general information as possible during the initial contact. The more you know about the client and his or her expectations, the easier it will be to establish a working relationship later and to get ready for any follow-up, training-needs assessment and design.

Rudyard Kipling and his "six honest serving-men" are good companions to take along to the initial contact with a potential training client - their names are **What** and **Why** and **When** and **How** and **Where** and **Who.**

Later that morning

Peter was anxious to get some new programmes going at SATI - some he could claim to be his own - but now he began to worry. How could he put together a programme in such a short period of time and on a subject he didn't know much about? His background was in public administration and finance - not community development. Peter thought aloud, "Maybe I could line up some guest speakers." He went across the hall to talk to Uma Das, one of his colleagues. She had just returned from a training-of-trainers programme (TOT) sponsored by UNCHS (Habitat). Maybe she could help him think of something. Peter told Uma about his phone call from the CMO.

"Doesn't sound like you know enough about the situation to plan anything, Peter. If I were you, I'd call the CMO back and suggest a meeting in Daspur. That way, maybe you can talk to some of the other people involved. Maybe even a few of those who would be trained. By the way," she added, "I got some interesting handouts at the programme on assessing training needs. You might want to look at them before you go any further".

Peter succeeded in setting up a meeting with the CMO the following week. In the meantime, he read the articles Uma had given him about the assessment process. Two things impressed him. One was the importance of establishing what the authors called a "contract" with the "client." Both the terms "client" and "contract" were new to Peter. He had never thought of organizations or individuals, who wanted training, as clients. Most of SATI's courses had been offered for years, without any real changes. Many of the courses were required by the Civil Service for public employees to get promoted from one grade to another. SATI rarely had any contact with the organizations that sent the trainees.

That's what made this call from the CMO so different. Here was someone actually asking for training and something pretty specific at that. The more Peter thought about having a "training client," the more he liked the idea. It would finally get him out in the field -- something he and his colleagues often talked about doing but rarely did.

Peter was puzzled by the idea of **contracting** with the city -- at least in the way it was described in the UNCHS (Habitat) materials Uma had given him. He had always thought of contracts as legal documents but they were described differently in the materials he had just read. The authors referred to "contracting" more in terms of building a working relationship between the training client and the training organization and representative. Reference was made to issues like agreeing on why the training was needed, what it should achieve, how it should be concluded and where it should be conducted. The authors even touched on the issue of "values" and whether the two parties had the same values about how training should se conducted. These were all new ideas to Peter. As he thought about them, they made sense.

The other interesting idea in the UNCHS (Habitat) materials had to do with assessing training needs. The manual Uma gave Peter outlined what the authors called a "performance discrepancy approach" to determine training needs. It described a performance discrepancy as "the difference between what management expects and what is actually occurring." Peter thought about his conversation with the CMO. He remembered Khan saying the donor wanted to see an increase in the city's market revenues before committing funds for renovation. That sounded like a clear example of a performance discrepancy, but what about working closely with the Market Vendor's Association? Peter wasn't sure how this fitted the description of a performance discrepancy. Peter had never conducted a training needs assessment before. All the courses, he taught at SATI were "handed" to him. He had been given the curriculum and told to follow it. Now he was faced with not only designing a new training programme but trying to figure out what the client's needs really were and "contracting" with the client to meet them, and he wasn't even sure, at this point, who the client was -- the city, the CMO or the donor. After all, the donor seemed to be calling the shots and might even pay for the training. It was all a bit confusing to Peter.

Questions to reader

- From what little information is provided so far, who do you think the "training client" is?
- What difference does it make who the client is?
- If you were Peter, what would you be doing to get ready for the meeting with the town secretary? Write down questions you would like to ask the town secretary during your first meeting.

19 July, early morning

Peter put a do-not-disturb sign on his door, borrowed an easel, news print and marking pens from the training supply room, and began to prepare for his meeting with the CMO. First, he listed on the newsprint all the questions he wanted to ask the CMO:

- Number of employees to train?
- Job titles? Responsibilities?
- Levels in the organization?
- Feasibility of training bosses and subordinates in same sessions?
- Access to documents/reports?
    - donor reports?
    - financial statements?
    - internal memos?
- Site visits?

- Who to and who not to talk to?

- CMO's training goals and objectives?

- What should employees be doing better?
  - not doing that they're doing now?
  - doing differently?

- Other training outcomes?

- Duration of the training?

- Budget?

- Where to train? When?

After Peter listed these questions on newsprint, he realized just how much there was to find out from the client. He also realized he might not be able to get enough of the CMO's time to answer all these questions. Peter decided to ask Mr. Khan if there was someone on his staff he could work with to plan and design the programme.

23 July, 8:30 am, Daspur

The meeting with the CMO lasted over an hour. The finance director Vivek Nair, and the chief market master, Ismail Sheikh, also attended the meeting. Peter was impressed with how much the city officials knew about the operation and finances of the markets. He also realized early in the meeting that they were not prepared to tell him their specific training needs. The city officials started out by focusing on community-development training. Only after much discussion did it become clear that revenue-collection shortfalls and the lack of routine maintenance were also concerns that should be addressed through training.

As for the city working closely with the Market Vendors' Association, Peter had the impression that this was not a high priority with the CMO and his staff. On the other hand, the CMO and the department heads recognized it was important to address this issue if they were to get financial support from the donor. They asked Peter to explore the vendor issue further. They seemed willing to support any community-development-type training he might propose -- as long as it was "reasonable" and didn't, as the chief market master said, "create more problems than it solves." The Market Vendors' Association was obviously a sore point with the CMO and his department heads. Peter made a mental note of this potential conflict, thinking that it could affect the outcome of any training he might propose.

At the end of the meeting, the CMO asked Peter to work directly with Sheikh the chief market master, on further planning. He also said he would be available for consultation, if necessary, but didn't expect to hear from Peter until there was a proposal for his review and approval.

After the meeting, Peter asked Sheikh for a few more minutes of his time to clarify what had been agreed upon in the meeting and to plan the next steps.

Questions to reader

- At this point in the negotiating process, what are the issues you would want to clarify in your meeting with the chief market master?

- What information might you wish to obtain to increase your understanding of the issues that might come up in the training programme? From whom might this information be obtained?

A short time later

Peter and Sheikh met in Sheikh's office to review what had transpired in the meeting with the CMO and to begin, in earnest the assessment of training needs for the market operation. Here is a summary of the main points on which they reached agreement:

- The training would focus on four problem areas:

    1. Market revenues being collected were only 60 percent of their current potential;

    2. Routine maintenance of the market areas was poor;

3. Most of the reports turned into the Finance Department by the revenue officers had to be rewritten;

4. The relationship between city employees and vendors had deteriorated rapidly over the past year or so.

- The trainees would include three market masters, their five assistants and 16 revenue collection officers. No one at the meeting felt there would be a problem in involving these various officers in the same training programme.

- The city couldn't afford to have any of these officers away from their jobs for any prolonged period of time. It was assumed SATI would take this into account in designing the training.

- The city would be willing to provide Peter with any documents he thought would be useful in preparing the training materials. Additional interviews with other city employees would be allowed, as long as the interviews were cleared in advance by their immediate supervisors.

At the end of the meeting, Sheikh asked Peter, "Is there anything else you need to know - or anything I can help you with at this time?" Peter responded, "Only one thing. Could you or your secretary find out if Mr. Nair could see me for a few minutes before I return to the institute?"

"Sure".

Peter was particularly interested in pursuing with the finance director the two issues raised in the earlier meeting -- the low level of revenue collections and the concern over the quality of the reports being submitted to his office.

He was successful in setting up a meeting with Nair after lunch. After exchanging greetings, Peter began by saying, "I appreciate the opportunity to meet again. I've certainly taken a big chunk out of your day".

"It's no problem," said Nair, "I'm as anxious as you are to see this training succeed".

Getting right to the point, Peter continued, "Perhaps we can talk some more about a couple of issues raised at this morning's meeting in the CMO's office. First, the problem of revenue collections: Did I hear you say collections are only about 60 percent of their potential?"

Nair confirmed, "That's right".

Exploring the point a bit more, Peter remarked, "That sounds pretty low. Why only 60 per cent?"

"There are several reasons," replied Nair. "First and, maybe, the most important is the low number of vendor contacts our revenue officers are making each day".

Thinking ahead, Peter commented, "May be you need more officers?"

"Not exactly," said Nair. "The CMO asked the council in the last budget for an increase in the establishment of revenue officers, but it refused. Councillors said our officers weren't doing their job now, so why hire more. On this, I tend to agree with the council. Maybe our guys don't know how to manage their time. They seem to spend a lot of it arguing with the vendors".

"What about the reports they turn in?" Peter asked. "Someone this morning - I think it was you - said a lot of them have to be rewritten".

This got a rise out of Nair. "Reports! Ha! They're terrible. Full of mistakes. Half the time, they're not complete. There are some on my desk right now that I can't even read! If you can do anything about these reports, it would be great, but I doubt if training will help.

Probing even further, Peter asked, "Just how many of these reports have to be rewritten? Can you give me an estimate?"

"As a matter of fact," said Nair," one of my assistants did a little research on that last week. Over the past month, one-third of those reports had to be rewritten".

"What would an acceptable level of rewrites be?" asked Peter, in an effort to find a reasonable standard.

Nair was quick to respond. "Zero! Oh, I know that's not realistic but I get fed up with these guys. I tell you, if we could get the rewrite ratio down to one in 20, I'd be delighted".

Peter was anxious to find an acceptable level of performance. "Should we shoot for five percent as a result of our training?"

"Why not?" exclaimed Nair. "I personally think it's unrealistic, but let's go for it".

"Well", said Peter with satisfaction, "I guess that should do it for now. I appreciate your time. If I think of anything else I need to know, is it okay if I get back to you?"

"Certainly", replied Nair graciously. "As I said, I'm as interested in this programme as you are".

Questions to reader

- Do you think Peter got enough information about these two financial concerns to design an effective training response?
- What other questions would you have asked?
- What else could Peter have done during this initial visit to help him plan and design a training programme for the town secretary and his staff?

Later that afternoon

As Peter left the City Hall that day, he was feeling good about the meetings and confident he could now put together a training programme that would meet the needs of the city.

Before heading back to SATI, he decided to drop by and see an old friend, Vinod Gupta. Gupta had taught at SATI but became disillusioned with the place. He said it was too academic and not meeting the real training needs of the public service. So, he left and joined a consulting firm in Daspur -- one that does a lot of training for private companies in the region. It was the first time Peter had seen Vinod since he left SATI.

Vinod ordered two beers for himself and his friend and said, "Tell me more about your day, Peter. Sounds like a real interesting assignment. I'm a bit jealous, you know, since I never got to do anything like this when I was at SATI, besides, you're cutting into my territory".

"What do you mean by that?"

"Aw, I'm just kidding, Peter. but, you have to admit, you guys at SATI aren't exactly famous for getting off campus to do anything - and now you're talking about doing a short course here in Daspur. Sounds like things are changing back at SATI".

"They certainly are, Vinod. I wouldn't be here if there hadn't been a change of leadership at SATI. Our new principal, Mrs. Pal, is great. But, you know, it's also a bit scary -- since I haven't had much experience in this kind of ……. "

Vinod interjected -- "This, kind of real live training?"

"Ya, I guess that's what I mean".

Peter went on to tell Vinod about his meetings with the CMO and the CMO's two assistants. Vinod was particularly interested in the problem areas the city wanted to address. He told Peter, "I don't think you have enough information, particularly about the issue with the Vendors' Association. Sounds like it could be a hot one. If I were you, I'd be, talking to some of those women vendors before I committed myself to anything. You are planning to spend more time here on your needs assessment, aren't you, Peter?"

"Well, no...". Peter said with some hesitation. "I didn't really think it would be necessary. I thought I had all the information I would need".

At that point, they got into a long discussion about who else Peter could talk to before he started putting together the training design. Vinod talked about the importance of touching base with some of those who would be in the training programme. He said he would want to get their inputs for the training, to begin building some commitment, on their part, to the training. Since the market masters and revenue officers have direct contact with the vendors, Vinod also expressed concern that Peter talk to some of these women to get their perceptions of how these officers could do their jobs better.

"If this was my project", Vinod said, "I'd probably look at some of the records and reports the CMO and finance director talked about, and I'd get out and spend some time in those markets, just observing what's going on. It's my experience", he went onto say, "that you can never get too much information before you start planning a training programme of this kind".

"Ya, I guess you're right, Vinod. In fact, I just read a little book put out by the UN that said you should scan the work environment - I think that's the term they used -- to look for performance discrepancies when you're planning a training programme. It suggested a three-pronged approach: asking questions, getting out and seeing what's going on, and looking at whatever records or reports there might be that would provide some clues. Maybe that's what I should be doing".

As Peter drove back to Vivat late that evening, he realized he had more "scanning" to do. It was becoming obvious to him that he was not ready to design a training programme for the Daspur City Council.

Commentary

The first step in the training cycle is making initial contact with the client and establishing a working relationship, something we call "contracting". Initial contacts, when it comes to providing training services, happen in a myriad of ways. We've chosen to have Peter meet with the potential training client, the CMO, in his office because we believe training should be demand-driven. It's just another way to emphasize the importance of the user in defining the parameters of the training experience.

We've also included a bit of reconnaissance in this initial phase of the training cycle. Where reconnaissance ends and needs assessment begins is always vague. Nevertheless, we have chosen to keep them separate to emphasise the importance of the initial contact and the various concerns the trainer and the client should address before moving on to the assessment of training needs.

As you will find out a bit later, Peter didn't really accomplish his needs assessment during these initial meetings, although he certainly got off to a good start.

Before we go on to training needs assessment, we want to spend a few moments reviewing some issues that are important to address in the initial reconnaissance phase of training.

The need for client-centered training

The term "client" may be unfamiliar to many in the public-sector training business. Nevertheless, we believe it is an important concept - one which provides the foundation for the entire training cycle and process. It implies, among other things, that training should be determined by the needs of those it serves - not only by those who provide the training. Let's look at the situation closely. More often than not, the training agenda is determined in isolation from the training client. Sometimes, it is simply a continuation of programmes that have been offered over the years, even though everyone knows training needs have changed.

At other times, the circumstances of the training institution itself dictate the agenda. One of the most common is the need to keep a residential facility as fully occupied as possible - this "institutional" need often results in long, residential courses which are no longer relevant to the needs of their clients but are often the only programmes that are available - or the training agenda gets defined by the skills of the faculty and the course materials they have developed over the years.

Another favourite "supply side" definition of training needs is that provided by the outside donor. Donor agencies often have "Pet" training programmes they like to promote and support. This may be the most difficult subversion of the client's training needs to cope with, since it often involves the infusion of desperately needed hard currency into the country and the institution.

The case study, involving Peter D'Souza, has been written to demonstrate the importance of developing a client-centered mind-set in the public-sector training business and to highlight the potential satisfaction that awaits the trainer who ventures beyond the boundary of his or her own institution to engage in dialogue with the client.

Who is the "client?"

As mentioned earlier, the term "client" may be new to many public-sector trainers. On occasion, it is also difficult to determine who the client is. Is it the organization that is paying for the training or is it the bosses who have expectations that training employees will make them more proficient back on the job or is it the trainees in the classroom? In reality, the client is all three of them. That's what makes the concept of the "training client" so difficult to deal with. It becomes even more confusing when we throw in the idea of "contracting".

The training client is, among other things:

- Someone who requires your services, based on his or her perceived training needs

- Someone who has expectations about the quality and outcomes of your services - and expects these expectations to be met

- Someone who can help you to help them decide what training is needed

- Someone who cannot be ignored if you and your colleagues want to be relevant as trainers and training institutions.

The client, whether we like it or not, is a collaborator in our success or failure as trainers. We are, so to speak, client-reliant.

Let's return to the case study for a moment and reflect upon Peter's experience in dealing with the training client. It is safe to assume that the CMO, Asif Khan, is the primary training client. He initiated the training request, has some expectations for the outcomes and will be a stakeholder in the investment, but he also has delegated some of the planning and decision-making to the senior market master at the end of their first meeting. In essence, the CMO said to Peter, don't bother me until you have a final draft proposal. At this point, Peter has to satisfy not only the CMO's expectations but the senior market master's expectations as well. Sooner or later, he will be faced with the expectations of those who will be trained - the market masters and revenue officers. Most, if not all, of the trainees will have expectations of one kind or another when the training begins. The sooner Peter understands these expectations and anticipates them, the more successful he will be in designing and implementing a training programme for the city. "What about the donor?" you ask. If and when a donor enters the picture, Peter may have to consider its needs as well.

Many training clients (probably conditioned by years of mediocre service) have low expectations about the outcomes they anticipate from training events. On the other hand, this is no reason to lower our own expectations to meet those of our client's. We should do everything we can to raise their expectations. Higher expectations, if met, will lead to higher regard for our services, and higher regard can lead to greater demand. This is where "contracting with the client" becomes important.

The art of contracting

"Contracting" is another term, which isn't very familiar to public training institutions and their personnel. First of all, it conjures up an image of the legal profession - not trainers. You may be asking, "What right does the trainer have to get involved in contracting?" Perhaps none, if we were talking strictly about legal contracting, but we're not. Contracting is a term that is used frequently in other professions as well. Psychologists often "contract" with their patients; teachers and students, in some educational institutions, discuss and negotiate learning contracts, and consultants, particularly those offering assistance in decision-making and problem-solving, often talk and write about the need to "contract with the client".

David Nadler, in his book *Feedback and Organization Development: Using Data Based Methods* (Addison-Wesley, 1977, p. 7), says in planning for organizational development, "The client and the change agent (consultant) must deal with a number of critical questions. The first of those is that of relationship building and contracting. The consultant and the organization need to make clear the nature of their relationship and to be explicit in the kinds of expectations they have". Further on he says that relationship-building/contracting also includes agreeing on the goals of the change effort and the procedures to be used, building understanding and commitment, and putting expectations on paper.

So it is with the trainer. He or she needs to "contract" with the client - to define expectations they have of each other, to decide and agree upon how they will work together, to talk about roles and responsibilities, and many other things. Contracting goes beyond the description of a product that will be delivered for a certain price.

During the first series of meetings between Peter and the city officials, there were other issues concerning the contract or working relationship that should have been clarified. For example, "Poor" market maintenance, as a performance discrepancy, may not be sufficiently clear to address as a training need. Not only is "poor" a vague and ambiguous term, but Peter cannot be certain about the type of maintenance involved. Were the city officials talking about maintenance of buildings, grounds, the water system, sanitation or something else? As far as we know, Peter doesn't have enough clarification on this issue at this time to specify it as a training need.

Another issue that is certain to challenge Peter when he starts to design the training programme is its length. If you recall, the city officials said they could not have their officers away for training "for any prolonged period of time". What is "prolonged" - three days, one week, six weeks? There is little reason to believe that Peter knows what a prolonged period of time is, at least from the city's perspective.

It always helps, during the contracting phase, to clear the air with the client about who can be contacted and who cannot in assessing needs and planning training. It is also useful to ask for a list of those persons who should be contacted during the diagnostic phase.

Finally, the contracting stage is a good time to get initial documents that might be available to assist in the assessment. For example, Peter could have asked for financial records on the markets; copies of revenue officer's reports; and donor reports on the markets, particularly those mentioning the need for training.

The initial contracting meeting does not normally include a detailed discussion of the training needs themselves, although they must be discussed enough to set the ground rules for the assessment and follow-up. What the two parties are looking for at this time is a clear understanding of.

a. How they will work together on the project;
b. Who will take responsibility to do what with whom;
c. How much time and other resources will be required to carry out specific tasks;
d. The overall objectives and outcomes of the training;
e. Expectations on the part of both parties;
f. issues or concerns that had prompted the client to contact the trainer in the first place;
g. Commitment to proceed.

Peter didn't have all of these issues and details tied down when he returned Vivat, but he is learning.

2. ASSESSING TRAINING NEEDS

We have been discussing the client and the art of contracting as the first stage of the training cycle. The client is the focus of the effort and contracting is the opening event in any formal, goal-directed, collaborative effort between two parties. It is the threshold we should honour in entering another person's organization or work setting, if we hope to establish a positive and productive relationship.

If contracting is the how of establishing a positive relationship between two or more parties to carry out training, the needs assessment task is the what. What will the training address and ultimately accomplish? There are many models, or approaches, a trainer can use to determine training needs. We discussed a few of the dysfunctional, supply-side approaches earlier (e.g., keeping the institute's dormitories filled). From the demand side, there are essentially four basic approaches - although many variations exist on each of these. We will focus in depth on only one - the performance-discrepancy approach.

The personnel/career-development approach: This methodology is based on a hierarchical pattern of organizational life which assumes continuity of roles and responsibilities and progression of individuals from one level to another based on the acquisition of experience and training. It assumes predictability and stability within the organization and the environment. Training needs are assessed in terms of what knowledge and skills are required for employees to move from one box to another within the system. The "meat and gravy" courses in most civil-service training institutions are based on this methodology and treat every candidate for training as uniformly needy, regardless of motivation, experience or natural ability. The personnel/career-development approach rarely accommodates itself easily to rapid change or emergent client needs.

The competency-based approach: This strategy for assessing training needs is designed to address the big picture. It defines the competencies required within a sector, system or organization for it to function at a realistically high level of proficiency. The competencies required to achieve these levels of proficiencies are defined within role-sets by those individuals who have already exhibited exemplary performance in those roles. Their performance is then examined in detail in the assessment process to determine what it is they do, day-to-day, on-the-job to become known as exemplars or master performers. The definitions of their work behaviour become the levels of competencies toward which others in those roles are trained. This approach to defining training needs is more pro-active and achievement oriented. (For a detailed description of the competency approach to training needs assessment, see a 1992 UNCHS (Habitat) publication, *A Guide to National Training Needs Assessment for Human Settlements: a Competency-based Approach.)*

The episodic approach: This approach is the most common generator of short courses, workshops or seminars for training institutions. Training needs are defined by specific events, which may or may not be associated with the training needs of the total organization. For example, the episodic event which triggers the training need might be the enactment of a new policy by the council, the installation of new equipment or the initiation of a social service programme not offered before in the community. The initial identification of training needs associated with episodic events flows from a variety of sources, including clients, providers of training, individual training entrepreneurs who see a business opportunity and those who have money to spend on training and see such training as compatible with their overall programme agenda. Responses to episodic training needs are usually focused and responsive, short in duration and unlikely to become institutionalized as part of an ongoing offering of programmes.

The performance discrepancy approach: This is the one Peter read about before going to Daspur to talk to the CMO and others. This approach to assessing training needs is based on the assumption that training requirements evolve out of performance discrepancies, past, present and future - discrepancies that keep individuals, work groups, departments and organizations from achieving intended levels of accomplishment. A performance discrepancy is the difference between what management expects and what is actually occurring. Discrepancies come in two basic varieties - existing discrepancies which have resulted in or continue to result in shortfalls in performance, and potential discrepancies, or possible shortfalls in future performance foreseen as the result of inadequacies in planning or training (e.g., as in new skills to operate new equipment, and knowledge to implement a new policy).

Performance discrepancies, sometimes, are easy to find and, sometimes, not so easy. Part of the problem, when using this approach in assessing training needs, is the client's initial definition of the discrepancies he or she is facing. Managers often see symptoms as problems or discrepancies. We only get to the discrepancy if we peel off the layers of symptoms that surround it. At other times, a manager might define "discrepancy" as a solution which he or she wants achieved. In the long run, the prescription may or may not provide an answer to the performance discrepancy.

It is not unusual for managers to state what they want in the way of training for their organization. While these prescriptive statements from the client may be accurate, this does not relieve the trainer from probing until he or she is clear about what the client wants to achieve through training and why the training is required. The "why" probes should help the client understand what the discrepancy is, as defined by the gap between expectations of performance and actual performance. The client may be able to define the gap but may not be able to describe why it is happening.

Looking at the case study and at market revenue in Daspur as a specific example of a performance discrepancy, we know that collections are only 60 per cent of their potential while a donor has defined a 15 per cent increase in market revenues as a condition for funding. We do not know whether the CMO, finance director and others see the 60 per cent as a problem, nor what they see as an acceptable standard to achieve, if they do. They may accept the donor's demand as the standard, not because it is adequate, but because it is the minimum the donor will accept before releasing the funds.

On this and other problem areas on which the city wants SATI to focus, Peter needs more information and analysis before he can design a response, that is, if he and the city officials are serious about using training as a strategy for addressing performance discrepancies (problem-solving). If there is no commitment to using training as a way to improve performance and to address specific discrepancies, Peter can go ahead at this point and design almost any kind of training response for the market masters and revenue officers. To put it differently, if neither Peter nor the city officials are much worried about where they are going with this training experience, any road will get them there.

"Cheshire Puss", she began, rather timidly, as she did not know whether it would like the name; however, it only grinned a little wider. "Come, it's pleased so far," thought Alice, and she went on. "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to walk from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where," said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you walk," said the Cat.

"-- so long as I get somewhere," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if only you walk long enough!"

-- Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

In the performance discrepancy approach to assessing training needs, the trainer and the client must engage in a bit of detective work - gather evidence that will help them resolve discrepancies through training. As the UNCHS (Habitat) *Manual for Training Needs Assessment in Human Settlements Organizations* points out, scanning the work environment for performance discrepancies is a form of "reconnaissance". It involves looking for performance discrepancies in a number of ways - studying the written records of the organization and, perhaps, other organizations for clues; asking employees and others about the kinds of performance discrepancies they are experiencing and why they think these discrepancies exist; and, finally, going into the work setting to observe first-hand what is going on.

When one considers these three scanning strategies - document review, interviews and direct observation - it is obvious Peter and others have a potentially rich storehouse of information to uncover on the four problem areas the CMO wants addressed by training. For example, they will probably want to review project reports that have been generated to get donor support for the markets, including correspondence and comments from the donor and copies of the revenue officers' reports which have had to be rewritten (for clues about why this need exists).

They may also want to carry out some site visits to the markets, to view maintenance problems and to observe the work of the revenue officers and market masters. Direct observation provides the trainer with a first-hand experience in the work environment. It not only offers valuable insights about the training needs to be addressed but gives him or her a mental picture of the work setting as the training response is planned and implemented. Without such observation, the trainee's work setting remains an abstraction - one which often distracts from the trainer's competence in the classroom.

Finally, we can assume that Peter and others will want to talk directly to those who are, in some way, responsible for the performance discrepancies or who are affected by them. Peter could, for example, talk to those who are to be trained, their direct supervisors and their subordinates, if the trainees are in supervisory positions. These individuals would give the assessor three different and unique views of the performance discrepancies.

If we were in Peter's shoes, we should want to talk to the three market masters; a number of revenue officers; members of the Market Vendors' Association, including officers; citizens who use the markets; and a representative of the donor organization who is handling the project portfolio. Because the problem areas to be addressed by training have been defined by the CMO and his assistants (and, in some ways, the donor), Peter can more quickly carry out his data-gathering and analysis work than would be the case if he had been asked to do an organization-wide assessment.

In an assessment of this kind, we can assume two types of data will be produced. The first is data that will help us design a training programme to address the CMO's concerns. The second is a list of performance discrepancies that cannot be addressed through training but which, nevertheless, provide opportunities for the CMO and others to engage in problem-solving ventures. From the trainer's perspective, very little of the data gathered gets left on the cutting-room floor. Even though the information he or she collects is not training-related, it may be manager or organization relevant. Do not throw it away: Package it and pass it on.

Many of the points just made about the training needs assessment process are covered in detail in the UNCHS (Habitat) publication mentioned earlier. We recommend that you refer to that document for an in-depth look at discrepancy-based assessment. [See Manual for Training Needs Assessment in Human Settlements Organizations: a Systematic Approach to Assessing Training Needs, Nairobi, 1987 United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)].

24 July, 7:46 am, SATI

Peter went to the office early. He wanted to spend a few moments alone, thinking about his trip to Daspur and what to do next. As he opened his door, he saw the newsprint on the wall, the list of questions he had planned to ask the CMO. In his haste the day before, Peter had forgotten to take the questions with him. "Dumb thing to do - or not do", he thought to himself.

As he sat reading through the list, he realized many of the questions had been answered. Maybe not to his satisfaction but, nevertheless, answered. He knew, for example, how many employees the CMO wanted trained, their job titles and where they fitted into the organization. On the other hand, he didn't know much about what each employee did. How, he wondered, did the assistant market master's job differ from that of the market master? He realized now how easy it is to skip over such details in meetings like the ones he just had with the city staff. The CMO, no doubt, assumed Peter knew what a market master does. Peter, on the other hand, didn't want to appear uninformed; so he didn't ask. Peter remembered someone saying to him in a training session, "Don't be afraid to ask dumb questions". The next time, he'd be quicker to ask dumb questions.

As Peter went over the list, he checked off other questions that had been answered. The CMO had assured Peter that the market masters, their assistants and revenue officers could be trained together. This can be a sensitive issue within some organizations; maybe too sensitive, Peter thought. It's about time employees who work together begin to train together -- and to learn from one another.

The city officials also assured Peter he could review relevant documents, talk to other employees and make worksite visits. Unfortunately, he had done none of these things on his first visit. Peter was lured into thinking he had enough information from his talks with the CMO and his assistants. His evening with Vinod had convinced him otherwise.

CMO's Training Goals and Objectives? When Peter saw this question on the newsprint, he remembered his first telephone conversation with the CMO. The CMO was pretty vague, as Peter recalled, about his training needs. He had mentioned something about "community-development training" but seemed more interested in getting something, any kind of training, started than concerned about what it might involve. Peter wondered if other managers were like that about training in their organizations.

The short meetings yesterday confirmed there was some kind of community-development problem, but Peter was still unclear about it, and there were all those other problems the CMO never mentioned in his initial conversations with Peter - things like revenue collections, market maintenance and record keeping. His colleague Uma was right. You can't sit in your office and decide what someone's training needs are.

Peter also realized, as he got to the end of his checklist of questions, that he was still in the dark about a lot of details, The CMO said he didn't want his employees gone for training over a "prolonged period of time". Peter had no idea what the CMO meant by a "prolonged period of time", nor had they talked about where to hold the training - or when. Peter had assumed the training would take place at SATI, but now he wasn't sure.

Peter picked up his coffee cup and headed for the cafeteria. "I've got to get back to Daspur and ask a lot more questions if I'm going to plan this thing right. But first, I need to brief the principal and tell her what I plan to do. And then, call the market master and set up some more appointments".

Peter's pace quickened as he thought of all the things he had to do.

29 July, mid-morning, Daspur

Peter checked into the local-government guest house in Daspur. He had made reservations for two nights, hoping that would be sufficient time to gather the other information he needed to plan the training programme for the city. Before going to City Hall, he reviewed his "to do" list one more time.

To Do
See the following people
- two or three market masters
- two or three assistants
- several revenue officers
- the head of the vendors' association
- several vendors

Get the following documents
- revenue statements from all three markets
- revenue officers' reports (original copies and those that have been rewritten)
- correspondence/reports on Vendors' Association
- squabble

Field visits
- to at least two of three markets

Peter stuck the checklist in his pocket, dropped his room key at the front desk and headed out to meet Sheikh, the chief market master, for his first meeting of the day.

2 August, back at SATI

Peter finished writing a long memorandum to the principal about the Daspur training project, with a carbon copy to the Head of his Department, although the department head was still away on long-term training. Peter wanted to keep them both informed about the project. Also, the memo would be a good reminder of what he needed to consider in planning the programme.

Memo

TO: Mrs. G.S. Pal, Principal
(c.c. Head of Department)

FROM: Mr. D'Souza, Lecturer
SUBJECT: Daspur City Training Proposal
DATE: 2 August 1990

This memo is to update you and others about the proposed market manager training for the city of Daspur.

On l8 July, I received a phone call from the CMO of Daspur, Asif Khan, requesting training assistance in community development for some of his officers. On 19 July, I visited the CMO and two of his key department heads (the finance director, Vivek Nair and the chief market master, Ismail Sheikh) to discuss the proposed training in detail. A follow-up visit was conducted 29-31 July to carry out an in-depth training needs assessment of the problem areas identified in the earlier meeting.

At the initial meeting, the CMO and his officers identified four areas where they believed training could be of assistance in the management and operation of their low-income neighbourhood markets. These included: (a) revenue collection shortfalls; (b) market maintenance; (c) the deteriorating relationship between the city and the market vendors; and (d) the quality of report writing by the revenue officers. The following is a summary of what was learned about each of these performance-discrepancy areas.

1. **Market Revenues:** At the initial meeting, I was told market revenues are only 60 per cent of their potential. Further investigation determined that the percentage of revenues collected varies significantly from market to market. In the three markets targeted for training, the range is from 47 per cent to nearly 74 per cent. In discussing the issue with various officials, I got different perceptions of why revenue collections are so low. The market masters believe many of the revenue officers are diverting sizeable portions of the fees to their own pockets, and this accounts for the poor collection rates. The revenue officers immediately complained of being overworked and underpaid. They said it was impossible to visit all the stalls every day, given the circumstances. After much probing on my part, I learned of several issues, which affect their performance. Transportation to the markets is a problem and often cuts into their workday. They are asked to prepare daily and weekly reports for the finance director: Often these must be rewritten. This is a task they dislike doing and say they have never been given any training or coaching for writing. Finally, the Vendors' Association, they believe, tells it's members to harass them so they can't do their work.

   Observing these officers in the field leads me to believe there are other factors, which may also affect their performance. They do not appear to be very well organized in carrying out their collections. They waste a lot of time talking to people and seem to be unprofessional in overall appearance and attitude toward their job responsibilities. On three occasions, I saw revenue collectors arguing with vendors. These officers apparently receive no direct field supervision: When I asked one of the officers about supervision, he said he and other revenue officers are supervised directly by the finance director. This practice is puzzling, since the market masters also report to Finance and could play a supervisory role.

   Finally, in regard to the shortfall of market revenue, I noticed several vacant stalls in each of the markets, while some vendors had set up business just outside the market entrances. I was told these "informal vendors" do not pay market fees. Several revenue officers said vacancies contribute substantially to the shortfall of market revenue.

   There are obviously a number of issues (performance discrepancies that contribute to the low level of market fees being collected. Only a few seem amenable to training solutions.

2. **Market Maintenance:** Market maintenance was identified by the CMO and two of his department heads as being a problem they wanted addressed through training. It was unclear, as a result of our initial meeting, what they meant by "maintenance". Upon my return, I found the market masters and revenue officers were upset about the maintenance of the markets. In further discussions I learned they have no jurisdiction over any kind of market maintenance: It is a function of the Public Works Department. The finance director and chief market master confirmed what the officers in the field had said: Both admitted great frustration concerning the maintenance problems and thought, as they put it, "Training couldn't hurt and might even help the situation". After some discussion, these two men agreed to drop maintenance as a problem to be

addressed through training: They said they would inform the CMO of our discussion.

3. Quality of Written Reports: On the first day that we met, the finance director had complained bitterly about the quality of the reports being turned in by the revenue officers. I reviewed some of these reports and concur with the director's assessment. However, in talking with several of the revenue officers, I got different insights, which should help us design a training response to this performance discrepancy. First, the revenue officers are asked to report information for which they have little data -- or responsibility. Many questions on the form are designed to record information the market master has but which is not available to individual revenue officers. Secondly, the forms are difficult to fill out, and the instructions are ambiguous. They could be simplified: In fact, in the interviews I conducted, three different revenue officers offered suggestions to simplify the forms. Finally, only one of the officers interviewed said he had received training on how to complete these reports: Others said the only feed back they get from the Finance Department is criticism.

4. City-Vendor Relationships: The relationship between the city officers and the vendors is complex and seems to be deteriorating. Both sides are locked into believing the other side is to blame for all the conflict. The city officers are under the impression the Vendors' Association wants to take over the markets, while the vendors say the city never listens to their complaints. The vendors are concerned about the lack of maintenance and water service, but the complaint I heard most often had to do with market fees. Mrs. Raman, chair of the Vendors' Association, said not every vendor is paying the same fees: some vendors are not paying at all. She believes her association can help manage the markets. She mentioned revenue collection and maintenance as two areas where the association could assist, but, according to Mrs. Raman, the city doesn't want to cooperate.

   The market masters were not specific about their complaints regarding the vendors, except for what they called "political interference". Apparently, the vendors have been complaining to their elected councillors. This has resulted in the market masters and assistants being threatened with lose of their jobs if they "don't start behaving themselves". The vendors, on the other hand, say they wouldn't go to their councillors to complain if the market masters would just start listening to them.

   This situation calls for some kind of intervention, but I am uncertain about what we can do through training to help resolve this conflict.

Scheduling the training

After my first meeting with the CMO, finance director and chief market master on 19 July, they met and discussed the proposed training in some depth. When I met this time with the chief market master, he asked if we could: (a) hold the training as soon as possible (within the next three months); (b) conduct it in Daspur; and, (c) schedule the training in one-day or two-day time blocks and spread it over several weeks, if necessary. The market master said it was impossible to release these officers for any long periods of time because of their job responsibilities. As he said, "We can't shut the markets down so these officers can get a little training".

I'm concerned whether we can provide training of any substance for these officers in such short time periods.

Possible funding

Before leaving Daspur, I met Ms. Freda Olsen of the Scandinavian International Assistance Agency (SIAA). Her organization is prepared to provide financial help to the city to upgrade its low-income markets, if certain conditions precedent are met. (By the way, I hesitated to meet with Ms. Olsen, but the CMO arranged the meeting, so I felt I had no choice.)

Ms. Olsen reiterated what the CMO had told me earlier. SIAA will require a specific increase in market revenues (15 per cent over 12 months) before it will give final funding approval. In addition, Ms. Olsen said she thought training could help improve the revenue situation and had conveyed the same message to city officials. This is, no doubt, why the city officials are so interested in completing training for the market and revenue officers as quickly as possible.

Ms. Olsen also mentioned the conflict between the Market Vendors' Association and the city. She said she had experience in what she called "conflict-resolution training" and offered to be of assistance in this area, if we were interested.

Finally, Ms. Olsen said she was pleased that SATI had been brought into the project to provide training assistance. SIAA apparently has a strong commitment to "practical training" (as she called it) and has earmarked the equivalent of $US 10,000 for training under this project. While she said the final decision on how to spend these training funds is up to the city, SIAA is, nevertheless, interested in reviewing any proposals. She also said she looks forward to seeing SATI's proposal.

One final note: In my assessment of training needs, I kept coming up with information (and ideas) which have nothing to do with training the market masters and revenue officers. What do you suggest I do with these?

I should appreciate an opportunity to meet with you as soon as possible on this project.

Questions to reader

- In Peter's memorandum to the principal, he mentioned all of the non-training-related information he gathered in his inquiries into training. What would you do with this information if you were Peter?

- At this point in the training cycle, what additional information or data do you think you would need, if you were Peter, to begin to design training events for the city of Daspur?

- What would you do next?

Commentary

Peter D'Souza's back on track. We believe he is now in a good position to begin his training design. Before moving on to the next step, let's take a look at what happened in Peter's second trip to Daspur.

First, he was well organized (even remembered his "to do" list). The success of most meetings of the kind Peter held with the city is largely dependent on the degree of preparation we are willing to put into them before we hold them.

Secondly, Peter took seriously the idea of scanning the environment in different ways. He not only talked to different people, he also looked at documents and spent some time observing what was happening in the proposed trainee work settings. Also, Peter could have prepared a survey questionnaire from the information and data he gathered (as suggested in the 1987 UNCHS (Habitat) publication, *Manual for Training Needs Assessment in Human Settlements Organizations).* In this case, the training group is relatively small and the training needs confined to specific concerns, so further data gathering and analysis did not seem necessary.

Thirdly, he got different perspectives on the problems the CMO wanted addressed through training. These different perceptions will be invaluable when Peter begins to design the training response.

Fourthly, Peter was able to eliminate one of the four initial "training needs" by asking probing questions. Market maintenance, if you recall, is not a responsibility of the Finance Department. While there may be training needs associated with the maintenance function and the Public Works Department, it does not seem appropriate to address those needs at this time.

On the other hand, Peter has learned a great deal in his visits about issues and concerns that have very little to do with training. He asked his boss "what to do with these", and rightfully so. The trainer, in our judgement, has a responsibility to report non-training related information he or she might receive, in an assessment of this kind, back to the chief executive of the organization asking for the training. Not only will this strengthen the manager's hand in carrying out non-training-related management decisions, it should also strengthen the client's confidence in the trainer.

We have just spent more time and space than we had originally intended on assessing training needs, since the topic is covered in considerable depth in the UNCHS (Habitat) publication mentioned above. The reason is obvious, at least to us. Assessing the client's training needs is, in most cases, the single most important function we perform as trainers, and, yet, we often do it poorly, or not at all. Again, we ask you to think about your own experience as a trainer. Also, reflect for a moment about Peter's experience in the case study. Would he have been prepared to sit down and design training to meet his client's training needs after the initial phone call or, even, after the initial visit? We think not. Nevertheless, we all have had the experience of pulling something "off the shelf " in response to a training request or suggesting the client enroll the officers for a general course designed 10 years ago and not offered until sometime next year. There are times when we have few other choices, and there are other times when we either do not know how to respond or do not take the time to do it. Client-responsive training is not always the easy way out - but it can be very satisfying to you and your client.

3. WRITING OBJECTIVES

Questions to reader

- Given what you know about the training needs of the city of Daspur's Finance Department, write learning objectives to meet these needs.

Case Study
4 August, 10:35 am, SATI staff lounge

It is customary for the SATI staff and faculty to meet for tea twice a day, informally, in the small dining room next to the principal's office. The principal, Mrs. Pal, joined Peter at one of the tables and personally thanked him for the report on Daspur's training needs and his initiative in following upon the request by the CMO. Then she asked, "Do you mind, Peter, if I say a word or two a bout your efforts, to the rest of the faculty while we have them together?"

"Well, no, I guess not", mumbled Peter, not sure what the principal was about to say.

She raised her voice and spoke, "Could I have your attention for just a moment, please?"

The tea-time buzz softened, and Mrs. Pal spoke. "As you know, I've been out of town for a few days attending a conference on community services and organizational effectiveness. Incidentally, it was co-sponsored by our Directorate of Personnel Management and two line ministries, Local Government and Works and Housing. These two ministries have been under a lot of pressure from the president and others to improve their services, particularly their services to the poor".

"Well, as it turned out", Mrs. Pal continued, "the ministries weren't the only ones who came under fire at the conference. The Permanent Secretaries of both ministries had some unkind words to say a bout the support they get from other agencies, particularly from public training institutes, like ours. It's pretty hard not to agree with them when, as I sat listening to their complaints, I realized that many of our courses haven't changed much over the years.

Mrs. Pal went on to say how Mr. Panda, the permanent secretary of the Ministry for Local Government, had cornered her at one of the tea breaks. "Sadiqa", he said, "you've got to help us take a new look at how we manage our local governments. You and I both know these organizations aren't very effective. The kind of training SATI and other institutes provide -- I'm talking about those long, academic courses you run -- just isn't helping us much on a day-to-day basis. Local governments need help to solve some of their immediate problems, like patching potholes or getting along better with community groups or raising more revenue from their markets and bus stops".

"Well", Mrs. Pal continued, "Mr. Panda is right. We don't give them much support or assistance when they need it. That's why I was so excited when I went through my in-box this morning and found a memo from Peter. He's been in Daspur doing exactly what the P.S. says we should be doing, helping the CMO and his staff solve problems".

Mrs. Pal turned toward Peter and said", I really appreciate your initiative and good work on the Daspur training request. As soon as you get your training objectives in writing, let me know. I want to be on top of this project in case either Ms. Olsen or Asif Khan give me a call".

Peter practically floated back to his office after the principal's kind remarks about his work in Daspur. Under the previous principal, he would probably have been reprimanded for taking the initiative. "But then", he thought, "I've kept the principal informed about the project and haven't made any major decisions or moves without her consent".

Uma caught up with Peter just as he was entering his office. "Nice comments by the principal, Peter. When are you going to let some of the rest of us in on the project?"

"Matter of fact, Uma", Peter said, "I've been thinking about asking you to help me with the design and delivery. Interested?"

"You bet, when do we begin?"

"How about tomorrow morning? I should have the training objectives written by then".

As Uma shut the door to her office, she thought it a bit strange that Peter wanted to write the training objectives without her, particularly if she was going to work on the project, but she didn't say anything. She found writing training objectives to be a tedious, boring task, and, besides, she had some other things to do before she got too involved in a new project.

Two things bothered Peter as he sat down at his desk. First, he shouldn't have asked Uma to work on the project without the principal's approval. "Guess I got a little carried away", he thought. The second thing on his mind was a little more serious. Mrs. Pal had asked to see his training objectives for the Daspur programme. He wasn't sure he knew how to write them - at least in a way that would satisfy the principal.

When Mrs. Pal was named principal last year, he recalled, she immediately reviewed SATI's long-standing certificate courses and ordered some changes. The first was a rewriting of the course objectives. The principal said most of them had nothing to do with what they were intended to achieve. According to her, they read more like course outlines than learning objectives. Now Peter was faced with drafting a few objective statements of his own, to her standards, and it worried him. After all, he was riding high from his tea time accolades: He didn't want to do anything to diminish the principal's confidence in him.

Later that afternoon, Peter knocked on Uma's door, but there was no answer. He slipped a copy of the objectives he had just written under her door with the following note:

Uma:
Here's my first draft of the workshop objectives. If you get a chance, could you review them before we get together tomorrow? I'll see you around nine.
Thanks, Peter.

DASPUR WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. *To discuss ways to collect more market revenue for the city*
2. *To know how to write better revenue reports for the Finance Department*
3. *To provide lectures and discussions about the importance of community development in running markets and other public facilities.*

Questions to reader

- How do these objectives compare with those you wrote earlier based on your understanding of Daspur's training needs?
- How could Peter strengthen the set of objectives he has just written for the Daspur workshop?

5 August, 9:00 am, Uma's office, SATI

"Did you get my list of objectives, Uma?"

"Yes", Uma replied, "but I've got to tell you, Peter, they need a lot of work before we turn them over to Mrs. Pal. Otherwise, she may run us both out of the institute- you know how finicky she can be about course objectives".

"They're that bad?" asked Peter, dejectedly.

"Yes, pretty bad", was the reply.

"Well then", said Peter, with determination in hie voice, "let's get to work on them".

Luckily, Uma had an old copy of a small book written many years ago by an American educator, Robert Mager. It was Preparing Instructional Objectives. Uma and Peter went through Mager's book quickly to pull out some of his key thoughts.

"An objective is an intent communicated by a statement describing a proposed change in a learner - a statement of what the learner is to be like when he has successfully completed a learning experience".

"An instructional objective describes an intended outcome rather than a description or summary of content - it describes what the learner will be DOING when demonstrating hie achievement of the objective".

"To state an objective that will successfully communicate your educational intent, you will sometimes have to define terminal behaviour further by stating the conditions you will impose upon the learner when he is demonstrating the mastery of the objective".

"If you can specify at least the minimum acceptable performance for each objective, you will have a performance standard against which to test your instructional objectives ... a means for determining whether your programmes are successful in achieving your instructional intent".

After Peter had written these statements on Uma's blackboard, she commented, "seems to me Mager is focusing on three things: performance (What will the trainee be able to do at the end of the training?); conditions (in other words, under what constraints or limitations will the trainee's performance have to take place?); and, finally, what criteria will be used to describe acceptable performance".

″Uma", Peter interjected, "it all sounds so simple, but why do trainers have such a difficult time stating what it is they want to accomplish? Some of the best trainers I know can't write decent training objectives!"

"I think you just said it, Peter. The trainer has a difficult time saying what he wants to accomplish - what he, the trainer wants to do. Get it? Mager is saying, what will the trainee, the participant be able to do by the end of the training. It's subtle, Peter, but I think..".

Peter jumped in: "So darned subtle I'm not sure I understand it. Anyway, let's get on with it. The sooner we get this task out of the way the happier I'll be!"

They reviewed Peter's field notes and listed the three performance discrepancies the CMO, his staff and Peter had agreed upon: (1) market revenues were only 60 percent of their potential; (2) over one third of the revenue officers reports to the Finance Department had to he rewritten; and (3) the relationship between the market masters and revenue officers, and the market vendors had deteriorated over the past year.

Peter and Uma selected the revenue-report-writing problem first and began to work with it, trying to use Mager's concepts of performance, conditions and criteria. The concept of the trainee's performance seemed pretty simple. Wasn't it to write revenue reports that would he acceptable to the finance director? Conditions, on the other hand, weren't so simple. As Mager described them, they were the constraints or limitations under which the report writing would take place. Uma and Peter decided one condition was to complete the report in the field using the form provided by the department, but there were problems with the report form. A number of revenue officers said it was too complicated: others said it contained questions to which they didn't have answers.

"Maybe the form needs to be changed?" Peter asked. "But is that a training need? Probably not unless... "

"Unless, what?" Uma asked.

"Unless we define one of the training results as a creative idea", said Peter. "I remember reading an article, several months ago, that described learning results in four ways - new knowledge, understanding and awareness; new skills; new attitudes, values and priorities; and finally, creative ideas. What if we had the revenue officers design a report form that was easy to use, gave the finance director all the information and data he needed and helped the revenue officers do it right the first time. Now, wouldn't that training result he a creative idea?"

"I guess so", Uma responded, "but how do you design a training programme to do that? Sounds like the manager's responsibility, not something the revenue officers should do. On the other hand, if the officers did come up with a new form, I'll bet they'd be motivated to use it".

"Good point, Uma. Now, where were we?" Peter asked as he began to worry about getting the training objectives written before the end of the day.

The two trainers struggled through this task, often having spirited arguments a bout what represented a condition and a criteria. Even Mager wasn't much help on these points. If, for example, the criteria (statements of acceptable performance) include getting reports to the boss on time, is that also a condition or limitation under which the performance must take place? Peter and Uma decided about mid-afternoon that these kinds of rhetorical discussions were useful and interesting, but also, very time-consuming. They quickened their pace, recognizing that many of the training objectives they would write could be open to interpretation by others. What they hoped to do was eliminate the potential for misinterpretation.

About nine o'clock that evening, Uma and Peter stuck their paper under the carriage of their secretary's typewriter and went off to their favourite hotel for a late dinner.

6 August, 10:30 am, Uma's office, SATI

When Uma sat down, she saw a copy of the training objectives on her desk. As she picked them up to proof them, she said to herself, "Sonia certainly does good work".

Proposed Daspur Workshop Goals and Objectives

A. Revenue report writing skills

Overall goal: To improve the quality and accuracy of the city market revenue field records and reports.

Training objectives: By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

a. produce an improved market-revenue reporting form that is acceptable to the finance director and easy for revenue officers to complete in the field;

b. complete their daily revenue reports in the field with an acceptance rate of at least 90 per cent

B. Increase market revenues

Overall goal: To increase market revenues in three targeted areas by a minimum of 20 per cent in the six months following the workshop.

Training objectives: By the end of workshop, participants will have:

a. identified at least five ways in which revenues can be increased in the markets where they have responsibilities and jurisdiction;

b. increased their knowledge and skills in vendor contact and time management to the extent they can increase the number of daily collections by 20 per cent within three months of the completion of the workshop.

C. Improved city-vendor relationships

Overall goal: To improve day-to-day working relationship between the city market masters and revenue officers and the market vendors.

Training objectives: By the end of the workshop, the participants will have:

a. increased their knowledge and understanding of community-development concepts and practices designed to decrease inter-group misunderstandings and tensions;

b. met with a representative group of market vendors to understand the issues and concerns resulting in the deterioration of the relationship between the city officers and vendors.

Questions to reader

- Which of the above objectives meet, to the greatest extent, the components of performance, conditions and criteria, as discussed in the text of the case study?
- What could Peter and Uma have done, in writing these objectives, to increase their ability to measure the long-term impact of the training on the performance of the individual trainees and the organization?

Commentary

Writing training objectives, particularly if there is intent to meet the criteria of academics like Robert Mager, can be a frustrating experience. In fact, we experienced just such emotions when trying to set up this case study. The problems one encounters in writing rigorous objectives are many. First, training is designed to change behaviour - individual, team or group, and organizational behaviour. From our perspective, that is the bottom line. If behaviour does not change, training has been wasted. This is one of the fundamental differences between training and education. Secondly, the behavioural change we are looking for in training is on-the-job, not in the classroom, although it is nice to see it develop there as well.

The academics who instruct us on the proper way to write training objectives rarely apply their own theory and criteria to messy organizational problems or performance discrepancies, when they give examples in their textbooks, particularly, those that cut across a myriad of jurisdictional and interpersonal boundaries. As Peter and Uma discovered, trying to write a training objective that demonstrates what a revenue officer will be able to do **in the classroom** at the end of a training session to demonstrate his or her ability to lessen intergroup tensions **in the community** under certain conditions based on specific criteria, is difficult, if not impossible. In fact, it's even hard to follow that train of thought!

Learning objectives are also difficult to frame because they often encompass subjective standards. Take the issue, in the case study, of unacceptable revenue reports as submitted by the revenue officers to the finance director. Training is only one of many options to overcome the performance discrepancy and may not be the best. What if the current finance director resigns, another one takes his place and the new director says, "I don't see anything wrong with these reports. Why spend scarce resources on training our officers to make them better?" Has the performance of the revenue officer suddenly improved? Probably not. On the other hand, the performance discrepancy as originally defined no longer exists. This decision by the new director might have uncovered a new discrepancy. That is, management's inability to distinguish quality work from that which is mediocre. Lowering standards is always an option when performance gaps exist. We are not advocating a drop in standards as a preferred option, although at times it might be. We are simply pointing out its availability to the manager as an option.

Another management option is to redefine roles and responsibilities. The finance director, in our case study, could decide the assistant market masters should take over report writing and leave the revenue officers to concentrate on revenue collection. They, of course, might need to be trained, as well, in report writing. The point is that training is not the only option available to the manager nor is it always the best.

KSAVCA = BC

Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Creative Acts (as training outputs) = Behavioural Change, or, at least, we should like to think so. The definition of potential training outputs has expanded significantly in recent years. There was a time when only increased knowledge or improved skills were seen as appropriate training outputs. Now it is common and, often, expected that training will address attitudinal concerns and, even, values as they affect performance in the work setting. Much of the training that falls under the rubric of "community development", for example, is concerned with attitudes and values. We are not only looking at new knowledge and skills that will help individuals work effectively in the community, we are often asking trainees to alter their attitudes about how they work with community groups and to confront their own values about the power and influence that citizens should have in controlling their own destiny at the community level.

Finally, training can and should result in creative acts as intended outcomes. Some of the training objectives Peter and Uma wrote are geared to producing creative acts. For example, producing a revised and improved revenue-reporting form and identifying new ways to increase revenue are just two objectives that go beyond the traditional outcomes associated with knowledge and skills. Ironically, the revenue officers, in pursuing these two "creative act" outcomes, could, at the same time, be engaged in responding to traditional skill building and knowledge-enhancement objectives. The skilful trainer is one who can pursue several training objectives at once and not be restricted to pursuing individual learning objectives in linear, isolated fashion.

The taxonomy of end products one can achieve through training (e.g., increased knowledge, improved skills, changed attitudes, creative acts) is raised here because it provides the trainer with another approach to writing objectives. If we can: (a) describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values or creative acts we want in place at the end of any training event (or in motion so as to be in place at some future date); and (b) ensure that they are based on client-identified performance discrepancies, we are on our way to writing acceptable training objectives.

Before moving on to training design, it will be helpful to summarize some of our thoughts on the task of writing training objectives.

- If you don't know where you're going with your training (defining your objectives carefully), you will have no way of knowing if you have the right design or not.

- Useful training objectives specify the intended performance by the trainee as a result of the training - not what has to be done by the trainer to achieve that performance.

- The focus in writing training objectives is on the trainee, not the trainer.

- Training objectives should be stated in observable and measurable terms whenever possible. In other words, can you observe or measure the performance change?

- To the extent possible, it is useful to state any conditions or limitations there may be on the trainees' performance when applying the new learning. For example, can they only use the new skills acquired through training while standing on their heads facing south?

- Objectives, whenever possible, should define an acceptable level of performance to be achieved as a result of training, i.e., given the investment, what is the lowest level of improvement the manager is willing to accept?

- The taxonomy of learning outputs, beginning with knowledge and ending with creative acts, is a useful tool in defining training objectives. It helps you to decide what you expect individual learners to achieve before you begin to plot a course to help them achieve it.

- All training should be committed to the end result of behavioural change. If change does not happen as a result of training, training is an investment with little or no perceivable return.

- Writing training objectives to meet other peoples' expectations (of how objective statements should be written) is difficult and sometimes impossible. It is best to write them to meet your own expectations and those of your client.

4. PLANNING AND DESIGN

Questions to reader

- If you were Peter or Uma, with the list of objectives you have just written, what would you do next? Why?

Case Study
6 August, after tea break

Peter and Uma remained in the faculty lounge after the morning tea break to talk to the principal. Mrs. Pal said she was satisfied with the training objectives for the Daspur workshop. "Oh", she went on to say, "I could pick at some of the wording you used, but I think it's more important for you to touch base with the CMO and may be some of his officers to see if they agree. By the way, the CMO plans to be here tomorrow to give a lecture to one of our classes. You might want to get in touch with him before he comes. He may be willing to go over your draft of the objectives while he's here". As an after thought, she said, "Perhaps we could all have lunch together".

Peter reached Mr. Khan in the afternoon. They chatted about the training objectives and the possibility of having lunch together at SATI the following day.

Asif replied, "Would it be possible to see a copy of those objectives before we meet? The engineer's down in Vivat now, looking at some paving equipment. If I can reach him, maybe he can stop by and pick up a copy".

Peter responded, "You just tell me where we can find him, Asif. We'll see that he gets them before he leaves town".

7 August, SATI, noon

Mr. Khan, Ms. Pal, Peter and Uma had lunch together and talked about the training. The CMO questioned one or two of the training outcomes. He wondered, for example, how Peter and Uma hoped to achieve objectives, like the development of a new revenue-reporting form through a training programme. Peter told Asif that several revenue officers had suggested ways to change the form to make it easy for them to complete. The CMO seemed surprised and said, "Well, maybe they can come up with one that will work. I'm skeptical, but why not give it a try".

Peter also mentioned he had gathered some information during his interviews and visits to the markets that wasn't training-related. He thought it might he helpful to the CMO or his department heads, in their management responsibilities.

Peter went on to explain, "For example, there doesn't appear to be any direct supervision of revenue officers in the field, and yet, as I understand, each market has a market master who is a grade higher than the revenue officers. All of them are under the finance director's supervision. Have you ever thought about giving the market masters supervisory responsibilities over revenue collection?"

"No", responded the CMO, "but it might work".

Peter wanted to mention other things he had observed to the CMO, but he decided maybe this wasn't the best time.

They also talked about how to schedule the training. The CMO wanted the training to take place in Daspur and didn't want his officers away from their jobs for any length of time. Mrs. Pal suggested they consider one-day sessions, spread over several weeks. Some "home work" for the officers to complete between sessions might be included.

"By home work", Mrs. Pal emphasized, "I don't mean the kind we used to get when we were doing our "O levels". I'm thinking about tasks that are directly related to the officers' jobs. For example, maybe revenue officers could keep track of how long each vendor contact takes - or market masters could do an inventory of empty stalls, if it hasn't been done lately".

While everyone agreed on the approach, Peter and Uma were still a bit nervous (but tried not to show it). They had talked earlier about the problem of working in one-day modules. Most of their experience at SATI was limited to nine month diploma programmed, taught like university courses or two-to four-week workshops that relied heavily on guest speakers and lectures.

Just before the CMO excused himself to get ready for his lecture, Peter said to him, "We're looking forward to working with you and your staff, but, before you go, I want to check something out. It has to do with the training objectives. If the training achieves the outcomes stated on the list of objectives that Uma and I prepared, would you be satisfied?"

"No question about it, Peter", replied the CMO. "in fact, it's a lot more than I expected".

Asif turned to the principal and said, "Sadiqa, these two young people have created some pretty high expectations on my part. You're going to have to work them hard to make sure I'm not disappointed".

8 August, SATI, principal's office

The principal told Peter and Uma she had received a phone call from Ms. Olsen. The Scandinavians International Assistance Agency (SIAA) had agreed to fund training of the Daspur city personnel but wanted a proposal from SATI. Mrs. Pal asked Peter and Uma to prepare the proposal for her review and signature. It was due in three weeks.

The three of them also had a long discussion about the proposed training and how it should be designed and delivered. The principal said she wanted the training to be "relevant and practical".

"What do you mean by relevant and practical?" Uma asked. "Give us an example".

The principal responded, "So often our training programmes involve little more than lectures and guest speakers and, maybe, a few group discussions. I'm not sure the officers in Daspur could sit through a day of dry lectures, and, from what you've told us, Peter these officers may be able to solve some of the same problems they seem to be helping to create. We may want to try some different approaches to training these people".

Uma responded by telling the principal and Peter that she had brought back some materials from the Training of Trainers programme she thought would be helpful. "We spent a lot of time", she went onto say, "looking at different learning styles, the different ways people learn. I think it would be fun to experiment with some of these ideas when we put together the Daspur workshops".

The principal encouraged Peter and Uma to be "creative", saying, "if we never take any risks in this business, we'll never know what works or what doesn't".

When Uma and Peter returned to Uma's office, they spent a few moments thinking about how they should proceed with the design work. They listed once again the training needs Peter had "discovered" in his investigations in Daspur and wrote them beside the objectives they had just given the CMO. They also noted the training audience. They would be training 24 mid-level officers, 16 of them revenue collectors and the remainder market masters or their assistants. The three market masters were one pay-grade above the rest but had no supervisory responsibilities over the revenue officers and only minimal responsibilities over the assistant market masters. Peter and Uma reminded themselves that, while the difference in status was small, they would need to keep this difference in mind as they designed and carried out the workshops.

There was one constraint about the Daspur training request that bothered them more than any other. It was the CMO's insistence that his officers could not be released for more than one day at a time. Not only was the CMO adamant about this matter, their own principal had agreed to it.

Peter much preferred to bring the officers to SATI for one or two weeks of residential instruction. This way he and Uma could use other faculty members to take responsibility for some of the sessions.

Uma, on the other hand, liked the idea of doing the training in Daspur, using a different approach. "Just think, Peter, if the training doesn't go well for us, we have a whole week to think about what went wrong and how to change it".

"Great!" Peter retorted, "A whole week to worry about what we should have done differently. Some consolation.

Later that morning, they talked about how they might sequence the training sessions. They decided to start with the performance problem involving market revenues and to hold the vendor-city relationship problem until the last workshop. The tension between the officers and the vendors seemed the most difficult of the three. They wanted to build their confidence before they tackled that problem. In between, they would work with the revenue officers on their report writing.

Just before lunch, Peter asked Uma for a copy of the materials on learning styles she had mentioned in the meeting with the principal earlier.

"Can we get together about three?" Peter asked. "I'd like a chance to go over these before we begin to think about the designs".

Later that afternoon

"Uma, I'm not at all sure I understand what that guy Kolb is trying to say about learning styles in those handouts you gave me before lunch".

"I can appreciate that", Uma responded. "He tends to be a bit academic at times, and he uses some terms that are "very American" as far as I'm concerned. Nevertheless, I find his ideas helpful and I think we should try to use them I in the Daspur programme, if we can. Let me see if I can describe them in my own words".

"Three things about Kolb's model impressed me. First, it identified four distinct ways in which individuals learn. First, according to Kolb, people learn from concrete experience (specific experiences and feelings). Secondly, they learn by watching and listening, (i.e., reflecting on what is happening and observing what is going on, viewing things from a different perspective). Thirdly, they learn by thinking or what Kolb calls abstract conceptualization. This involves acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation - more of an analytical approach to learning. And, finally, they learn by doing - or active experimentation to find out first-hand how something works for them".

In describing Kolb's theory, Uma said that each individual seems to have a preference in the way he or she learns. Some people prefer "learning by doing", while others prefer "learning by thinking" or one of the other two approaches identified by Kolb in his research. "In spite of our preferences", Uma went on to say, "we can and do use each of these styles in varying degrees, and we can strengthen those we don't use as often, through practice. That's one reason why it's important to vary training designs to accommodate different styles".

Another aspect of the learning-styles approach, which Uma liked, was the way trainers could modify their training designs to emphasise one style over another. For example, for those who learn best by active experimentation, it might make sense to include a field assignment. Another approach might be more effective when working with someone else.

As Uma remembered, there is also a cycle of events that each of us must experience or be involved in, before significant learning is achieved. The cycle includes the four styles identified by the Kolb model. The cycle goes from concrete experience, to reflective observation, to the conceptualization stage and, finally, to active experimentation. As Kolb describes these steps, they are circular, not linear. This means, once the cycle is complete, it begins again.

Uma was surprised that the trainer, according to Kolb and others, could break into that cycle at any point when designing and conducting training.

"This means", as Uma explained to Peter, "that you don't always have to start out with what Kolb calls a concrete experience, like a lecture, and finish with an active experimentation activity, like having the trainees apply whatever it is you're teaching. This means, we have a lot of options available when we design a programme like the one we're going to do in Daspur".

"I like the model too", Peter remarked. "It gives me a way of thinking about training design, but frankly, I think it's too complicated. After giving it some thought, I think I've come up with a way to simplify it".

"Really", responded Uma. "Did you arrive at this conclusion through reflective observation or active experimentation?"

"Actually", replied Peter, "It was a concrete experience. On a more serious note, Uma, it seems to me we trainers have three things to do when working with a group of participants, particularly those who have work experience, like the participants in Daspur, and we need to think about these three stages when we sit down to design the programme. The first is to present new ideas or knowledge or data ... "

"Or", Uma interrupted, "even the introduction of a new skill?"

"Yes, " Peter continued, "and other things as well. Once we have presented the material or input or whatever we want to call it, we need to help our participants process it".

"Wait a minute, Peter", Uma said, "what do you mean by 'process' it?"

"A variety of things", Peter continued. "We help them talk about what it is we presented, reflect on it, go out and observe it in the field, even experiment with it in the class room".

"We don't always do this very well in our programmed now, do we?" Uma observed.

"That's right", Peter went on to say. "But the thing we do even less well is the last step - that is, helping our participants figure out how to apply whatever it is they have learned, and application is really two-fold. We can help them apply what they learned to a contrived situation in the classroom, or we can help them apply it to a real situation they are facing on the job".

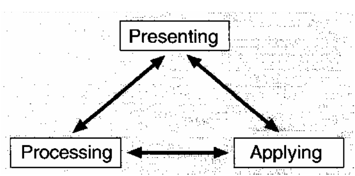
"Of course", Uma added, "helping them apply it to a real-life situation is important, particularly when we are involved in in-house training, as we shall he doing in Daspur".

"Precisely", said Peter, nodding in agreement. "Now, I suspect we shall have trouble keeping these three steps separated. The lines between them don't always seem to be clear, but then, I have the same trouble with Kolb's model. When does a trainee stop observing and start thinking or, to use Kolb's terms, go from reflective observation to abstract conceptualization?"

"That's a good point", Uma replied. "I guess if we're going to stay in this training game,
Peter, we're going to have to learn to live with a lot of ambiguity, but I have a concern with what you said about the three steps in designing a training programme. Can we also mix them up?"

"What do you mean, mix them up?" asked Peter, looking a bit puzzled.

Uma continued. "Remember, Kolb said we could break into the learning cycle at any point when we put together a training design. Now, I'm wondering whether we can do the same with your three steps. In other words, could we start with what you call application and, then, go to process or presentation or do we always have to start with 'presenting' something?"



"I guess there's one way to find out", said Peter. "Let's take one of those training needs I found in Daspur and see if we can think of more than one training design to meet it".

Questions to reader

- Select one of the objectives Peter and Uma plan to address in the Daspur training programme and design training to accomplish it in at least two ways. Start first with a traditional presentation followed by the other two steps. Then, start with either application or processing and design a learning experience incorporating the other two steps.

Later that afternoon

Peter and Uma met later that afternoon to see if they could design a training event for Daspur that would start with the different stages Peter had outlined earlier. They chose the training objective concerned with developing a new revenue-reporting form. (You may recall, the training objective, as sent to the CMO for approval, read: to produce an improved market-revenue-reporting form that would be acceptable to the finance director and easy for officers to use.)

As Peter and Uma worked together that afternoon, they came up with the following options, each beginning with a different step in the training cycle.

Option I, Starting with presentation

Presenting

- Short lecture on how to design an effective report form, using examples from other local authorities.

Processing

- Small-group discussions, comparing the report form Daspur is using with others described in the presentation.

Applying

- Total group, working with the instructor and using ideas from each small work group redesign Daspur's revenue-reporting form.

Option II, Starting With Processing

Processing

- The instructor divides the participants into small work groups to list problems they encounter in completing the revenue-reporting form.

Presenting

- Small groups report out and compare their lists. Instructor comments on the various lists, summarizes what he/she sees as the problems to be addressed, and uses the participants' inputs as the basis for short lecture on criteria for designing a simple but effective reporting form.

Applying

- Instructor organizes small groups to design a new form they can propose for use to the finance director.

Option III, Starting with Application

Applying

- Individual participants are given market-revenue information from a previous week and asked to complete the revenue-reporting form.

Processing

- Small groups of participants (2-4) are organized and asked to critique each other's revenue reports and prepare a list of problems they each have encountered in completing the revenue report.

Presenting

- Each small working group presents its report. After all reports have been given, the total group consolidated its findings, making one list of the problems encountered in completing the form.

Questions to reader

- Review the three training designs, outlined above, and select the one you believe would be most effective in meeting the stated training objective. Explain why you selected this alternative over the others.

"Hey, we did it!" exclaimed Uma. "At least, I think we did it. Anyway, we have some outlines we can work on to meet that training objective".

"You're right, Uma". Peter agreed. "What surprised me was how easy it was, once we got started. Why don't we go ahead and pick one of the three approaches.

Uma interjected, "The best of the three, of course",

Nodding in agreement, Peter replied, "Yes, if we can figure out which one that is, we can try to finish the design and use it as a model for the others. After all, the principal said she wanted a funding proposal to send to Ms. Olsen sometime in the next two or three weeks".

"I agree with you, Peter", said Uma, "but I'm tired. We've worked hard today. What do you say we call it a day, go get a drink and celebrate our great insights into the mysteries of training.

"You're getting a bit cynical about our chosen profession, aren't you, Uma?"

"You think so, Peter?" she replied.

As they went out the door, Uma turned to Susan, her secretary, and said, "if the principal calls, tell her Peter and I have gone out to have a concrete experience. Or are we planning to engage in abstract conceptualization, Peter?"

"Hardly!" he replied. "You know, Uma, sometimes you're kind of weird".

10 August, 8:30 am, Peter's office

Two days later, Peter and Uma met again to work on the Daspur training design. After developing a format for outlining the design, Peter and Uma gave some thought to the performance discrepancy associated with the completion of revenue reports. As they discussed the problem the city was having in getting the reports written, it occurred to them that the officers' poor performance was, in part, a symptom of other problems. For example, some officers had already criticized the report form as being too complicated. Other officers said it required information about the markets that it wasn't their responsibility to collect. Maybe the officers don't have enough time to complete the current form by the end of each workday. These symptoms, Uma and Peter realized, may or may not be solvable by training.

Uma and Peter decided that one way to test some of these performance assumptions would be to simulate the work situation in the classroom. For example, the revenue officers could be asked to prepare a revenue report, within the usual time allotted them, using actual data from the field. The simulation would not only give the trainers feedback on each individuals capacity to perform the task but provide insight into problems that are encountered widely within the cadre.

As Uma and Peter reviewed the three options they had outlined earlier, they decided to go with the third. As you may recall, this was the one to be initiated bran application exercise. They would start the report-writing training with the simulation exercise they had just discussed.

Working together, Uma and Peter planned a day-long workshop to achieve one of the two training objectives concerned with the performance discrepancy of unacceptable revenue reports from the field. They put the training outline for the workshop in the following format.

Revenue-Report-Writing Workshop
City of Daspur

Overview of Training Need:
The overall quality of market-revenue reports from the field has been identified as one of three performance discrepancies the city wants addressed through training. Over a third of these reports have to be rewritten now before they are accepted by the finance director. In discussions between the city officials and SATI, it was agreed the training should result in a sustained 90-per cent report acceptance rate by the director. Since training is only one of several strategies needed to overcome this performance discrepancy, the two parties agreed to work together to employ both training and management interventions to meet their predetermined objectives.

To improve the quality and accuracy of city market-revenue field reports and records.

Specific Training Objectives:

1. By the completion of the workshop, the participants will produce a revised market-revenue-reporting document that is acceptable to the finance director and will help the revenue officers achieve a sustained minimum acceptance rate of 90 per cent upon initial submission.

2. Within six weeks of the completion of the workshop participants will achieve a sustainable minimum acceptance rate of 90 per cent for market-revenue reports written in the field. (It is recognized that this objective cannot be met during this workshop. It is listed here because it represents the impact result to be achieved through training and follow-up activities.)

Workshop Participants:
Revenue officers (if it has been determined at a previous workshop that market masters or assistant market masters should be involved in writing revenue reports, they should also be involved in this workshop.)

Time required: One day

Training Venue: A suitable site in Daspur. The workshop will require a room large enough to accommodate 24 trainees in plenary session and up to six simultaneous small-group discussions.

Training Design:

8:00 am Plenary session:

- Warm-up activity: Each participant quickly states something that has happened to him/her during the past week as a result of the first workshop in the series.

- Overview of days activities and briefing of participants on first task.

Task

1 . Each revenue officer is asked to complete two copies of the current market-revenue-reporting form.

2. Each officer is to he given receipts and other data necessary to complete the report.

TRAINER NOTES: This task should not go beyond 30 minutes. This is the amount of time normally required to complete the report in the field. Since the revenue officers have been using this reporting document, there should he no need to give lengthy instructions. Ask participants, to complete one copy before they begin the second copy. One copy is to se given to the instructors, and the second copy kept by the training participant to use in the following activity.

9:00am Small Work Groups (3-5 Revenue Officers)

Tasks

1. Participants discuss their reports and develop a list of problems (constraints) they experienced in completing the reports.

2. The problem list is posted on newsprint and one member of the group is selected to report to the follow-up plenary session.

TRAINER NOTES: Some groups may have problems completing the task. If so, suggest they go over the report in detail to look for all of the reasons why they have not been able to complete it, either on time or accurately. Ask them to check their arithmetic. Has each of them come up with the same revenue totals for the day? If not why not? Is the form organized to be completed easily? Is there enough room to record the information requested? Ask them to look at the data and the reporting form from the perspective of an outsider, as someone who is seeing both for the first time.

10:00 am Tea Time

10:30 am Plenary Session

Tasks

1. Small work groups report on their list of problems (constraints) and answer questions for clarification.

2. Lists are combined, and priorities put on those problems that are seen as the most important to solve.

3. Instructors lead a guided discussion to prepare a list of recommended steps to overcome each of the problems/constraints. Group selects a spokesperson to present its findings and recommendations to the finance director at the next training session.

TRAINER NOTES: It will be important to provide structure and direction to this session. The primary objective is to develop a list of ways to change the reporting form to help revenue officers achieve the objective of a sustained acceptance rate of 90 per cent. The officers may also come up with other suggestions that help them with their jobs. These should be recorded, and a decision made on the best way to handle them for future consideration. Since the director will be attending the afternoon training session, the officers should he encouraged to do their best on these tasks.

12:30 p.m. Lunch (The finance director should be encouraged to join the revenue officers for lunch)

2:00 p.m. Plenary session (with finance director)

Tasks

1. Group spokespersons report their findings and recommendations to the finance director.

2. Each recommendation is discussed, and a decision made, if possible, on whether to accept it as proposed, to modify it or to drop it.

3:30 p.m. Tea Time

4:00 p.m. Plenary session continues

Tasks: Critique of days activities and discussion of what needs to be done to follow up on the decisions that were made by (or with) the finance director at the previous session.

TRAINER NOTES: While it is difficult to predict what will happen during the afternoon session with the finance director, the instructors and the city staff should be prepared to follow up on the recommendations that have been adopted. If, for example, the revenue officers, working with the director, agree on a new format, it should be typed, the officers, briefed on its use, and the new form put into operation as quickly as possible. The officers should have several days to use the new form in the field prior to the next training session. The results could be reviewed and critiqued at that time.

Questions to reader

- You have just looked over the shoulders of two trainers struggling to develop a training design for a group of line officers. Given the training objectives regarding the report-writing performance discrepancy, how successful do you think their design will be? Why/why not?

- Peter and Uma admitted to themselves that the training design they just completed for the Daspur revenue officers would result in some uncertainty and ambiguity, in that they, as trainers, could not predict the outcomes. Is this desirable or undesirable, when planning learning events for organizational work teams? Why? Would you have done anything differently, in their situation, to have decreased the uncertainty? If so, What?

Commentary

The design of training interventions is or should be the most challenging task in the training cycle. Yet, many trainers are either not skilled in training design or not inclined to spend the time necessary to design effective learning experiences. The design phase of the training cycle is challenging because it requires: (a) knowledge of the many design options that are available; (b) skill in using them; and (c) creativity in manipulating the various options to enhance participant involvement and significant learning. Moreover, the design phase requires the trainer to see the big picture while grappling with the details of each learning moment. It also demands an element of self-confidence that allows the trainer to take risks and to disinvest in his or her own creation, if it's not going as planned or if a better opportunity presents itself as the learning event unfolds.

Learning is an organic experience - not a mechanical exercise. It puts roots down in the strangest places and occasionally bears unexpected fruits. Perhaps, that is why training is both exciting and, at times, exasperating, and that is why the design phase is so challenging.

In the next few pages, we want to reflect on the experience Peter and Uma have just had in designing a training event and look at some of the key factors that determine the success of learning designs.

The points made earlier about the importance of assessing needs and writing objectives need to be re-emphasized here. If you don't know where you're going, it's impossible to plan your trip, and the more detailed your learning objectives are, the easier it is to plan and design experiences to fulfil them.

Content vs process

Designing training experiences involves both content and process - the "what" and "how" of learning. Content is often a problem for the trainer. First, there is a tendency to bring in the "experts" to provide content to the training experience. Often these experts are knowledgeable about their field but not skilled in adult learning strategies. They can be enlightening, but very boring! Secondly, outside experts are not always needed. What is needed are strategies for helping people learn from each other (this quickly gets us into a discussion of process). Thirdly, many trainers believe that content can be dealt with only in a traditional lecture format. Not so. This is one of the traps we put ourselves into when confronted with technical or conceptual ideas that need to be transferred from one head to another.

Content and process are not separate containers from which we draw to design training. They tend to be intermixed, often, inseparable ingredients. Take, for example, the exercise where revenue officers were asked to critique the reporting forms they had been using to report data and information to their director. Is it content or process? We think it's a bit of both. Content is best when it is delivered in an engaging, interactive milieu. Process is at its worst when it is void of content, epitomizing form over substance.

Many years ago, a highly paid industrial trainer was working with a city council to teach them how to be creative. He suggested they do a brainstorming exercise on the redesign of a container lid. The mayor, who was interested in creative thinking but preferred to direct attention to redesigning the council chambers, was told by the trainer, "We shall consider that exercise but only after you have redesigned the lid". It was, of course, a dumb move on the trainer's part. He alienated the mayor and council and missed an opportunity to help them grapple with a long-standing problem that was important and frustrating to them.

We said content is often a trap to the trainers: so is process. Often, we think it has to be complicated to be effective. The more complicated the training process, the more likely it is you will lose the participants in the maze and haze of implementation. Keeping it simple (the training process, that is) is also keeping it effective.

Finally, it is important to remember that the best content resource the trainer has available is, more often than not, the knowledge and experience of the training participants. The best process resource the trainer has available is an opportunity for the training participants to share their knowledge and experience. Don't hesitate to design both opportunities into the learning experience.

Stages of learning

Peter suggested that we think about the learning event in a slightly different way - as encompassing three stages, which Uma then suggested, could be interchangeable in terms of sequencing. These stages are presenting, processing and applying.

Presenting is the stage when we input new ideas, data, information, concepts, models, and definitions. From a training perspective, we have a wide range of tools available. Presenters can instruct, lecture, use visual aids, provide reading materials (put the total onus on the learner), initiate a discussion, and generate data (through such activities as brainstorming and nominal group process). Presenting is content-oriented and suggests an infusion of new material for learning. It can come from the instructor/trainer, from the training participants or from the outside, in a myriad of ways.

Processing is the way we take the input and -turn it into something meaningful and useful, like turning raw cotton into beautiful cloth. Processing uses such tools as questions and answers, small-group activities, guided discussions, data analysis, reflecting and, no doubt, listening with a third ear (as counseled by a famous psychologist years ago). Processing means activities like interpreting information, verifying variables, cogitating on concepts, manipulating models and pursuing perspectives.

Applying, the third component in the learning process, is promoting the transfer of wanted behaviour within and beyond learning situations. Application happens in two ways: (a) in contrived circumstances, and (b) on the job. Contrived applications are those which take place primarily within the "classroom' and represent a relatively safe use of an input to learning. They use such tools as case studies, role plays, simulations, exercises and self-assessment instruments. Real-time applications of learning, which are often associated with training programmes, include such tools as force-field analysis, problem-solving, action planning, use of check lists and contracting for achievement.

Obviously, these three factors or stages in the learning, process have fuzzy boundaries and invade each other's areas with relative ease. They are fluid and not always amenable to quick and easy labeling. We even had difficulty trying to catalogue them for purposes of this manual.

The sequence challenge

The task of sequencing learning events is part logic, part experience, part intuition and part good common sense. Sequencing or deciding what comes next, is both a micro and macro concern. Uma and Peter, in the case study, have been concerned primarily with the micro issues of sequencing - how to order events within a short, tightly structured one-day learning experience. The challenge they faced was primarily one of deciding how to juggle presenting, processing and applying events to meet a specific learning need.

As they learned, when manipulating those variables, it is possible to start anywhere in the cycle. Some starts make more sense than others, for different reasons.

There is no hard and fast rule. What is more important than sequencing is the need to touch all three bases. When any of those steps is left out, the learning experience is not complete.

Sequencing, in the macro arena, may be difficult. This is the challenge of bringing order to the total learning experience, from the initial session to the closing ceremony. For Peter and Uma, it was deciding when to focus on each of the performance discrepancies, since they would be covered in separate, discrete workshops. Their decision to leave the vendor-city conflict until last was, we believe, prudent. It gives the trainers and the client opportunities to know about each other and to develop a working relationship around training, before venturing into the community.

One could argue over the positioning of the other two components of their programme (increased revenue generation and improved record keeping). We do not have strong feelings either way. What is important is a well thought-out plan based on: (a) the objectives to be accomplished; (b) the resources and their availability; (c) the opportunity to build on a previous learning experience; and (d) the logic of what should happen when.

One final note (and this pertains to just about everything you do as a trainer), do not be afraid to change things. If the sequencing doesn't "feel right" or something unexpected happens that interrupts the flow of events or you see a target of opportunity to enhance the learning experience for your participants, loosen up and redesign. The ability to invest heavily in a training programme with your time and talent and, then, disinvest quickly, as you see an opportunity to improve the learning mid-stream, is the sign of a mature, self-assured and competent trainer.

The flea-market/back-pack continuum

Another challenge the trainer faces in designing learning events is how to provide diversity without being bizarre. Have you ever heard of "flea markets"? They are open-air bazaars that are available to anyone who has anything to sell, from junk to precious antiques. Some training programmes are like flea markets. The trainers use so many different techniques, gimmicks and processes that the trainees spend most of their time wondering what weird trick the trainer will come up with next. On the other end of the spectrum, is the trainer who honours the backpack syndrome. Every morning he gets up, asks himself what he's going to wear, reaches into his back-pack, pulls out the only shirt he owns and says, "Hmm, I think I'll wear this today". Some trainers are like that. Each session has a different label but ends up looking the same. An example of this backpack approach is the lecture - guest speaker - panel discussion - guest speaker - lecture - guided discussion - lecture - lecture routine. Others (we should mention them in the context of this long-winded case study) use case studies or simulations ad nauseam.

Bringing diversity into the learning experience is important, but it can be overdone. Again, we must rely on judgement, experience and participant feedback to guide us in our selection of training tools.

One final point before returning to the case study. The training objectives and what is to be achieved as end results are the driving forces that determine what tools to use in fashioning the learning experience. Before you reach into the back of this manual to select the tools you want to use in designing your training programme, ask yourself, "What is it I want the participants to be able to do with what they've learned, and how can I best help them learn how to use it?"

14 August, SATI's library

Peter and Uma met in the library to continue their design work. They had two more programmes to plan, one to address the revenue shortfall and the other to help resolve the conflict between the city market officers and vendors. They decided to start with the revenue discrepancy.

While the overall goal of the city they recalled, was to increase market revenue in the three target areas, by a minimum of 20 percent within six months following the completion of the workshops, the SATI workshops had a more limited set of outcomes or expectations. Nevertheless, they were geared to supporting and enhancing the overall goal of the city.

Uma and Peter were expected to help the Daspur training participants: (a) identify at least five ways to increase market revenues, and (b) increase knowledge and skills in vendor contact and time management so they could increase daily contacts with vendors by a minimum of 20 per cent within three months.

The basis of the second objective is that trainers and city officials recognized training alone would not necessarily increase market revenues. Implicit in this objective is an assumption that increased vendor contacts could increase the potential for additional revenue collections and that officers could be trained to increase the number of contacts they make on a daily basis.

Uma asked Peter to review once again some of the key factors he discovered in Daspur's, market-revenue shortfall.

In reply, Peter tells Uma, "it's important to remember that the percentage of potential market fees being collected is an average for all three markets. While this overall average is about 60 percent, I discovered in scanning records that the average for individual markets varied, from 47 percent to 74 percent. If each market is expected to increase by 20 per cent, the market with the best record may not he able to reach that goal".

Curious to know why one market outperformed the others, Uma asked, "What do you know about that market, Peter?"

"Only that it is small", he replied, "has few, if any, vacancies and enjoys a good overall relationship between the vendors and the city staff".

Peter related other aspects of the market operation to Uma that he thought might have a bearing on revenue collection. several revenue officers had told Peter that it is impossible to visit all the stalls each day. There is just not time. They identified lack of transportation, report-writing requirements that take more time than they should, and general harassment from the vendors, as some of the reasons why they don't collect from all vendors on a daily basis.

Peter stated some of his own impressions as well. "These problems are real but I saw more, Uma, on my visits to the markets. First of all, these officers are not supervised - or at least that was my impression, and many of the officers I observed seemed not to use their time very well. There are quite a few vacant stalls in two of the markets, while squatters were operating just outside these markets".

"So", Uma interjected, "it looks like there are ways to tighten up the operation. The question is: Can we help the city increase its market revenues through training?"

Questions to reader

- Comment on the quality of the training objectives Uma and Peter hope to achieve and the rationale underlying each.
- What would you do, as a trainer, to assist the city improve its market revenues?
- Outline two approaches you would take to design a training programme to meet the objectives associated with Daspur's market-revenue generation concerns (as stated above).

Uma confided to Peter that she had been thinking about their objective to increase vendor contact by 20 per cent. "I'm not sure it will necessarily serve the local government's best interests in the long run", she said - to which Peter replied, "What do you mean?"

"Well" Uma continued, "we've not tied that objective to revenue generation. Do you think its possible these officers could actually contact more vendors and have revenues decrease? We say nothing about what they should collect, only that they make more contacts".

"Hmm!" Peter thought for a minute. "so, we'll change it. After all, its our training programme, and we want it to be successful, don't we?"

"Of course we do", Uma replied. "But I think we need to let the CMO and others know what we have in mind and why".

Uma and Peter went on to design the revenue-generation workshop which was to be the first in the series. As the first workshop, they would need to provide an opportunity for participants and staff to get acquainted and to probe, in some way, for any expectations the officers had about the training. They would also want to give a brief overview of the three training events and how they related to one another.

Peter suggested they start this workshop (after the usual preliminary events) with a presentation by the finance director or, maybe, the CMO, if he was willing and available. Peter felt such a presentation would do two things. First, it would give some legitimacy and prestige to the workshops. As Uma said, "send a message to the participants that these workshops are important". Secondly, Peter believed the officers should have an overall understanding of how the markets operate, how much revenue they each generate, what were revenue and costs trends for each market, what potential they represented, how important the revenue was to the city, and what it buys in services.

He went on to say, "if these men don't understand the big picture and how important these markets are to the city, how can we expect them to get excited about doing a good job!"

Uma agreed with this approach. She added, "His presentation would make a great introduction to our first group exercise".

Her reasoning was not clear to Peter. He asked, "What do you have in mind?"

"If I recall", Uma explained, "you said one market is doing much better than the other two. Why don't we plan a brainstorming session to generate a list of reasons why that market has a higher revenue-collection rate than the other two".

Peter was not convinced. "I'm not sure", he said nervously, "I want to risk a group exercise so early. What if they don't come up with any ideas?"

Uma was reassuring. "I can't believe that would happen, but, if it does, we can shift the exercise to look for ways to increase revenue in all three markets. I think it's important to focus initially on their successes, and, it looks like that one market is being very successful".

Buying in, Peter was quick to see other possibilities. "Maybe we could follow that brainstorming session with another where they list all the ways they could he more successful in all of the markets".

Uma quickly picked up on that idea. "From there, we have them start to do some action planning".

"Precisely", said Peter, "and we...".

"Before we get carried away by our own enthusiasm", Uma warned, "let me interject a sour note of reality".

Coming down to earth a bit, Peter asked, "What's that?"

Uma went onto express this concern: "Our original objective was to increase the officers' knowledge and skill in vendor contact and time management to the extent they can increase the number of daily collections by 20 percent within three months. If I were they, I should take exception to these statements, particularly the 20 percent increase".

Confused, Peter asked Uma to explain. "Are you saying that we've jumped the gun on deciding what the problems are and how they can be solved?"

"In away", she replied. "Although you do have some pretty good data to suggest that this kind of training could help".

Both of them were quiet for a while, lost in their own thoughts. Peter broke the silence. "I have an idea. Why don't we admit to them we had decided on this one objective (the one about skill training and vendor contacts) before the workshop started but would be willing to reconsider it based on their own discussions and action plans during the workshop".

"Sounds kind of risky", Uma responded, "but I think it might work".

Questions to reader

- Outline the advantages and disadvantages of being openly candid with the trainees, as suggested by Peter.
- Given this apparent problem with the way the training objective was originally stated, what would you do to rectify the situation?

Commentary

Peter and Uma have touched on some issues that are central to effective learning and good management practices, particularly with experienced employees. They have decided to ask the finance director or CMO to provide a complete database for planning use by the participants at the workshop. Also highlighted is the importance of sharing information widely within an organization.

Secondly, by focusing on the successful market, they are recognizing good performance and rewarding those responsible.

Thirdly, Uma and Peter, in their design, are recognizing the power of collective experience and wisdom. They are counting on the group, as a whole, being able to generate a list of recommended changes. This is not altogether based on faith. Peter, in scanning the work environment as part of the training needs assessment, was assured that at least some officers were aware of changes that could improve the situation.

Fourthly, as they began to plan the training intervention, the two trainers realized, based on the results of the action/research approach to planning, that one of their learning objectives was flawed. If the trainers ignore these results and go ahead with the skill training they identified in the initial training objective, their decision may run counter to the officers' own assessment of needs. Their decision may take precedence over an issue the officers believe is the most important.

The action research method is an excellent approach to training because it uses data from training participants and their work environments as a basis for problem solving. It permits participants to share the prerogatives of the trainers in making decisions and designing future learning events. Power sharing of this kind is advocated by many adult learning specialists who say this is when significant learning really begins.

Finally, the initial training objective, which defined work-output quotas (e.g., 20-per cent increase in vendor contact within three months) should probably be set collaboratively or in consultation with those who have responsibility for meeting them. Setting objectives collaboratively can overcome resentment, build commitment and give those who are responsible for achieving specific work goals an opportunity to voice any concerns they might have about being able to meet them.

You may be saying to yourself, "I'm a trainer. I shouldn't be involved in these kinds of organizational and management problem-solving situations". One can defend this point of view. It fits with the traditional and, we might add, safe definition of the trainer's role. On the other hand, being safe and traditional has made the trainer a relatively unimportant participant in the development milieu that swirls about managers, organizations and countries in today's fast-moving world. Better to be seen as a useful meddler in management and development than as an onlooker who never gets to play in the game.

Perhaps we should return once again to Peter and Uma and their struggles to design a training programme for the Daspur City Council. As you can see, this training business can become very complicated if you take it seriously or if you decide you want to make a difference in how operating agencies carry out their roles and responsibilities in your society.

14 August, later in the day

Peter and Uma decided to continue their action-research approach to design the first day of training as well. They didn't drop their plan to provide skill training in vendor contact and time management. They just decided to put it on the back burner for quick recovery, if and when it seemed appropriate. They also had a long discussion about the various roles and responsibilities of those who would be attending the workshop. Among other things, they realized the role issue might come up at the workshop, and they wanted to be prepared.

Uma said she had come across some training materials, not too long ago, on role clarification and would do research in this area, so they could be prepared. (Do you get the impression that Uma reads a lot and never throws anything away? Well, you're right. Most effective trainers behave this way.)

The librarian came around and reminded Uma and Peter the library would be closing soon.

Uma said, "Before we leave, let's look at what we've come up with for the first day of training. Maybe, we could reflect on the model you recommended, Peter. You know, the presenting-processing-application number".

"Okay", Peter responded. "After we get all the opening details and formalities out of the way, we have the finance director or maybe the CMO make a presentation on the status of the markets, with good, solid data on trends etc. Then we do a brainstorming session with them on why the best market is performing the way it is".

"I guess that's, processing the presentation or input, isn't it?" Uma asked. "Then, we get them into action planning. In other words, what do they think they can do to improve the operation of all the markets".

"Now that's application - pure and simple", Peter observed.

"It may he pure", Uma thought to herself, "but it doesn't sound very simple. Let's just hope it works!"

Over the next few days, Peter and Uma struggled with the conflict problem that existed between the city and the Vendors' Association and their members, and how they might address it through training. They were concerned about responding to the CMO's initial reference to the need for community-development training. They reviewed SATI's programmes in this area and found them either too academic or oriented to the role of the social worker. The revenue officers, they reminded themselves, are hardly social workers. Uma and Peter were confident the vendors didn't see the officers that way either.

Then, they remembered Ms. Olsen's offer to help them with the design of that particular session. They decided to get in touch with her.

Questions to reader

- The vendor issue is, obviously, a bit delicate for the trainers to get involved in. As a trainer, how would you handle this issue?

- At this point in the planning process, what are some tasks Peter and Uma need to undertake to get ready for the implementation of the Daspur training programme?

6 September, early evening, on the bus to Vivat

Turning to Peter, Uma said, "I'm curious, Peter. Why did you decide to use that old community centre for the training venue?"

"Location, for one thing", he replied, "it's located right in the middle of the biggest neighbourhood served by one of the markets where our trainees are working, and it's the right size and has the right kind of space".

"Aren't you overlooking something?" asked Uma. "No food service that I could see. How do you plan to feed the participants?"

Not hesitating a moment, Peter answered: "That's part of the deal I worked out".

"What deal?" she asked.

"The Neighbourhood service Council", he explained, "has agreed to prepare tea breaks and lunches for our workshops if we fixed up the building".

Uma was not convinced. "Sounds like expensive lunches to me!"

"Not really", Peter explained further. "I persuaded Ms. Olsen to cover those costs in our funding proposal. You see, the Hotel Shanker was going to cost over $1000 more just for meeting space and food. When I realized we could fix up the Community Centre for less, I spoke to Ms. Olsen about it (reminding her, of course, that the centre would serve the neighbourhood long after our workshops were over). She agreed".

Still troubled about the community centre, Uma protested: "There's no furniture, Peter. Are we going to sit on the floor?"

Peter reassured his colleague, "Don't worry, Uma. I've taken care of that, too. The British Council's getting new furniture for their library and donating the old tables and chairs to the centre".

Uma was impressed. "Hey, Peter, you're a real tough negotiator".

With all the humility he could muster, Peter replied, "It's just part of being a good trainer".

Questions to reader

- Peter's done something unusual in locating a venue for their training. Do you agree with him that "this is all part of being a good trainer?" Why?

Peter and Uma were both upbeat and talked almost non-stop on the bus back to Vivat that evening. They chatted about their meeting with the CMO.

They were in agreement that each workshop would be a day long, starting at 8 a.m. and ending about 5 p.m., with two tea breaks and an hour-long lunch. The workshops would be held on consecutive Tuesdays. This was the one day of the week when all three markets were at their lowest levels of activity. In addition, it meant any "field work" or assignments to be carried out after each workshop could he done during the next four days. Peter had "pushed" the CMO a bit to get his agreement that all participants would attend all sessions, and all day long! Peter was aware that in-house training programmes tend to suffer when some participants decide to carry on business as usual, taking phone calls, seeing visitors, etc. Nothing demeans a training experience more than having some participants treat it as a nuisance or an interruption. It's better not to have these individuals in the programme at all than available only part time, particularly when the training involves the potential for making decisions and solving workplace problems, as expected with the Daspur programme.

They also talked further about the venue.

"Do you think", asked Uma, "we'll have enough room, Peter, to do our training in that centre?"

"Should be fine", he replied. "At most, we'll have no more than 35-40 participants and, then, only at the final workshop when the market vendors join us. It looks like we can get a square conference table arrangement in the big room without any problem, putting 10 to a side".

"I see what you mean", Uma said. "And, we have those two small rooms in the back for breakout groups. When it's painted, it should be light and cheery in the big room, particularly with those windows on the east and west sides, and there's that long wall in the front of the building where we can tape up newsprint. If there is anything I dislike, it's getting stuck with a training room where you can't put up newsprint".

"I agree", Peter hastened to say. He added, "The only possible problem we might run into will be room for the tea breaks and lunches. Don't want them interfering with the training, but the council representative assured me they can serve on the verandah".

"Incidentally", said Uma, "I overheard one of the women with the Neighbourhood Council say she is active in the Vendors' Association. That shouldn't hurt us any when we hold the third workshop".

Peter agreed. "Precisely. That's another reason why I decided to persuade Ms. Olsen to help us carry out some renovations on the centre".

"Sounds to me like a win-win situation", said Uma. "We get a training venue, and they get their centre renovated".

One of the first things Uma and Peter did upon their return to SATI was draft a funding proposal for the principal's review and SIAA's consideration.

Funding Proposal for
A SERIES OF MARKET MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS
To be conducted for
THE CITY COUNCIL OF DASPUR
by
THE SOUTH ASIA TRAINING INSTITUTE, VIVAT
September-October, 1990
Balaja Community Centre, Daspur

Proposal Overview

The South Asia Training Institute, Vivat, and the city of Daspur plan to conduct a series of one-day, in-service management-development workshops, for approximately 24 market masters and revenue officers. These workshops are part of a larger effort to upgrade the municipal markets and their operations in three low income areas of the city. The workshops are designed to address three interrelated concerns influencing the overall effectiveness of these markets. These include revenue generation; internal records management; and the city's relationship with the Market Vendors' Association and its members.

Venue
The workshops will be held at the Balaja Community Centre, located in the heart of the largest low-income area of the city. The centre is also adjacent to one of the city markets where over 40 per cent of the training participants work.

Dates
The workshops are scheduled for three consecutive Tuesdays, 25 September and 2 and 9 October. An additional workshop is anticipated but not designed at this time. The design of the fourth workshop will be based on agreement between SATI and the city as determined by needs identified during the first three workshops. The length and timing of the workshops are based on three needs and concerns:

a. To conduct the workshops in a manner that would not disrupt the participants' daily work routines any more than necessary,

b. To coincide with the time of the week when the markets are least busy, and

c. To give participants opportunities to practice what they have learned in one workshop and discuss it in a subsequent one, and to collect data for upcoming workshops.

The workshops will be conducted from 0800-1700 hours with two 30-minute tea breaks at 1000 and 1500 hours. Lunch will be served at the community centre from 1230 to 1330 hours.

Workshop Stall

The teaching faculty for the workshop will include:

- **Mr. Peter D'Souza,** Lecturer, Department of Local Government, South Asia Training Institute, Vivat

- **Ms. Uma Das**, Lecturer, Department of Local Government, South Asia Training Institute, Vivat.

Proposed Workshop Design

As stated earlier, the training programme is scheduled over three consecutive weeks. It includes one-day workshops preceded and followed by task-oriented field assignments designed to reinforce classroom activities and learnings. The objectives of the workshop are based on a training needs assessment carried out by SATI staff in collaboration with city officials in Daspur. The workshop outcomes are intended to impact directly on the overall operation of three of Daspur's municipal markets.

The following is a brief outline of the three workshops based on the objectives stated for each.

WORKSHOP 1:
MARKET-REVENUE GENERATION

Workshop objectives:

The workshop objectives are:

1. To increase participant knowledge of overall market operations and their impact on city finances, and

2. To develop an action plan for increasing market revenues within a specific period of time.*

*These objectives are slightly different from those originally stated, based on further discussion and design considerations.

Programme:

0800: Registration
Welcome by CMO
Introductions
Expectations of staff and participants

0900: Presentation by finance director on status of municipal markets and their operations

1000: Tea break

1100: Brainstorming exercise: To list reasons why Puna Market has the highest revenue-generation rate among the three markets

Discussion and follow-up brainstorming on ways to improve revenue at all three markets

Group exercise to select the 5 to 10 most important options (ideas) that would boost revenues, if implemented. Selection to be based on: (a) potential for generating additional revenue, and (b) feasibility of carrying them out successfully.

1230: Lunch

1400: Lecturette/demonstration on force-field analysis for problem solving

1430: Form small groups to do force field analysis and action planning on top options for generating additional market revenues

1500: Tea break

1530: Work groups continue on task assignment

1600: Small groups report on findings and recommendations

Plenary discussion with finance director and other relevant officials

Critique of day's activities and task assignments for follow-up workshop

This workshop will probably run beyond 1700 hours. Participants should be notified of this possibility prior to the workshop and compensated by the city in accordance with its over time policy.

WORKSHOP II:
REVENUE-REPOPT WRITING

Workshop objectives:

The workshop objectives are:

1. To determine each participant's skill level in completing market-revenue reports, and

2. To develop a list of actions that could be taken by the city to improve the quality of revenue reports

Programme

0800: Warm-up activity: review of efforts undertaken since last workshop

0830: Individual task: Participants complete revenue report based on actual data from various markets (to be completed in duplicate)

0900: Small-group exercise: Discussion of report-writing task and development of a list of problems experienced in completing reports

1000: Tea break

1030: Plenary Session: Work groups report lists of problems/constraints

Lists are consolidated and priorities put on problems to be solved

Guided discussion of actions that can be taken to improve the quality of revenue reports

1230: Lunch

1330: Plenary Session (with finance director)

Group spokespersons report their findings and recommendations to finance director

Detailed discussion of recommendations

Action planning

1500: Tea break

1600: Plenary Session: Discussion of follow-up activities to be implemented prior to next workshop and critique of day's activities

(SATI trainers, as follow-up, would critique each officer's revenue report (those prepared in morning work session) and determine level of competence of each officer vis-a-vis the task. They would then decide if any skill training is required, who specifically needs it, and how the training could be planned and delivered. They would report this information to the CMO and finance director with recommendations.)

WORKSHOP III:
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN THE MARKET VENDORS' ASSOCIATION AND THE CITY

(Workshop will include market vendors representing the association in addition to the regular workshop participants from the city.)

Workshop objectives:

The workshop objectives are:

1. To increase participant knowledge of community development and the advantages of public-private cooperation, and of what city staff members and Vendor Association representatives think about one another in connection with the operation of the city markets, and

2. To develop options for resolving the conflict that exists between city officers and vendors

Programme:

0800: Welcome to the market vendors

Introduction of staff and participants
Review of workshop objectives and training design

0900: Short Lecturette/Discussion: Community development and the advantages of public-private collaboration

0930: Briefing of officers and vendors on workshop tasks to be completed

1000: Tea break

1030: City officers and market vendors meet in separate groups to prepare two lists: (a) issues they believe adversely affect the city-vendor relationship; and (b) issues they think the other group believes adversely affect their relationship

1130: Plenary Session: Each group reports on its list of issues and takes questions for clarification. These reports are followed by a general discussion

1230: Lunch

1330: Plenary Session: A guided group discussion to identify issues (conflicts) that are keeping these two groups from working effectively with each other

1430: City officers and vendors work separately to identify options to overcome the top three to five conflicts

1500: Tea break

1530: Plenary Session: Each group reports out. Lists are compared for agreement and disagreement. Action steps are formulated on issues where there is agreement. On issues of disagreement, the group decides how to continue a process of mutual problem solving

1700: Workshop summary and Evaluation

Discussion: Where do we go from here?

WORKSHOP IV: SKILL-DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS BASED ON NEEDS IDENTIFIED DURING FIRST THREE WORKSHOPS

(to be planned and scheduled later)

The action-learning process, which characterizes the workshops outlined above, will undoubtedly identify specific skill training needs, which would be addressed through this additional workshop. For example, Workshop II (Report Writing) may identify several officers who are deficient in basic mathematical skills, which makes it difficult for them to carry out simple reporting tasks. Workshop IV would be designed to respond to these needs.

Proposed Budget for Workshop Series

Direct personnel costs:
Professional Staff:
1.5 person months: Training Design
1.0 person month: Training Delivery

@ 9000 Shillings/mo -- SH 22,500.00

Support Staff:
1.0 person month @ 3000/mo -- SH 3,000.00

Subtotal -- SH 25,500.00

Travel and per diem for training staff
12 round trips: Vivat-Daspur SH 450/trip -------------------------------- SH 5,400.00

20 days per diem @ SH 225/day --- SH 4,500.00

Subtotal --- SH 9,900.00

Participant costs
Facilities and meals* -- SH 30,000.00

Training materials 24 x SH 150 -- SH 3,600.00

Subtotal --- SH 33,600.00

Total --- SH 69,000.00

Administrative overhead
@ 23.5% of Total -- SH 16,215.00

Grand total --- SH 85,215.00**

Budget notes:
*The cost of facilities and meals to conduct the workshops has been determined by requesting funds equal to the quotation received from the only suitable private facility in Daspur. The equivalent will be used to renovate the Balaja Community Centre. In return for this investment, the local Neighbourhood Council has agreed to provide all meals and tea breaks during the workshops.

**The proposed programme will provide 112 person-days of training at an average of SH 760/day. The total budget is about 60 per cent of the funds originally set aside by the donor for possible support of this project.

Questions to reader

- If you were Peter and Eva, would you feel confident about returning to Daspur to conduct this series of workshops? Why? Be specific in your responses.
- What else, if anything, would you have done to prepare for training implementation?

Commentary

The time between training design and delivery is important. Let's face it, all phases of the training cycle are important. Training is an interrelated system of events that depend upon a myriad of efforts if the final product is to be satisfactory. Pre-delivery, post-design tasks, more often than not, require nailing down details on the training venue;

training equipment requirements; physical structuring of the training environment; agreement on dates and training times; instructional materials, including readings; lodging and meals; tea breaks for participants and staff; protocol on opening and closing sessions; and, perhaps, a dozen more details. Here is a brief look at some of the important details.

Peter, in the case study, selected an unusual venue for the training. We've used this scenario to demonstrate the importance of being creative, maximizing the various resource opportunities that are often available to the trainer. Too often, we see our own institution as the only viable option for training, but moving the training close to the client is important, if time or travel costs are a factor, and this often means finding an alternative venue. It also provides access to the client's work environment, which is important if t e training has any kind of action research focus.

If your country has a sizeable tourist industry, which is seasonal, you may want to consider negotiating competitive rates for the use of tourist facilities. Training venues are an important and integral variable in the training business. Be creative in determining where you will conduct your training. If there are opportunities to support the training client or its community, as presented in the case study, do it. The dividends go beyond the classroom value of the investment.

Ensuring that the physical environment (where the training will take place) is supportive of your training programme and objectives is an integral part of the venue-selection process. Are there enough rooms or space available to meet your needs? Is it well lighted, properly ventilated, away from sources of outside noise and traffic? Can you move the furniture around? Is the furniture (chairs and tables) the kind that can be re-configured in various shapes and sizes? What about wall space to hang newsprint? Space for tea breaks? Outlets to plug in training equipment? Basic training equipment, such as easels and overhead projectors? In fact, it's a good idea to develop a list of questions to ask when you are negotiating for the training venue.

Some of the essential post-design, pre-delivery details are between you and the client. If the training is in the client's territory, you will want to know if there are expectations regarding opening and closing sessions. For example, will the mayor or some other local official want to be involved? Does the CMO or some of his department heads expect to give a presentation? Are there holidays or other events that might interfere with the training schedule? For example, is the president or some minister scheduled to visit the community on the same day you plan to open the programme, with all the trainees expected to be available for that visit?

It is impossible to list all the details that must be attended to as you get ready to carry out a programme. If you're like us, you will find it helpful to make a list and to add to it as you think of new items needing your attention. Don't leave anything to chance. There is a management law (of sorts) that says, if anything can 90 wrong, it will, and, in our experiences with training, it does!

5. TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION

Case Study
24 September, 6:30 pm, Balaja Community Centre

The last training participant finally left the centre. Peter, Uma and Ismail Sheikh sat down to review the day's training events.

"Why is it", asked Uma, 'that the first day of training never gets started on time?"

"I'm not sure", Peter responded, "but it always seems to happen. Maybe, they're testing our resolve to stay on schedule?" Peter turns to the senior market master and asks, "Ismail, how do you think it went?"

Appearing pleased and a bit surprised, Ismail responded: "Not bad, although I thought the first small group exercise, the one on why the Puna Market had the highest revenue collections, did not start out well".

"I agree with you", said Peter. "On the other hand, Uma, I thought you handled it well when you realized there was resistance to doing a small group exercise so soon".

"Well, I hope you didn't mind my changing the design on the spot?" asked Uma cautiously.

'No, not at all", Peter replied. "The trainer in charge needs the freedom to do whatever is necessary to get the group back on track. No problem, Uma. It was a good move".

Ismail was quick to add this observation. "Frankly, I was surprised at the number of ideas our officers had on improving revenues.

To which Uma added, "Not only that, but they had definite ideas on how to put them into operation".

"Ya", said Peter. "I think they shocked the finance director as well, with their recommendations".

The three went on to discuss the conflict that started to arise between the market masters and the revenue officers. Peter found it necessary to step in and help the two groups communicate with each other in a constructive style. He talked about active listening and gave them a few ideas on how to give constructive feedback in a caring way.

There were a number of recommendations made by the group that required approval by senior officials. The trainers helped them divide their list of recommendations into those they could do something about without the approval of others and those that needed to be referred to their superiors.

On the first list, Peter was successful in getting the group to identify a number of tasks that they could carryout before the next workshop and to assign responsibility for these tasks to specific officers. These officers were expected to report back on their results at the next workshop.

It was getting late, and Ismail asked if they could leave so he could lock the community centre.

Said Uma: "Could you give us just a few more minutes, Ismail?"

To that, Ismail replied, "Kdi baat nahin - no problem".

Peter offered a suggestion as they were preparing to leave. "Before we leave, Uma, I think we should review next weeks training session and put together a list of things we need to do to follow-up on this one".

"I agree", Uma responded", and we must not forget the request for skill training on time management. Looks, like that will have to be scheduled for week four".

Commentary

The success of training implementation depends, in large measure, on what happens before the trainer begins to conduct the training. In other words, has there been effective assessment of the client's training needs, a clear articulation of outcomes (objectives), and a design that will achieve the learning objectives, based on the training recipients and their needs.

Successful implementation also depends on the trainer's ability to determine what is happening in the training sessions as they unfold. For example, Peter and Uma apparently ran into some resistance to a small-group task they had planned to use. These things happen, particularly if experiential designs are being used.

As trainers, we need to be able to: (a) recognize when the training is not going as "designed", (b) think about why it isn't (often, on our feet, in front of them), (c) consider alternative strategies to help our participants learn what it is we want them to learn, and (d) take whatever risks are involved in responding to situations that are different from what we thought they would be at the time we designed the training event.

In most cases, the risks are minimal or non-existent. Don't hesitate to admit to the participants that what you had planned doesn't seem to be working and you want to try something else. Many times, they will also have ideas about what approach might be taken. An experiential design adds a new element or catalytic agent to the training event (i.e., the participants' experiences, needs, concerns, expectations and ideas). While experiential designing enriches the quality of learning, it also adds an element of the unexpected. The effective trainer is one who "grows with the flow", taking advantage of what is happening in the classroom that was not anticipated or planned.

One way to grow with the flow is to be aware of the flow and to have a few alternative training tools in your kit that can be substituted easily and quickly. They should be ones you have confidence in and experience with. Otherwise, you may not feel comfortable in substituting them for what has been planned.

Group processes or group dynamics are another factor to be taken into consideration as you implement training. Earlier examples, such as resistance to a small group task, are manifestations of "group dynamics". There are many more. Influence, power, participation, relationships, and functions, that individuals tend to assume in groups, are just a few of the "dynamic" aspects of group behaviour that will challenge your ability as a learning facilitator to keep one step ahead of your training participants.

Finally, stay on schedule to the extent you can. Yes, we know this seems contradictory to the "stay flexible" counsel just given. While flexibility or willingness to alter designs to meet participant learning needs will often throw your schedule off, you also need to determine how you will either shorten or lengthen immediate events to get back on schedule. Don't be a slave to your schedule. On the other hand, don't ignore it. By announcing a schedule at the beginning of any training session, you have defined expectations; expectations about when you will begin, when tea breaks will come during the day, and when you will complete your training sessions. If there are necessary changes required, it is best to share these with the trainees as early as possible and to gain agreement on the changes.

We could go on at great length about the rich experiences you will undoubtedly encounter in implementing experiential training designs, but discussion is no substitute for experience. We suggest you throw yourself headlong into these learning opportunities with the ability to keep part of your awareness detached and looking over your own shoulder, ready to communicate what is happening and why. Become a voyeur to your own experience.

6. EVALUATION

Questions to reader

- Given the scenario we have been following in Daspur, what would you have done regarding evaluation?
- How would you evaluate the impact of the training that is being conducted in Daspur, based on the scenario?

25 September, 0900, Peter's office

Peter and Uma, when they met the next morning to review the first day of training again, realized they had not given much thought to how they were going to evaluate the overall effort. They had asked the usual "happiness" questions of the participants at the end of the day, but that wasn't going to satisfy either their boss, the principal, or the funding agency.

"Why don't we use SATI's standard course evaluation form?" suggested Uma.

"We could, "Peter replied. "But I'm not sure it will give us the kind of information we want. Besides, this course is already a lot different from those we conduct on campus. I'm just not sure it fits".

Uma was not convinced. "What's so different, Peter, that we have to come up with a new format?"

"For one thing", Peter explained, "there wag a lot more interaction by the participants. Do you realize, we didn't spend more than, maybe, a half an hour in front of the group? Here at SATI we'd be at the lectern most of the day".

Reflecting for a minute, Uma replied, "Guess you're right, Peter".

Peter continued. "The biggest difference is how we figure out whether the course makes any difference. With the long course we're conducting, we test the students. Can you imaging trying to test these revenue officers? They'd have us run out of town".

"Right again, Peter, "Uma said, "but how do we figure out whether they've learned anything or not?"

Peter paused, lost in thought. "Well, I guess we try to determine if they are behaving differently once the workshops are over".

"Okay, I think I see where you're going", said Uma. "You mean, whether the training has any impact on the job?"

"Ya", said Peter. "That's it, Uma. Impact on the job".

"Wow!" Uma exclaimed. "That's not going to be easy".

Uma and Peter have just stumbled on to one of the great challenges of the training world - one which often gets left unattended when training is designed and delivered - impact evaluation.

Some say there has been no learning until new knowledge or skills are put to use. It is a variation on the philosophical question: 'if a tree falls deep in the forest, and no one hears, does it make any noise?"

Peter and Uma tackled the workshop evaluation responsibility first. **Did they, the trainers, do what they said they were going to do, and how well did they do it?** They made a checklist of what they wanted to evaluate, course content, training process, quality of instruction, facilities, printed materials, use of training aids, and logistical support.

Here is a copy of the evaluation form they designed for the first workshop. They decided to administer it to the participants at the beginning of the second workshop.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

1. Name of workshop: Market-revenue generation

2. Job responsibility (check one): Market master ________ Asst. market master ______ Revenue officer _______ Other __________________ (please specify)

3. To what extent were the following workshop objectives achieved. Check the response closest to your opinion.

   a. Increased knowledge about market operations and finance.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

   b. Identification of additional ways to increase revenue generation.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

   c. Development of an action plan for revenue generation.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

4. To what extent were the workshop expectations, requirements, and objectives made clear?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

4. How relevant was the workshop to your job responsibilities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

6. How useful will workshop learning be in carrying out your job responsibilities?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		To a great extent

7. On the following aspects of the workshop, check the response closest to your opinion.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. The subjects were thoroughly covered.					
b. The training events were well designed.					
c. The training approach encouraged participant learning.					
d. Participation was encouraged.					
e. Differences of opinion were tolerated.					
f. Enough time was allocated to perform all the assigned tasks.					

g. The course contributed to your Human knowledge.					
h. Good use was made of training in aids.					
i. A variety of instructional methods were used.					
j. The instructors were helpful.					
k. The classroom was comfortable.					
1. The workshop involved a manageable number of students.					
m. Meals and tea breaks were satisfactory.					

8. What did you like most about the workshop?

____

____

____

9. What did you like least?

____

____

____

10. Other comments?

____

____

____

Questions to reader

- Critique their workshop evaluation design. What are its strengths? What would you do differently?
- How would you evaluate the impact of their training over the next year or so? Be specific?

After designing the evaluation form for the first workshop, Uma and Peter turned their attention to the concern of measuring the impact of the training programme on the participants' performance on the job.

Uma expressed some initial reservations about measuring impact. "This task is going to be tougher".

"Maybe not". Peter was confident". After all, we tried to think of impact when we wrote our training objectives".

"That's right". Uma was getting into the swing of it. "One of our overall goals was to help the city increase market revenue by 20 percent in six months".

"That's a good goal, but..". Peter observed a problem, "how will we know it was the training that achieved it?"

"Yes", Uma agreed. "There could be a whole bunch of factors involved - not just training".

"We did, " Peter recalled, "think about these problems when we were writing the objectives. For example, we decided that we could help the revenue officers increase their number of collections by improving their skills in time management. That should be pretty easy to measure once they're back on the job".

"Of course", Uma added. "The percentage of revenue reports accepted by the finance director is another measurable impact".

"Another thing", Peter pointed out. 'We might have difficulty in determining the difference in the relationship between the vendors and the city as a result of the third workshop".

"At least", Uma replied. "We should be able to get a feel for the impact of the training by interviewing both sides sometime in the future".

Peter and Uma were satisfied they would he able to determine, at least, to some extent, what impact the training was having on the performance of the participants once they were back on the job. They reassured themselves that their efforts to move in this direction far outstripped the normal behaviour of their colleagues and, probably, most training institutions in the region.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING

Commentary

Peter and Uma slipped a bit when it came to training evaluation. Evaluation is one of those tasks we should think about right from the beginning of needs assessment. We should be asking ourselves, "If this is a training need, how will I know when it is met. What difference has it made in the overall performance of the individual or organization?" These questions, if kept in mind, will help frame each step in the training cycle process.

As suggested in the case study, training evaluation is two-fold. First, we need to know **how well we did** during training and **whether we did what we said we were going to do. Secondly, we to know whether the training made any difference in the performance of the participants and their organization.** Bottom line stuff. As for providing you with a blueprint or format for impact evaluation, it's almost impossible to do. Every work situation is different. The answer to impact evaluation is in the responses you get when you determine performance discrepancies. Eliminate them and you have training impact. Simple? Well, probably not quite so simple, but you get the picture.

A shift in focus

The Case Study, thus far, has focused on the training cycle, from **initial contact/reconnaissance** between the trainer and the client, through **evaluation** of the training impact. In each phase of the training process, we demonstrated how training interventions can be more client-centered and demand driven, with attention to shortfalls in performance. We also illustrated how short training programmes can have a favourable impact on individual and organizational performance, often within a short period of time. Finally, we stressed the importance of training as a management strategy for improving performance and bringing about planned changes within organizations. This, of course, means that training organizations and trainers will need to deliver a lot of their services differently if they want to be involved.

At this point in the Case Study we want to shift the focus more toward the development of the client organization and less on individual employee development. As we make this shift, we will continue the focus on client-centered, performance-based training interventions but spend less time on the fundamentals of following the training cycle. While these steps continue to be important, we assume Peter and Uma have learned them well and will continue to apply them as they work with the city of Daspur and other clients.

When an organization, like the city of Daspur, begins to appreciate the importance of using training as a strategy for solving problems and enhancing overall performance, they also ask themselves how they can make the training process more integral to the everyday activities of the organization and its employees. As we continue the dialogue between Peter, Uma and their new clients in Daspur, we will explore ways to expand the training activities into new areas of engagement. We also want to develop the staff of the city to take a more direct role in conducting the training.

Organization development, by whatever name

The training activities we have in mind have had various labels over the years, such as **organization development** and more recently **total quality management,** but essentially they all have the same purpose. They are designed **to utilize concepts and strategies of planned learning (training), within the work place itself, to improve the organizations internal performance and to increase the quality and availability of its products and services to their customers.** Or "the public", as we tend to refer to those who benefit from local government programmes and services.

Before shifting the emphasis of the Case Study to the development of the organization, we want to summarize two or three key points made earlier. We assume our trainers and their clients understand the importance of following most, if not all, of the steps in the training cycle outlined earlier in the Case Study. As a result, we will not dwell on them as we take Peter and Uma deeper into their involvement with the officials and staff of the city of Daspur. Nevertheless, we want to stress the importance of being rigourous and systematic in every training (learning) intervention, no matter how practical, mundane or limited it might seem.

To re-emphasize some of the more important points made thus far, competent trainers always:

a. develop working relationships with those involved or affected by the proposed intervention, and they continue the relationship-building process as they work together on other ventures (never take the relationship for granted!);

b. engage in vigorous inquiry to understand fully the problem or opportunity being pursued;

c. identify ways to improve performance and service delivery through various kinds of training interventions;

d. help plan a course of action that can be implemented within the resources of the organization; and,

e. evaluate the impact of the interventions to assure they achieved their intended goals and objectives.

These steps continue to be the foundation stones for effective training, and management.

Old wine, new wineskin

The interventions Peter and Uma will be making, from this point on in the Case Study, will look less and less like the kinds of training we usually associate with public training institutions. Nevertheless, they reflect the principles and practices of intervention that many training institutions and trainers have undertaken to be more responsive to the needs of their clients. These training interventions are characterized by:

- learning that is associated more directly with task accomplishment;
- activities that often involve group learning to achieve common purposes; and,
- efforts that have more immediate impact on the organization and its performance.

The kinds of interventions we will be introducing from this point on can produce anxiety the first two or three times they are conducted in the "real world". But, not to worry! You will quickly discover you're not the only one who wants to be successful. Your client also wants to be successful and will work with you to assure that any intervention you are planning and implementing will achieve its intended results.

We want to emphasize the importance of sharing both responsibilities for, and the successes of, organizational learning. If you, as the trainer, take full responsibility for the successes or failures of the training interventions you are facilitating, your client probably won't be committed to either the process, or the outcomes. This trainer-dominated sense of responsibility increases the potential for failure, or, at the very least, severely limits the opportunities to succeed. If both the trainer and client expect the intervention to be successful, chances are very good it ill be. This is what some individuals call the "self-fulfilling prophesy".

1. LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

Several months later on Main Street, Daspur

Uma and Peter were crossing Main Street in Daspur when they heard someone calling their names. When they turned around, they saw Asif Khan coming their way. "What a surprise to see you in Daspur! Don't you know you're not allowed to be here without the CMO's permission", he jested.

"Well", said Uma, "we were just talking about you. Peter said we should touch base with you before we leave town. Since you beat us to it. Can we buy you a cup of coffee?'

"Why not? Besides, I have some things to talk about with you".

Over coffee, Asif told them how pleased he was with the results of the workshops. "Our revenues are up 33 percent since that last workshop. Besides, I haven't heard a complaint in months about those terrible revenue reports. And you know how finicky Vivek is about his records".

"And, how are you and your staff getting along with the vendors"? Peter asked.

Asif was enthusiastic in his reply. "Great! That workshop with those women really cleared the air. The best part is the agreement with them to manage the maintenance of the markets. Turns out they do it cheaper and better than we did with our own employees. The training really was a good investment".

Almost as an after thought, Asif said, "Just between the three of us, I never thought I'd be saying something like that".

"So, when do we start the next round of training"? chided Uma.

"Matter of fact, I was getting ready to call you. My brother, who's studying for a masters degree in business administration at the University of Singapore, sent me some information on something called **total quality management.** Looks interesting. Have either of you heard about it?"

"Yes " 'Peter responded, not wanting to look like the CMO knew something about management that he didn't. "But I must confess my understanding of TQM is somewhat limited. Would it be possible to borrow those materials on TQM?"

"Only if you promise to return them. You trainers are notorious for borrowing things and never returning them!" Asif responded. "Better yet, maybe you and Uma can help me and my staff get something like that TQM idea going in city hall. If it's half as good as the author makes it sound, it would be worth the effort. Are you interested?"

"Sure", Uma and Peter replied in unison. "We'll get back to you in a couple of weeks with some ideas on what we might be able to do".

Early next week at SATI

Uma and Peter agreed to spend some time in the library seeing if they could learn more about TQM and other similar management approaches. They discovered that TQM was just the latest round of management ideas that take a comprehensive view of working within organizations, to make them more efficient and effective. These approaches use a variety of training- and management-related strategies to accomplish their goals and objectives. But, the focus of TQM seemed to Peter and Uma to be very different than past efforts at "organization capacity building".

TQM, as they discovered in their library research, puts a greater emphasis on quality than other approaches, particularly the quality of the products and services the organization is making or delivering to their customers. Earlier approaches, like Management by Objectives (MBO) and Organization Development (OD), focused mostly on building the competency of the organization. It war, assumed that these organizational development efforts, or whatever you want to call them, would automatically translate into better quality products and services. According to many of the articles Peter and Uma reviewed, the causal relationship between organization development and higher quality products and services was not always evident. What TQM attempts to do is build more competent organizations and work forces by focusing on improvement in quality of goods and services they produce.

TQM, they discovered, was born out of a lot of managerial frustration, particularly in the United States and Europe, in response to the fierce competition from Japan in the manufacturing of consumer goods. More often than not, Japanese goods were superior in quality to those produced in other parts of the world. Many Japanese companies had succeeded in making the concepts and strategies of achieving "total quality" an integral part of their overall management and operation.

Back in Uma's office later that day

As Peter sat down, both he and Uma blurted out, "TQM sounds.......

"Sorry, Uma, you were a bout to say?"

She responded, "From what I've been reading, TQM sounds much too complicated to use in Daspur".

"My thoughts precisely, although I must admit I found the ideas very interesting.

Peter went on to say, "Maybe, after we've done more work with the CMO and hie staff, on some of their more pressing internal problems, we might be able to talk to them about this total quality thing".

Uma laughed and said, "You mean stage three?"

"Well, something like that", Peter responded. "Do you agree"?

"I was just kidding you, Peter. Yes, I agree. I think it would be a mistake to go too fast in introducing new ideas into an organization with a workforce that hasn't been used to a lot of internal change. On the other hand, I don't think we should abandon the idea of quality totally".

Uma went on: "While I was looking for TQM articles, I came across a manual on something called collaborative organization assessment. Maybe this is something we could do with Asif and his staff".

"You mean the UN-Habitat booklet?", Peter responded. Uma nodded agreement and Peter went on to say, "Incidentally I read that manual cover to cover. I think it would be a much better way to begin doing what Asif said he wants to do when we talked to him last week".

Peter continued: "COA (that's how the authors refer to it), is a process consultants like us can use to help an organization, like the Daspur municipality, do a systematic assessment of all its work unite and the products they produce. The consultants then work with the staff to come up with a proposed action plan based on information generated by the assessment. The idea behind the assessment and planning process is to help the organization become more efficient and effective in what it does".

"Like 'doing the right things and doing things right', Uma", chided Peter.

"So, you read it too!" responded Peter. "Why didn't you say so instead of letting me blabber on about it?"

"Just keeping you honest, Peter. But, I agree, it looks like a good way to continue our efforts with Asif and his team. It would provide an information base so our interventions would be less ad hoc".

"And, less supply-driven", Peter added.

There was a long silence as though both were pondering the way they had operated in the past. Finally, Peter said, " I guess we'd better put together a proposal and make a trip to Daspur. After all, we promised to return his articles on TQM".

Questions to reader

- As a trainer, how would you have handled the town secretary's challenge to install a Total Quality management system, or something similar in the city organization?

- If you were either Peter or Eva, what would you do to get ready for the next meeting with the CMO?

Commentary

Peter and Uma are about to develop a new client/trainer relationship. The CMO has indicated his satisfaction with their past services. Now he wants to pursue a deeper type of development for the staff and organization, although he is not sure what it might entail. This is not unusual. Many managers lack the knowledge and the experience of building staff and organization capacity through approaches like TQM or organization development. After all, their primary focus *is* managing, not institution building. And yet, these two concepts, or strategies, are inseparable. Training institutions and trainers can perform a valuable role in marrying the concepts of effective management and long-term institution building.

Although Uma and Peter have limited knowledge and understanding of what TQM is all about, we think they made a wise decision not to consider this approach at this time with their client. Total Quality Management, when pursued rigorously (and that's about the only way it will work effectively), requires a full commitment and understanding at all levels of the organization; from the policy-makers and senior managers right down to those who are making the products and delivering the goods and services. The "total" in TQM means not only "total quality" but total involvement and commitment from everyone in the organization.

David Carr and Ian Littman, in their book *Excellence in Government, Total Quality Management in the 1990s,* point out four fundamental differences between TQM and traditional management that help to put this approach into perspective.

- First, TQM builds quality into everything the organization undertakes versus inspecting for quality after the task has been accomplished or the product and service are about to be delivered.

- Secondly, authority is vested largely in employees, who take responsibilities commensurate with their potential contributions. (From what we've seen and experienced in many countries around the world, this, management approach could be seen by many as heretical.)

- Thirdly, TQM focuses on systems improvements, not blaming employees when things go wrong.

- Finally, TQM is a process of continuous improvement, not one-time breakthroughs.

These characteristics of the TQM organization imply a high level of competency throughout the organization, or the capacity to develop a high level of competency through training and other employee development strategies. Unfortunately, most developing-country organizations, particularly those in the public sector, don't have the depth of trained and seasoned employees that TQM requires. Nor do they have a history of delegating authority and responsibility down through the organization to the lowest level with the capacity to carry out the required task.

TQM may not be an appropriate management strategy for many public organizations at this time. This doesn't deny, however, the use of an incremental strategy of development that leads to TQM as an ultimate goal. B y suggesting the Collaborative Organizational Assessment (COA) approach, we think Uma and Peter are on the right track. That is, an incremental track of organization development for the city of Daspur that could result in a TQM programme in the future.

There are many ways to build the foundation for implementing an institutional development, or capacity building, programme in an organization like the Daspur municipality. We have chosen the COA approach in the case study about Daspur, for three reasons:

1. it is client-centered, involving the entire organization in the collection and analysis of data and information about the organization, its products and "customer satisfaction;"

2. it is information and data based, providing a comprehensive "picture" of the organization, how it works, and its current level of performance; and,

3. it begins the process of organizational learning by providing skill training for key employees in needs assessment, analysis and problem solving.

(We will not be explaining the COA approach to any extent in this volume because of limited time and space. If you are interested in learning how to use the methodology and to work with client organizations to conduct such an assessment and planning process, we suggest you contact the Training Section at the UNCHS (Habitat) headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya, for more information. Ask about the 1992 publication, *Manual for Collaborative Organizational Assessment in Human Settlements Organizations.)*

For assistance in "troubleshooting" performance problems in individual work units, see "Performance Analysis and Needs Assessment" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Two weeks later in the CMO's office

Peter and Uma have just finished a short presentation to the CMO and his senior management staff on a proposed organization development programme. They suggested to the team that they are considering starting the programme by conducting a collaborative organization assessment based on the UNCHS (Habitat) model.

Peter went on to say, "We also believe it is important for the municipal organization to build an in-house training capability. This way many of your training needs, particularly at the lower levels, can ultimately be met without relying on-external trainers".

As Peter concluded his part of their joint presentation, he said, "As you probably determined from our discussion, the COA process could unearth a variety of opportunities to change the way you currently operate. This also means digging up some problems you probably didn't know you had - or, at least, didn't want to acknowledge for one reason or another".

The finance director spoke up, "if you can deliver a few more changes like the ones you made in the markets late last year, then it will be worth it. But I must tell you I'm concerned about the costs".

Uma responded immediately, "We also want to keep the costs under control. In fact we want to work with you and your colleagues to set up a tracking system so we can determine the costs and savings of whatever changes result from our work together".

Sheikh, the market master, was impatient to jump into the discussion, "I want to challenge my friend Vivek on his remark that the trainers were responsible for the changes we made in the markets. Sure, they helped us look at the way we were operating. But it was me and my revenue officers who made the difference!"

"Couldn't agree with you more", Peter said. "And it's a point we should all keep in mind if you decide to go ahead with the COA. Our role is to help you make better decisions, not make them for you".

At this point, the CMO spoke up: "The COA approach sounds like a good place to begin. Nevertheless, I'm concerned about the time it will take. And, where are we going to find people who can do all this interviewing you say is so important if we want to do it right?"

Uma had anticipated his concern. "We realize there will be some time problems. The initial COA process can be time-consuming. But we can work with your staff to minimize interruptions in the daily work schedules".

"As for finding interviewers", Uma said, we think you have a number of employees who would not only be effective interviewers, but who also could become the core members of an in-house training team".

The discussion concluded with an agreement to conduct the organization assessment. As a part of the process, Uma and Peter agreed to design a questionnaire to help in the selection of five or six employees who could help them conduct the COA interviews and planning workshops.

Questions to reader

- The dialogue we've included in this initial meeting between Peter, Uma and their client is not complete. Take a few minutes and jot down all the other questions you would have asked, or issues you would have covered, had you been involved in "contracting" with the Municipality to initiate an organization development programme.
- What criteria would you use to select a team of part-time, in-house trainers?

Commentary

As stated earlier, there are many ways to initiate a systematic approach to organizational capacity building with a client. We think Peter and Uma have selected an effective approach since it will provide a baseline of information about each organizational work unit and what it is "Producing". In addition, COA provides feedback on every "product" of the organization from internally consumed products, such as financial reports, to those used by citizens, such as refuse collection and primary health services. From this initial inventory and assessment, the CMO, his staff and the training consultants, will be able to identify actions that might be taken to improve both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the organization.

The COA process is designed around the concepts of **effectiveness** and **efficiency**, as defined by that venerable world management resource, Peter Drucker. According to Drucker, effectiveness is "doing the right things" and efficiency is "doing things right".

Effectiveness involves such things as policies, mission statements and overall management strategies that provide direction and standards for the organization. Efficiency is operational, ensuring that policies, standards and other expressions of effectiveness are achieved as intended. Doing things right involves such activities as cost containment, quality assurance in the production and delivery of programmes and services, and preventive and periodic maintenance of facilities, infrastructure and equipment.

The COA process, when implemented effectively, will identify a range of possible actions to strengthen the organization and improve its performance. These might include:

- changing the organizations structure to be more compatible with it's overall mission
- eliminating outmoded procedures
- creating interdepartmental teams to work on tasks that cut across organizational boundaries
- contracting out certain functions that can be done more efficiently by others, and
- implementing skill training to close performance gaps.

The COA process provides a valuable database from which all subsequent changes can be measured and evaluated. This is important to both the consultants and client in the Case Study since they have expressed concerns about the cost effectiveness of the proposed capacity-building effort.

2. FOCUS ON IN-HOUSE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Later that day

Since Uma had several meetings with ministry officials, beginning the next day, she and Peter had dinner together to review the meeting with the CMO and his staff. There were decisions to be made about what to do next in their work with Daspur.

"Well, Uma, how do you think the meeting went?"

"Not bad", Uma responded. "But it's going to be a lot different from putting on a short workshop".

After a short hesitation, Uma said, " One of the first things we need to do is develop a way to select interviewers for the COA effort".

"What kind of people should we he looking for?" Peter's question was one of those reflective kind we ask ourselves when we're not quite sure what to do next.

Uma responded, " Probably the kind who'd make effective on-the-job trainers. I think those we pick to help with the COA will se the same we want as in-house trainers later on".

"It would give us an opportunity to check out their skills and commitment before the CMO makes any decisions to involve them further as trainers". Peter responded.

"By the way. How do you see these officers operating once we're through the assessment and they begin to work as part-time trainers, assuming, of course, that Asif wants to use them in this role?"

"Well", Uma said slowly. 'They'll only be part-time trainers, and working in their own organization. So, there are some big differences when you compare their training role with ours. Their first responsibility will be to their full-time job. We gotta keep this in mind and not expect too much from them".

"Frankly, Uma, I worry about the practicality of such a role. What makes you believe they will have time to do any training, particularly in some other department? The more I think about it, the more I think it's unrealistic".

"You may he right, Peter, but I've read how other organizations have created such a role for exceptional employees, and it seems to work out just fine", Uma responded. "But I agree with you. The notion of creating a small in-house training team may look better in theory than practice".

"Don't get me wrong, Uma, I think it's worth pursuing", said Peter. "But we must involve the CMO and department heads every step of the way so they understand what the potential risks and benefits are. And, we must make sure the right officers are chosen for this role".

Peter continued. "Since you'll be busy for the next few days with the ministries, let me work on putting together some criteria for selecting the interviewers. Maybe they will help if the CMO decides to create that team of part-time trainers".

Uma, sensing some reluctance on the part of Peter to commit himself to the in-house trainer idea, said: "While you're thinking about it, could you give some thought to just what an in-house trainer does, or should do. I'm not sure I understand the role as well as I would like to".

Questions to reader

- Uma's comment may seem naïve, but not so. The role of the part-time, in-house trainer really is different, or should be? What do you think such a trainer should do? And, how should they do it?

- Given these ideas, how would you design a Training of Trainers course to prepare them for this new role?

March 10, CMO's office
Peter met with the CMO to discuss the upcoming COA implementation. Asif immediately asked, "Where's Uma?"

"Oh, she's out of the country for a few days", Peter explained. "She had a chance to attend a conference on total quality management for public agencies. She'll be back on Monday. In the mean time, Asif, you'll just have to put up with me".

"As promised", Peter went on to say, "we've prepared several documents for your consideration. They include a proposed contract for services, a schedule of activities required to conduct the assessment and planning effort (working with all of the work units), a Questionnaire to use in selecting the officers who will help conduct the COA interviews, and a proposed workshop schedule for training the interviewing team".

"Looks like some good work", Asif interjected, as they went over the materials and made a few changes to reflect the CMO's interests and concerns.

And then Asif said, "Peter, I'm concerned about the recommendation you and Uma are making to train a team of part-time, in-house trainers. Seems to me, no employee will want to take on more responsibilities when they may already feel overworked in their full-time job. Don't get me wrong, I think it's a good idea but I'm not sure it will work in practice".

"You may be right, Asif", responded Peter. "But Uma and I have given this issue a lot of thought and we believe the advantages can be substantial, for both the employee and the municipality, if you go about it in the right way.

"Okay", the CMO acquiesced, "but just how will these employees benefit by volunteering to take on more work?'

"Hopefully, in several ways", Peter said. "First, they will receive skills training. This should help them be more effective on their full-time jobs. Secondly, they get exposure to the entire organization. And thirdly, through their roles as problem solvers, they'll develop valuable management skills. All these things should help them advance in their careers.

Who knows", Asif said. 'It might even help us with some of our future management needs".

Almost as an afterthought, Asif reflected, "What if we paid these trainers an additional stipend, based on the extra work they do and maybe even a fee based on the value of their contributions". Asif asked, "Any problem with that?"

Peter thought to himself, "This guys way ahead of me".

"Seems to me, you can answer that question better than I can, Asif", responded Peter. "But I don't see any problem, particularly if it's based on some kind of cost/benefit criteria.

The CMO said he thought it would be wise to take one step at a time. He was willing to do the organization assessment, based on the UNCHS (Habitat) COA model, but wanted to with hold judgement on the decision to create an in-house training team. If the COA exercise proved to be useful he would be in a much stronger position to take the in-house training proposal to the Council Finance Committee for its consideration.

Commentary
The hesitation that Asif reflected in the previous dialogue is probably typical of what other managers might do when considering such a proposition. In-house, on-the-job training (OJT) may be one of the least understood and most under-utilized approaches to staff development and organizational capacity building. And, we're not quite sure why. When designed and implemented with proper forethought and planning, the role of in-house trainer/problem-solvers can be very cost-effective. They operate close to the source of need for their services, and their training skills and knowledge of the organization can be applied immediately. More importantly, it is an excellent way to "grow" future managers. Let's take a closer look at what Peter and Uma might do to help the Daspur management team develop this potential resource.

Identifying quality trainers
In-house, on-the-job trainers are found and developed, not born into this future role. Nevertheless, some individuals are more effective in their ability to work with others. And, this is a basic and essential training skill. In addition, in-house trainers should have an in-depth knowledge of the organization, as well as the functional area in which they will be providing assistance.

While their role as trainer will probably be enhanced if they have position or role status in the organization, it isn't critical. All other factors being equal, a market master would probably be more effective in working with revenue collectors than one of the collectors. However, a respected collector who is known to be effective at working with people can probably be developed into a competent on-the-job trainer. If the choice is between an experienced, knowledgeable supervisor who is not particularly respected by the employees, and a respected and highly skilled technician, who has limited experience in the organization but is willing to learn, the decision on who to appoint as the in-service trainer should be easy.

An essential skill a trainer should have is the ability to communicate ideas, concepts and operating instructions in a clear and simple manner. The trainer should also be able to communicate with his or her hands - in other words, he able to demonstrate how a certain mechanical task is to be done correctly by doing it correctly so others can see, and learn.

Of course, the ability to communicate to others is only half the communication process. They must also be skilled in active listening: that is, patient, focused and able to hear what others are saying with as few distractions as possible. Listening with empathy and insight is what one well-known psychologist called "listening with the third ear". To paraphrase the Bard of Avon: Friends, Romans, countrymen, and, of course, in-service trainers, lend me your ears. Yea, all three of them.

For additional information on locating and developing competent training resources in-house, see "Training the Staff to Train" ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Identifying training opportunities

The first thing the in-house trainer must realize is: **not every problem can be solved through training**. However, trainers are basically problem-solvers, or should be, so training should be seen as one of the best ways to solve problems.

The in-house trainer will soon realize that a training intervention in the work place is not the same as what they've experienced in a traditional classroom. They will find little use for abstract theories. Instead, they will find that concrete experiences and active experimentation are two of their best friends.

Problem-solving, when associated with an opportunity for employees to know **why** a problem exists and **what** to do to solve it, is fundamental to effective in-service training. As employees learn why a problem exists, and how to solve it, they should be able to solve the problem in the future, maybe even before it becomes a problem.

We've talked about some of the characteristics of the competent trainer, such as communication skills, particularly the ability to listen actively. In-house trainer/ problem-solvers also must be curious and fully aware of their immediate environment. Like the consummate flea-market or bazaar shopper, who is looking for that special bargain, the in-house trainer never avoids an opportunity to work on an organizational performance problem, particularly if he or she can use a training intervention to solve it.

Employees who don't know **what** they are accountable for, in terms of duties and responsibilities, or **how** to perform the tasks and duties they are assigned, are another great source of training needs. The "what" deficiency requires the input of information, ideas and data (increased knowledge on the part of the employee). The "hob" deficiency may get a bit more complicated. This involves skill improvement, either technical skills or what some call relational skills, those associated with the ability to work effectively with others in a task-oriented situation. Helping employees know what they are responsible for and how to fulfil those responsibilities may seem too simple. Nevertheless, many lack these basic job requirements.

The trainer's best friend for uncovering training needs is a ROC. Well, not literally but it may be easier to remember this way.

R **Reviewing documents, reports, complaints - all those things that have been put in writing, for one reason or another.**

0 **Observing work settings, employee interactions, the results of whatever employees are doing to serve the public with goods and services, and other obvious observable things.**

C **Communicating, talking and listening, with dedicated intent to understand.**

Training in-house trainer/problem solvers

In-house, on-the-job trainers will need skills in:
- interviewing
- developing problem-solving relationships with individuals and work groups
- problem and opportunity finding
- active listening
- reviewing documents for clues about performance discrepancies
- coaching individual employees
- conducting problem-solving work sessions
- monitoring progress and giving feedback, and
- evaluating the impact of previous interventions.

When developing the skills of part-time, in-house trainers, it isn't necessary to do it all at once. Remember that these individuals have other job responsibilities. Given this obvious constraint, it is useful to think about short, periodic professional-development experiences that will assist them in both their full-time and part-time jobs.

The skills listed above are also the skills of the effective supervisor and manager. The astute chief executive will immediately recognize that these in-house trainers are, or soon will become, a ready pool of management talent. Because the skills and attitudes of competent, in-house trainers are so congruent with those of competent managers, the selection of these individuals should be done within the context of the longer-term, managerial-staffing needs of the organization.

To summarize, an effective in-house training-and-development programme should provide four benefits to the organization and its leadership. It should:
- Act as an early warning system to identify emergent performance problems before they jeopardize organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

- Help managers prepare work units and individual employees for the introduction of planned changes in the organization and its operation.

- Furnish feedback to managers on problems that need something other than a training solution.

- Prepare the next generation of competent managers.

3. FOCUS ON PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Questions to readers
- List two or three problems your organization is currently facing that you believe could be resolved, or reduced through some kind of training intervention.

- Now, identify two or three opportunities your organization is not taking advantage of that it could, or should, with a little extra effort. What role might the kinds of training interventions we've been talking about play in tapping these opportunities?

June 1 CMO's office
The CMO, with the assistance of Uma and Peter, had just briefed the Municipal Council's Executive Committee on the results of the organizational assessment (COA) and planning process. Several issues were identified by the assessment that the CMO believed should be addressed. He was asking the council for their support so he and his staff could take appropriate action. For-example, the assessment revealed considerable dissatisfaction, on the part of many municipal employees, with the annual performance appraisals and the way they are conducted by their supervisors.

The assessment also confirmed the need to consider new ways to maintain city vehicles. The city-operated workshop is not adequately staffed or equipped, and frequent equipment failures have adversely affected the provision of many municipal services. In planning sessions following the COA, the management team discussed the possibility of contracting out the maintenance responsibility to a private garage or equipment firm.

There were also a number of issues raised by citizens, contacted during the COA exercise. The two that the council was particularly interested in were: (a) the possible relocation of one of the primary health centres to an area where rapid growth is taking place; and (b) the degree of anger expressed by many citizens about the deterioration of the storm drain system. The council and staff knew the drainage system was in dire need of maintenance but were unaware that so many citizens were upset about it.

At the end of the council briefing on the COA results, Asif talked about hie plan to create a small team of in-house trainers to help in the implementation of the many recommendations resulting from the assessment. These individuals, as he described them, would be recruited from the ranks of the full-time employees and be selected based on criteria developed by the Institute consultants. In addition, the CMO requested the council to consider allocating funds to allow him to compensate the team members for their work as trainers, based on specific activities and. in some cases, cost savings to the city.

The council members were pleased with the results of the COA effort although they had some tough questions for the CMO about how to control the costs of the proposed in-house training venture. The CMO promised to prepare a report for the council on the costs and benefits of such a programme before taking further action.

After the meeting adjourned, Asif, Peter and Uma returned to the CMO's office to discuss the meeting with the council. As Asif shut the door, he said to Peter and Uma, 'How do you think the meeting went?"

Uma responded, "Great, but to tell you the truth, your comments about creating the in-house training team just about floored me".

"Me too", Peter chipped in, "I thought you had serious reservations about creating such a team".

"I did, and some of my initial concerns, still haven't been answered. But, the quality of work those interviewers did during the COA project really sold me. I think they can help us get some things done in this organization that I've wanted to get done for some time; but, frankly, I didn't think there was any support for them. The assessment really opened my eyes. I now realize that others in the organization and the community have similar concerns.

Asif went onto say. "For example, I think a team of part-time, in-house trainers could be a big help in training the supervisors to do a better job with the annual performance appraisals. That's always been a problem. At least now we have some concrete data and ideas about why it's a problem and what our employees would like us to do a bout it".

What about that discussion on the drainage problem", Uma said. "Weren't you surprised at some of the suggestions by the works foreman? Do you think his idea to assign certain areas of the city to smaller teams of maintenance workers would really work?"

"Yes, I was surprised by his suggestion, but I think it might work", the CMO responded. "It would take some careful selection of crew members and quite a bit of training. Obviously, what we're doing now isn't working. And yet, I'm convinced it's not just a shortage of funds that's causing the problem, although that's the excuse we always use. It's more complicated than that. That's why I found the foreman's suggestions about the area work crews so intriguing. It might just work".

"From what I can tell, "Peter observed, "his ideas are right in line with some of the things I've been reading about total quality management and the experiences of other organizations".

"This discussion is all very interesting", retorted Uma, "but I want to talk about getting those in-house trainers selected and.......

"And trained?" Asif interrupted.

"Yes!" Uma responded. "The seven officers who helped with the COA interviewing did a good job. But I'm not sure all of them would be effective trainers. Peter and I share your concerns, Asif, about making sure you pick the right officers to work on this training team".

She went on to explain that she and Peter had developed a Questionnaire, based on some, in-service trainer criteria, they thought might help the CMO and his management team pick the three or four best employees to perform this role.

"That's great, Uma, and I think it will be helpful, "Asif replied, "but what about training these guys?"

"Well, first of all", Uma shot back, "I hope they won't be all guys!"

"Of course not, Uma, but you know how we always refer to our employees as 'guys'".

"Ghmmm", Peter interjected, hoping to change the subject. "Let's get back to the training of these gu..., ur, part-time trainers. Uma and I have been talking about this. We think we can do the training in away that will minimize any disruption to their current job responsibilities".

"I was pleased with the way you trained the interviewing team in such a short time", Asif responded. "But one or two of the councillors think most training is a waste of money, so we gotta be careful".

In response to Asif's concerns, Peter and Uma described an approach they experienced during an earlier UNCHS (Habitat) training-of-trainer's (TOT) programme. Each participant, working with a local-government client, identified a performance problem they thought could be addressed through some kind of training intervention. Then, during the workshop, the participants worked to define and analyse the problem further and then designed a training response to implement back in the organization. They thought a similar approach might be useful in training the local team.

"We, of course, would change the process to fit your situation, Asif". Uma went on to explain, "For example, the COA already identified a number of issues you want to address. We could use these as the performance problem statements. But even these problem statements might need to be refined as more information is collected on why those having the problem think it's a problem. You'd be surprised at how difficult it is, even for seasoned managers, to identify the **real problem**".

Peter interjected, "That's why this kind of training, and being a part-time trainer/problem-solver, is so important in developing future managers...".

"And, in developing more effective and efficient organizations", Uma exclaimed. She talked about how most organizations don't take the time to develop their workers to their highest potential and how foolish and costly this is in the long run.

"We spend enormous sums, of money, a lot of it on long-term loans from international agencies, and never think about developing our organizations and employees so they can manage, operate and maintain these investments. It's downright criminal! Sorry about the preaching, but it's, true", Peter said.

Questions to reader

- Peter obviously got a little carried away about the importance of organization and staff development. But, he does have a point. Where does your training organization stand on these issues? Put a bit differently, are the training programmes and services you offer your local governments really making a difference in their overall ability to manage, operate, and maintain their capital investments?

- Take a few moments and jot down all the reasons why it's important to begin to work with local government in the way Peter and Eva are. After you've done this, list all the excuses you and your colleagues use for not doing it. Then, think about how you might overcome these barriers.

Commentary

The kinds of problems and opportunities COA unearthed in Daspur are typical of those that other organizations experience. Moreover, the assessment process often creates certain dynamics that are predictable, and these are reflected in the Case Study. Such assessments often confirm what a lot of employees and citizens already think or believe about the organization and how it operates. These confirmations add legitimacy to the issues. They also provide evidence that support for change may be much wider than senior managers and others realize.

Probably more important is the realization that organizational members, at all levels, have good ideas about how to make the day-to-day operations more effective and efficient. These lower-level employees are rarely, if ever, asked their opinions about how to improve organizational performance, or given the opportunity or responsibility to act on "good" ideas. Many managers keep such a tight rein on their employees that there is little chance for creative thinking, or delegation of authority down to the most logical level of competence in the organization.

The idea put forth by the maintenance foreman in the case study (to create work teams and give them responsibility for all routine infrastructure maintenance in specific locations), is typical of the innovations that are initiated when organizations undertake total-quality-management-related programmes.

4. FOCUS ON INITIATING AND MANAGING PLANNED CHANGE

Commentary

As you can see, the situation in Daspur is rich with opportunities for capacity-building. Given this fertile state, we want to change the format of the Case Study somewhat to focus on a number of activities that are common to organization development/capacity-building ventures. From this point on, the Case Study will describe specific interventions, based in part on the COA database, and partly on conventional wisdom about the kinds of situations that surface frequently in complex organizations.

In this leap forward, into the "fire" of organizational reality, we want to share with you the following assumptions about the progress of the SATI-Daspur relationship. In order to move this Case Study along, we have assumed that the following things have already happened:

- Four of the officers who assisted in the COA process have been identified and appointed by the CMO as part-time, in-house trainers,
- A satisfactory arrangement has been made to compensate them for their additional contributions to organizational performance,
- They have been involved in their own professional-development programme, in consultancy and management skills, under the able tutelage of Uma and Peter, and,
- Their contributions to workplace problem solving, in the few short months since their appointments, have gained the confidence of most members of the council and management team.

The professional-development programme, for this team of organizational problem-solvers, took place in short workshops ranging from several hours, conducted in the council chambers of city hall, to a few weekend retreats away from the city. The in-service training for these in-service, training officers has included skill development in such areas as conflict resolution, team building, role negotiation, survey research, coaching, impact evaluation, and goal setting/strategic planning. These skills are, of course, those that are also associated with effective management and leadership. Asif, being an astute and forward-thinking chief executive, has recognized these developments as part of his long-term strategy to develop future managers for the municipal organization. Or, to use the latest rhetoric from the external support community, **human-resource planning to ensure sustainable development.**

Team building and coaching
September 19, Lalmatia Primary Health Care Centre

The CMO had gone to the Lalmatia Primary Health Care Centre to talk to Rashne Dutta. Rashne, a public-health nurse, was one of the officers he had selected. To be on the part-time, in-service training team.

"Rashne", Asif began, "the people in the public works department have been raving about the help you gave their supervisors in filling out those annual, confidential report forms. As you know, they have always created hard feelings with some of the workers".

"We've had the same problems in our department as well,' responded Rashne. "Never thought a little training on how to conduct an evaluation interview would make such a difference. But it did. Probably sounds funny, but I think some of our supervisors actually enjoy filling out those forms. Think that's because they understand how to do it **with** their workers and not **to** them, if you know what I mean".

"Oh, I know what you mean alright", Asif said, remembering his own problems with the mandated Public Service Commission requirement. "But the reason for my visit, Rashne, is to see if you could give us some help with the road maintenance unit. Do you remember the suggestion that came out of the COA exercise about creating area work teams?"

"Sure", Rashne responded immediately. Thought it was a good idea at the time, and still do. Not everybody agreed, if you remember".

"Oh yes! I remember ... but then some people seem to be against anything that's new and different. Well, the council's getting more heat from the citizens about potholes and storm-water damage. That last storm we had really raised havoc in some areas of the city", Asif was quick to point out.

"Anyway, I think it's time to move on that idea. And, the director and his maintenance foreman has agreed to try it out in the Pandara Heights area. The storm damage was real bad on that side of town", Asif explained.

"So, when do we begin?" Rashne asked.

"Great! I like you're enthusiasm, Rashne. How about a meeting later on this week? Okay

Rashne nodded her approval and Asif said, "I'll set it up and give you a call".

As the CMO was leaving, Rashne said, "Asif, have you thought about inviting the councillor from the Heights to come to the meeting? "

"No, but it's a darn good idea", Asif replied. "Wouldn't hurt to get him involved in the planning, would it"?

Questions to reader

- Do you think a public-health nurse can be effective in working with a maintenance crew in the way Victor has suggested? Why?

- Rashne has suggested brining the elected councillor into the meeting to discuss locating a maintenance crew in his area of town. What do you think of this idea? Why?

Later on that week

Asif, Rashne, the public works director, his maintenance foreman, and Councillor Ahmed met in the CMO's office to discuss the maintenance problems and to plan a strategy for setting up the first area maintenance team. They agreed that the team should have as much autonomy to operate as possible under the current personnel rules and be given full responsibility for all road, drain and open space maintenance in a clearly designated area.

Nazmul Siddique, the maintenance foreman, said, "No all my men are for this idea. Some think it's just a way to get more work out of them for less pay.

"Doesn't surprise me", retorted Alam, the director. "and.".

Rashne took advantage of the pause to ask, "Do your workers all feel this way, Nazmul?"

"Oh, no. I've got five or six employees who are eager to try it. They see it as a way of making the work more interesting. And, maybe getting a little recognition if they do a good job".

Councillor Ahmed spoke up, "I could call some neighbourhood meetings, after the team gets in place ... to talk about the new set-up, if you think that might help them get some support from the folks in the area".

"Not a bad idea", Alam said, "as long as they don't begin to think they can boss my people a round!"

"Well, it's a potential problem, I suppose. It's just one of a hundred things we have to keep in mind", the CMO responded. "Gotta be sure we think this thing through before we make the final move".

Sensing some anxiety from Asif and others about a major change in the way they'd been operating, Rashne said, "I have a suggestion. If you all can make a decision on who should be on the first maintenance team (and I think it's smart to start with only one to see how it goes), I'd he happy to work with them to help them get organized and operating".

Rashne went on to explain to the others how she thought she could help, referring to what she planned to do with the new maintenance crew as "team building". Among the issues she said she would try to address in the initial team building sessions would be: the overall supervisory role on the team, various task responsibilities, how they planned to handle conflicts within the team, work scheduling and resource allocation, work conditions, and how they would assess their performance as a team. The last point, Rashne added, is crucial if the team is to be able to determine how well it is doing and to fend off any criticism of the new way of doing things.

"You know", she concluded, "any major change in operating procedures, no matter how successful, will have its critics. So, this team needs to be ready to defend itself when others, who don't know what's going on, start to criticize".

"Sounds complicated ... and time-consuming", the public works director retorted.

"Not really", Rashne responded. "Just the kind of things all good managers should be doing. And we need to remember, this team is going to be ... well, self-managed, in a sense. So they need to be prepared.

Rashne suggested it might be a good idea to get the new team together for two or three days before taking over maintenance of the Heights.

"The Catholic Church runs a modest retreat centre just outside of town. It's not expensive". she turned to the CMO and said, "Do you think we might be able to meet there for this initial team building session?"

Not wanting to lose the opportunity, Rashne stressed, "You know how important it is to get them started off right".

Asif hesitated a moment, and then said, "Well, I think we can work something out. But, before I call the mother superior who manages the centre, I'd like to have an action plan detailing what you plan to cover in the workshop and whatever follow-up you think it's going to take to work with this team over the next six months or so. Oh, yes, and a proposed budget - one I can live with.

"No problem. I'll give it to you on Monday morning".

Rachel's initial plan involved only one two-day, team-building session at the retreat centre and a series of on the-job work sessions, every two weeks or so, to help the team implement its own work plan. The work sessions would involve the review of progress since their last meeting, setting new short-term work goals, discussions of barriers the team is experiencing in completing its work and, sometimes, specific on-the-job skill training.

Questions to reader

- What do you think of Rashne's recommendations about "team building?"
- If you were given the responsibility to work with this newly formed team to help it get started with its new responsibilities, how would you go about it?

Commentary

The last scenario in the Case Study raises several issues that warrant further discussion. They are: the creation of somewhat autonomous work teams; team building and the use of an outside facilitator, and, the role of "coaching". Let's take a closer look at each of these activities.

The introduction of semi-autonomous work units

The issue here is not so much the method used, although it is in keeping with many of the concepts and strategies of TQM and other contemporary management approaches. The real concern is the need to change the way most work units now operate. More often than not, they are: inadequately supervised, hampered by a shortage of necessary resources, rarely trained to perform their duties to a satisfactory level of standards, and, working without a clear notion of what the end results should be.

The use of the semi-autonomous work unit is introduced, not as a panacea, but rather as a way of saying there are many ways of doing things, particularly at the lower end of the often, long hierarchy that typifies public agencies. On the other hand, we don't want to convey the idea that this kind of work arrangement, the semi-autonomous work unit, is not worthy of consideration. It is! But, those organizations that hold tight rein, exercise control from the very top, and share little power and responsibility down the line, will probably find this idea radical and unacceptable. Nevertheless, the semi-autonomous work unit, based on clearly defined job and area responsibilities, is an excellent strategy for use in forward-looking organizations.

Teams, team building and team builders

While teams are most often associated with sport activities, there are some important characteristics about sports teams that are germane to the work setting. First, members of sports teams work together to achieve a common goal winning. If winning is out of the question, at least they strive to lose by as few points as possible. Secondly, every person on the team knows what his or her responsibilities are, in relation to other team members, and strives to carry them out. Thirdly, team members are trained in their individual responsibilities and taught how to work together to achieve common goals. Finally, winning teams are provided with the necessary resources to do the job and are supported by those up the line.

Team members also are coached. Among other things, this means they are: directed, supported, encouraged, provided feedback on their performance, and, held accountable for their actions on the field (the work place). But the coach, rarely if ever, goes on to the field to take over for the person who is not performing up to some predetermined standard. Coaches have other ways to deal with sub-standard behaviour.

Contrast this with many of the public work teams you have experienced in working for local governments. Too often they don't understand what it is they are expected to achieve on the job. They are rarely trained to carry out their roles and responsibilities in a competent manner nor are they properly supported and equipped to do what is expected of them. Consequently, these teams rarely are held accountable for their actions, or inactions. All of these factors are reflected in the quality of work and service that is associated with many local governments around the world.

To summarize, effective teams have the following characteristics.

- They have a clear understanding of the goals they are expected to achieve, they believe these goals are important and worthwhile, and they understand what the results are to be when the goal(s) are achieved.

- They are organized in order to achieve their goals. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear. There is a communication process within the team and with others that is supportive in helping them get the job done. There are methods for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback on that performance.

- Team members are competent to perform their tasks and responsibilities. If not, they are provided with the opportunity to become competent through some kind of focused learning, either on-the-job or through more formal means.

- There is a unified commitment to accomplishing the goals of the team - call it "team spirit". It is that shared willingness to do whatever is needed to succeed as a team.

- There is willingness to collaborate and cooperate with others to get the job done. Within this element of working together is something called trust, or a level of integrity about how the members relate to each other.

- Effective teams have standards of excellence that define their work and outputs. This can be as simple as a properly filled pothole or a quick and pleasant response to a citizen inquiry at city hall to supplying potable water to all citizens on a 24-hour basis.

- Effective teams get external support and recognition. This means financial and logistical support as well as psychological and personal support. And, team members are recognized individually and collectively for their contributions to the organization's mission.

- Finally, effective teams have fair, impartial, open, supportive and challenging leaders, who provide what some characterize as "Principled leadership".

Team building

Team building is an effort by an outside facilitator, such as Rashne, to help teams achieve the qualities outlined above. Normally, team building occurs at specific times and places set aside for such activities. This is why Rashne was suggesting that the new maintenance team be given an opportunity to spend a couple of days, away from the job site, to address issues of how they will work together.

If you recall, Rashne said she wanted to help the team do such things as:

- Set work goals and priorities

- Allocate the way work is to be performed, according to the various roles and responsibilities of individual team members

- Look at how the team is going to make decisions, and communicate with each other and outsiders

- Determine how resources will be allocated and used, and

- Determine how personal relationships, such as conflict, will be handled within the team.

The role of the facilitator is to guide the process of team building. This means, among other things:

- Setting the agenda with the team,

- Helping the team generate adequate information and a database from which to make decisions,

- Providing insights and structure for analysis and decision-making,
- Providing skill development opportunities, and
- Maintaining a supportive and productive (results oriented) work environment.

For information on facilitating the formation of new teams and resolving performance problems in existing teams, see "Team Development" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Coaching

Coaching is another form of on-the-job training, usually associated with the role of the worker's immediate supervisor. In the case study, we have suggested that Rashne might also perform this role since she will be working closely with the team. In her role as part-time trainer and facilitator to the team, Rashne will be able to identify specific performance discrepancies that can be addressed through some kind of coaching intervention.

For information on the use of coaching by supervisors or trainers to help overcome employee performance problems, see "Coaching" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Improving inter-departmental relations

Several weeks later

It was a beautiful afternoon and Rashne had agreed to meet the maintenance crew in one of the small parks for which they were responsible. No sooner had she sat down when James, the team leader, said: "Rashne, we're having all kinds of problems with the people in the Finance Department.

"What kinds of problems?" asked Rashne.

"I don't think they trust us". James went on to say. "They're always making snide remarks about our not having to answer to anybody … and things like that. Sometimes I think they're jealous".

"Could be", Rashne responded, "Could you be more specific, James, about the kinds of problems you're having with the department? Or, is the problem with just one or two people? It would help me understand the situation better if you were more specific. And then, maybe, we could figure out what to do about it".

"The biggest problem", James went on to explain, "has to do with the requisitioning of materials and small hand tools. It seems to take forever. The finance director is always questioning my authority to order them directly without the approval of the director of Public Works".

"Do you have such approval from your boss"? asked Rashne.

"Yes", James said. "That's not the problem. We hammered out those details when this unit was established … And, another thing. We worked out an arrangement with one of the small businesses in the Heights to reseal their parking lot over a weekend more than a month and a half ago and my men have never been paid for it".

"Whoa, James, that sounds like it could be a little tricky. Wanna tell me more about it?"

"Sure. I know what you're thinking", James continued. "But everything was above board. We even had the CMO's approval. Only thing, he wanted the payment to go through the city accounts so there'd be no questions asked. That's, not all. "We've had other problems with that department, too. I just feel the finance director's out to get me ... and it's affecting my team's morale. Do you think you can help us get this mess straightened out?"

Questions to reader

- What immediately came to mind when you read the section about the maintenance crew doing work on private property? Why do you think you felt that way?
- What would you do, if you were Rashne, to deal with these conflicts between James and the finance director?

Rashne agreed to look into the situation after she got more specifics from James. She also talked to the finance director and found out that the situation was not all one-sided. Apparently, Peter and other members of the maintenance team had been bothering some of the finance clerks a bout the payment for extra work. At least one member of the crew had complained to one of the councillors and she had brought it up at a Finance Committee meeting. The finance director was pretty unhappy about it.

As a result of her inquiries, Rashne decided to get the two individuals together to see if she could help them resolve their conflicts. She arranged to hold the meeting in a small room off the council chambers where there would be no interruptions. Besides, it was neutral territory. When they convened, she spent a little time explaining that she had talked to both of them, as well as others who had been brought into the situation. It was her judgement that the differences were primarily between these two individuals and that she thought they could resolve them without involving others at this time. Finally, she described how she hoped to assist them resolve their differences.

The process Rashne used was very simple but effective. She had them each put in writing, on large pieces of newsprint paper, all the things that were irritating them about their working relationship, asking them to be as specific as possible. She then asked them to tape these lists on the wall so they could be compared. Each person was given an opportunity to explain his list, with the other asking questions only for clarification.

Rashne then went over each of the lists, identifying those issues that were common to both lists. She encouraged the two individuals to work out a solution to each of these issues, and to identify what each would do to carry out the solution. Her role was to help them seek a level of understanding about what was creating the conflict from each side and to help them arrive at a mutually agreed set of actions. After they had discussed each other's "botheration" list and come to some resolution about each of the items raised by the two men, they agreed to meet in two weeks to review progress toward solving their differences. At that point, the three of them would decide if further meetings, or different arrangements would be necessary to resolve any outstanding concerns.

Commentary

There are many ways to help resolve conflicts of the kinds described in the Case Study. Probably the best, and simplest, is to provide a neutral ground where both parties can express their concerns, state their case, and even vent their anger, without fear of reprisal. Rashne, in her efforts to help resolve the issues between these two individuals, did several things that were beneficial. First, she determined that the problems were primarily at the supervisory level; and, therefore, it seemed unnecessary to involve other persons in the dispute at this time.

Secondly, she made an effort to understand the conflict from both points of view and to seek out the views of others who had been drawn into the fray. With this background, she was ready to get the two warring parties together. She wisely chose a neutral ground. She encouraged them to present their concerns in writing to each other (although there are many other ways to do this). And she refereed the interactive process, helping the two individuals to reach agreements they could both live with and, that would resolve the problems between them (agreeable agreements don't always make for solvable solutions).

As a final act, she assured there would be a follow-up session where progress could be assessed and further action steps planned if required.

Many conflicts in organizations never get resolved because nobody takes the time and energy to bring them out into the open, and to provide an environment where they can be discussed thoroughly and fairly. One of the roles of the in-service trainer, such as Rashne, is to provide opportunities and the environment to help manage organizational conflicts.

For information on the facilitator's role in resolving differences and reducing stress between organizational work units, see "Intergroup Conflict Intervention" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Role negotiation

A few weeks before local elections

"Uma, this is Asif".

"Yes, Asif, nice to hear from you", Uma responded, wondering why Asif was calling.

"How much experience do you have in working with difficult councillors?" Asif got right to the point.

"Some", Uma said. "Why? You having some problems?"

"Nothing too serious, Uma, but I think it could get out of hand with the elections coming up".

"Can you be more specific, Asif?" Uma inquired. "You know how I always want to know more than I need to about these things".

"Well, it started when the councillor from Pandara Heights- you know, that area where the maintenance crews have been working. Incidentally, they're doing great. Might even put a second team out next month in the University area".

"Good, Asif, but what about the councillor..".

"Oh sorry, Uma", Asif interrupted. "As I was saying, Councillor Ahmed has started to boss the crew around. The public works director is furious, and the crew members working in that area don't know what to do. They feel like they're caught in the middle".

"Is he the only one who is giving you problems?" asked Uma.

"No. If he was the only one, I think I could handle it", responded the CMO.
"What about the mayor?" Uma inquired.

"Fortunately, he understands and is willing to do something about it. Incidentally, he's the one who suggested I call you". After saying this, Asif realized that Uma might wonder why he hadn't thought of it first.

"Sounds like you need to do a little role negotiation", Uma suggested.

"Funny you should put it that way, Uma. Just the other day the mayor said he thought that some council and staff members were getting their roles mixed up".

"Oh, so it isn't all one way!" Uma exclaimed.

"I guess not", Asif said, "if I can believe what a couple of the councillors are saying".

"Again, Asif, could you be a little more specific?" Uma prompted her friend over the phone.

Later in the week

Uma scheduled a meeting with Asif and the mayor in Daspur for later in the week.

They had just finished a long discussion about the various misunderstandings and minor conflicts that had developed over the past few months between some councillors and employees. It was clear to Uma that the issues were not serious but should be dealt with before they escalated any further. The coming election might provide an "opportunity" for some to exploit the differences that already exist.

"I think one day will do it, if we can get all the councillors and department heads - and, of course, you Asif - together", Uma said. "Probably should hold it some place outside of City Hall".

"The University has some small meeting rooms", the mayor offered, "and I'd be happy to arrange something. After all, I should get some consideration as a board member".

"That would be helpful, mayor, and a good venue", Asif responded and then shifted his attention to Uma. "I was a little curious, Uma, why you didn't suggest we use one of our in-house trainers to facilitate this workshop. Any particular reason?"

'Yes, Asif, there is", she responded. "At least two of your trainers could handle this workshop as well as the best trainer we have at SATI. But there's one problem. They are on your staff and could be seen by some councillors as, well, "representing the enemy. "Not really the enemy, but you know what I mean".

She went on to explain. "Facilitators should be as neutral as possible in a situation like this. Using one of your own staff members for this role, Asif, could be misunderstood by some councillors, no matter how fair and un-biased your trainers might be".

"I guess that makes sense", Asif replied. "Oh, one other thing, Uma. I'd like to put something else on the agenda for that workshop".

"Oh, what's that?"

"It has to do with shifting that primary health care centre", Asif went on to say. " You know, the one we talked about when we did the COA."

"I'd prefer not to, Asif", Uma responded. "While it would be an opportunity to discuss the move with the key people, I'd like to keep the focus on just the relationship issue. Otherwise, some of the participants may sec the role problem as not all that important".

Uma described how the workshop would he facilitated. She also explained that the issue seemed to be as much role clarification as negotiation. Often conflicts arise when individuals aren't clear about what is expected of them, or in the case of council and staff relationships, what is formally mandated. While these issues should be clarified through some kind of orientation training, or briefing, more often than not, it doesn't happen. Or, individuals forget, sometimes conveniently, what their roles include and don't include.

Questions to reader

- If you were given the responsibility for facilitating this workshop, how would you design it?
- What would you do to increase the potential that both sides of the negotiation process honour the commitments made during the workshop?

Commentary

A role is a set of duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual, a team or a larger organization component. Put another way, a role is a group of related duties someone is supposed to perform as part of his or her job. Opinions may vary on the nature of someone's role, however. Asked to explain the role of a city councillor, for example, one observer might say, "I guess councillors are supposed to see to it that the city is effectively run". Another might say, "It seems to me councillors are responsible for approving budgets and levying taxes". Still another might say, "The main thing councillors are to do is make plans and set goals for the city's future". Who is right? In a sense, they all are. Councillors, like most people who serve in local governments, have many duties to perform.

Not only are there differences of opinion about what someone is supposed to do, expectations may vary about the way someone actually does it - their role performance. Expectations for role performance generally are prescribed by law, custom, or professional practice. When expectations are violated, conditions are set up for disagreement, hard feelings, and even bitter conflict such as the feelings expressed by the Pandara Heights Public Works director toward Councillor Ahmed's interference with the maintenance crews.

One of the roles customarily performed by a councillor is the **overseer** role. When performing as an overseer, the councillor is expected to do certain things designed to ensure that the city is run effectively. The councillor who makes inquiries, pursues individual complaints and conducts random probes to stay informed about what is going on might be viewed by fellow councillors and the administrative staff as performing properly in the overseer role. Conversely, a councillor who goes around the management structure and gets entangled directly in the way city projects and programmes are carried out might be viewed as abusing the overseer role. Such a councillor might be regarded privately by the administrative staff as "way out of line" and might be cautioned by the mayor or co-councillors to desist from these unacceptable practices.

At times, relationships are strained owing to disagreements and open hostility about the influence exercised by one individual or group over another. In every case, one or both of the parties has as its objective gaining greater control over a situation, reducing the control the other has over the situation, or both. The administrator who views his or her prerogatives over service delivery being usurped by a member of the council, for example, wants to regain the lost control.

Role negotiation is the technique Uma has recommended to help clarify expectations of councillors and department heads about what they believe each should be doing more of, less of, or differently in relating to employees. The value of the technique is its effectiveness in helping people who are in conflict over role expectations to negotiate their differences fairly and openly. The facilitator's task in role negotiation is to create a non-threatening environment in which both sides are able to air their grievances without fear of intimidation or reprisal. In the process, the facilitator referees the interaction between the parties as they negotiate their differences. It is customary for the facilitator to point out that, in role negotiation, nothing is gained by either party without a willingness also to give up something.

As Uma pointed out to the CMO, the use of a facilitator from outside the organization is desirable not only for the added expertise but also for the appearance of objectivity the facilitator brings.

For more information on how to facilitate the resolution of role conflicts on teams and in work units, see "Role Negotiation" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Goal selling
Several weeks after the local election

The CMO had asked Rashne and Siri Ibanda, another of his in-service trainers, to come to his office for a short meeting.

"Appreciate your coming on such short notice, but something came up at the council meeting last night that I need to discuss with you".

"No problem", they both replied in unison.

"So. What's up", asked Siri, someone who never hesitated to get to the point.

"You know Salehuddin Fareque, the new councillor who teaches management at the university. Well, he suggested, at last nights meeting, that the council and senior staff hold some kind of retreat to do some organizational goal setting". The CMO went on to ask, "Do either of you know how to organize such a thing?"

Rashne responded, "I've been reading some materials that SATI sent me on the subject. Doesn't look too complicated. Not too different than some of the planning work I've been doing with the maintenance teams. By the way, Asif, that new team the one working in the University area is doing just great".

Question to reader

- Before we go any further, would you spend a few minutes and jot down some comments on how effective you believe a goal-setting session might be for your own organization. Why do you feel this way?

- If you were in the trainer's shoes, how would you go about planning a goal-setting workshop for the council and staff?

"What should I do on this request? Is it something I can tag onto a council meeting sometime when we have a light agenda"? asked the CMO.

"Probably not", Siri responded, not wanting to offend his boss by saying something like "How naive can you get?"

From what I can tell", Rashne added, "a goal-setting session takes a couple of days, if its done right. In fact, I'm glad Councillor Fareque didn't suggest a full-blown, strategic-planning process. I hear those things can take months! Not full time, of course, but strategic planning is much more complicated and comprehensive from what I can tell from the write-ups".

Siri elaborated. "This kind of planning effort usually requires a lot more information and data than just goal setting".

"And can involve a lot more people as well ... "stake holders" they're called", Rashne went on. "It can even include people from the community".

"Sounds interesting, but I don't want to get into that now", said Asif. "What about it? Do you two think you can do a goal-setting workshop for us?"

"Definitely! You just tell us when", they responded.

"In the meantime, we'll put together a proposed outline and budget, won't we, Siri?" Rashne suggested.

Siri just rolled his eyes and said, "Sure, Rashne, when do we meet?"

Commentary

We think this is a good place to end this Case Study. Organizational goal setting is one of the best services the trainer can provide an organization, whether the trainers are from an institution like SATI, or in-service trainers, such as Rashne and Siri. Strange as it may seem, the leaders of many organizations lose sight of their reason for existing. They are not goal-directed. Instead, these leaders spend all their time reacting and responding to day-to-day crises and demands. Consequently, important improvement opportunities are overlooked, long-standing problems go unsolved and little of value for the future is ever achieved.

Such organizational leaders are much like the traveler who left on holiday without a map, hoping to get to his destination by relying on memory. The traveler covered a great deal of territory, made many wrong turns, and wandered aimlessly about before arriving eventually at the destination. A traveler who starts on a long journey without a map, we all would agree, is foolish, indeed. Yet the leaders of many organizations proceed from year to year in exactly that way - focused on the past and the way things have always been done rather than planning for the future in order to cope successfully with its many uncertainties and challenges.

There is an old adage that, *Some people make things happen! Some people watch things happen! Some people wonder what happened!* You might ask yourself. "Which of these is like my organization? Do we mostly wonder? Do we mostly watch? Or do we make things happen for our community?"

For more information on facilitating the development of community goals and goal-attainment strategies, see "Organizational Goal Setting" in ***Volume 2: Trainer's Tool Kit.***

Oh, by the way, you can assume that Rashne and Siri facilitated the retreat. It was very successful. It did take place at the university, lasted two days and ended with a cocktail party hosted by the provost. After all, they used the conference room next to his office, the one normally reserved for the Board of Governors.

Two months later, Asif Khan was named permanent secretary of the Ministry of Local Government. And, Rashne Dutta was appointed to the position of CMO.