

Block

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STAFF DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

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MDE-419: Staff Training and Development in Distance Education

(New Course in place of ES-319 : Staff Development in Distance Education)

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MDE-419: Staff Training and Development in Distance Education

Course Outline

Block 1 : Growth and Development

- Unit 1 : Amorphous Beginning
- Unit 2 : Curricular Issues
- Unit 3 : State of Maturity
- Unit 4 : Towards Professionalism: An Exposition

Block 2 : Staff Development Perspectives

- Unit 1 : Training to Develop Self-Learning Print Materials
- Unit 2 : Training in Student Support Services
- Unit 3 : Training of Non-Teaching Support Staff
- Unit 4 : Evaluation of Training

Block 3 : Implementational Aspects

- Unit 1 : Training Needs Assessment
- Unit 2 : Methodologies for Staff Development
- Unit 3 : Trainer Training
- Unit 4 : Language Issues

Block 4 : Online Training

- Unit 1 : Approaches to Online Training
- Unit 2 : Continuing Professional Development: Some Issues
- Unit 3 : Assessment and Evaluation of Online Training

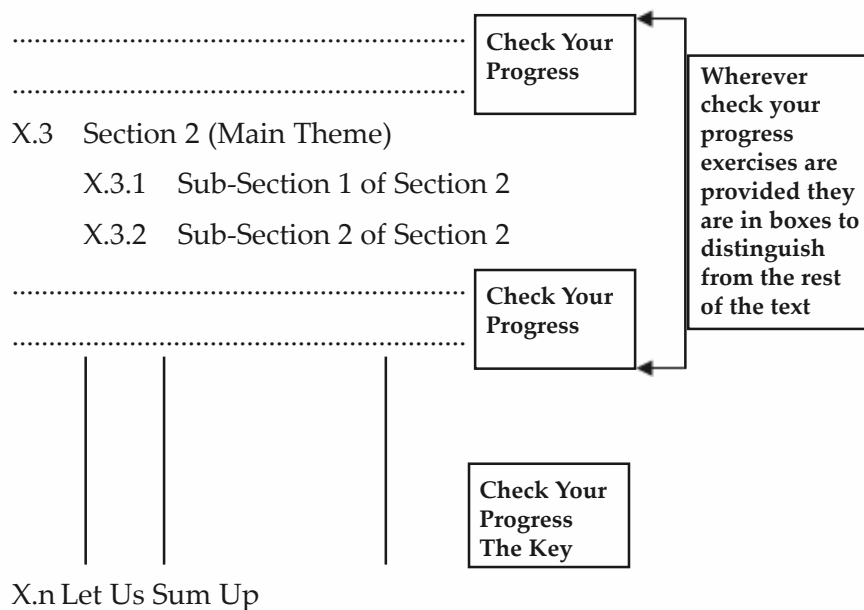
Block 5 : Staff Development Experiences

- Unit 1 : Reflection and Continuing Professional Development: Implications for Online Distance Learning
- Unit 2 : Reflective Online Resources for Online Professional Development
- Unit 3 : Training and Staff Development
- Unit 4 : Training of Trainers' Workshop in Distance Education
- Unit 5 : Face-to-Face Training Workshop for the Academic Counsellors

In Block 1, we traced the genesis of training in the context of distance education. Personnel involved in each of the distance education activities such as course production, course delivery, student support, etc. Need training in order that they function effectively and professionally. In this Block, we have identified four areas for our discussion. In units 1, 2, and 3 respectively we have focused on training to develop instructional material (print), student support services, and non-academic/support staff. This block is different from the rest in terms of presentation. We shall explain this further. Unit 1 provides you with an outline of a training programme for course writers. The unit has been presented in the form of sessions with required content inputs. The materials presented here can be suitably improvised to suit your local needs. Try to use it, when called for. In unit 2, we have discussed the issues involved in training student support service staff focusing on training of the academic counsellors. Unit 3 highlights the role of non-academic/support staff in carrying out various operations in distance education. The message in the unit is that unless the support staffs are properly oriented towards the philosophy of distance education- that it is learner centered- an effective system functioning is impossible. In unit 4, we have discussed the importance of evaluation of training programme and various approaches to evaluation of training.

A schematic representation of the design of the units is given below to facilitate your access to the content presented here.

- X.0 Introduction
- X.1 Objective
- X.2 Section 1 (Main Theme)
 - X.2.1 Sub-section 1 of Section 1
 - X.2.2 Sub-section 2 of Section 1



***'X' stands for the serial number of the unit concerned**

As the scheme suggests, we have divided the units into sections for easy reading and better comprehension. Each section is indicated distinctly by bold capitals and each sub-section by relatively smaller, but bold typeface. The significant divisions within sub-sections are in still smaller but bold typeface so as to make it easier for you to see their place within sub-sections. For purpose of uniformity we have employed the same scheme of 'partitioning' in every unit throughout the course.

We begin each unit with an Introduction followed by the section 'Objectives'. It articulates briefly

- What we have presented in the unit, and
- What we expect from you once you have finished working on the unit.

In the last section of each unit, under the heading, 'Let Us Sum Up', we summarise the whole unit for purposes of recapitulation and ready reference.

Besides, we have given self-check exercises under the caption 'Check Your Progress' which invariably end with possible answers (the key) to the questions set in these exercises.

What, perhaps, you ought to do is to go through the units and note down important points as you read in the space provided in the margin. (Broad margins in the booklet are there for you to write your notes on. Make your notes as you work through the materials. This will help you prepare for the examination as also in assimilating the content. Besides, you will be able to save time. Do use these margins). This will help you keep track of and assimilate what you have been reading in the unit, answer the self-check exercises and the assignment questions and, easily identify the item(s) to be clarified.

We hope that we have given enough space for you to work on the self-check exercises. The purpose of giving self-check exercises will be served satisfactorily if you compare your answers with the possible ones given at the end of each unit after having written your answer in the blank space. You may be tempted to have a furtive glance at the possible answer(s), as soon as you come across an exercise. But we do hope that you will overcome the temptation and turn to the possible answers (which are not necessarily the best answers) only after you have written yours.

These exercises are not meant to be submitted to us for correction or evaluation. Instead, the exercises are to function as a study tool to help you keep on the right track as you read the units. On an average, each block will have at least one or a part of one assignment. At times an assignment may expect you to work through more than one unit to prepare your responses. You have to work on one assignment per course. Assignments are sent separately and are changed every year.

We suggest the following norms be strictly practiced while you are working through the assignments.

- Write your enrolment number legibly.
- Before you put anything down in words, assimilate what you have read, integrate it with what you have gathered from your experience to build your answer, and preferably prepare a concept map before starting to write it.

- Make the best use of the block and additional reading materials by diligently working through the assignments.

Mail us

At the end of this block, we have provided a questionnaire to be filled by you after you complete reading this block. Your feedback will be very useful for future revision and maintenance of the programme. Please take note of the time you devote in studying this block. Maybe you can complete this block after 4-5 sittings. But for every sitting, kindly note the time separately so that you can categorically say how much time you took to read this block. You can send the feedback questionnaire by post or you can e-mail the same to: (pkbiswas@ignou.ac.in). In the email, please mark in the subject area – FOR COURSE COORDINATOR-MDE-419. You may also contact us for any difficulties related to the programme in general and MDE-419 in particular.



UNIT 1 TRAINING TO DEVELOP SELF-LEARNING PRINT MATERIALS

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Open Distance Education
- 1.3 Process of Course Production
- 1.4 Introduction to Self-learning Materials
- 1.5 Beginning Part of Unit
- 1.6 Body and Ending Part of Unit
- 1.7 Let Us Sum Up

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You are aware that self-learning print materials impart measurable educational outcomes to specified target groups of learners. Irrespective of format used, there are some features which are common to any self-learning materials. The major chunk of any system of distance education is concerned with materials and therefore they pay special attention to the training of their faculty/course writers in this area. It is in this context that this unit addresses itself to the training of course writers. You will notice, we have presented the sections in terms of 'sessions' so as to give you a 'feel' of a training programme. We have discussed issues such as, the concept of open distance education, systems approach, content analysis, etc. We have presented materials which you may like to use as slides using power point. The attempt in this unit is to give you a training-kit for preparing course writers. The kit is only in the form of outline, but we do hope that you will use it appropriately for your purposes. You would also notice that this unit does not contain exercises, because we have presented the whole unit as an activity itself.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

This unit purports to give you an idea about training of those who are involved in course development. After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- plan, design and implement a training programme for course writers;
- design individual session plan for the training programme; and
- improve the materials presented in the unit according to your own situation.

1.2 OPEN DISTANCE EDUCATION

You may see below an example of a session plan.

Session Plan (1 hour 30 minutes)

Session Title: Open and Distance Education

Topics

- Concept of open distance education
- Why open distance education
- Characteristics of distance education, flexible learning, online learning, blended learning
- Evolving distance education

Objectives of the session

After attending this session, you should be able to:

- Define distance education;
- Define open education, flexible education, online learning, blended learning; and
- Discuss how distance education evolved during the last few decades.

Strategies

- Slides (power point presentation)
- Interaction
- Discussion

Resources

- Reading materials (Handbook, Handouts)
- LCD Projector
- Paper/writing pad, pen etc.
- Flip chart
- Video on Open University

Evaluation

- Verbal feedback
- Written report from the participants

You may start your discussion with known concept i.e. conventional education. You may compare conventional education, distance education and open education. You may discuss why distance education is important and then how distance education. You may discuss various terminologies like flexible education, online learning, blended learning, and so on.

Why Open and Distance Education?

Socio-academic dynamics make distance education relevant both in the developed and developing economies.

Changing social norms, values, etc. (e.g., the movement from what is basically an agrarian society through industrial and information societies to a learning society) influence educational patterns or the vice-versa.

Information explosion warrants continuous training (re-education and re-training) of various personnel to keep pace with the changing environments.

Population explosion has been making increasing demand for higher education.

There is a clear mismatch between demand and supply.

Implication

Many have to be educated or trained at a shorter period (information flow being tremendous and even increasing) and without much of duplication efforts. The whole process should be cost-effective without compromising on the quality/standard.

Complementing the traditional educational patterns, which are inadequate to take up these responsibilities because of obvious reasons, distance education has potential to alleviate the problems and ameliorate the situation.

A few sample materials are given below for power point presentation which you may later improve on to suit your situation.

Slide 1

Conventional Education



- Face-to-face teaching-learning
- Teacher responsible for teaching
- Pre-designed syllabus
- Word of mouth for communication
- Interaction/activities/immediate feedback
- Learning full-time and teacher based



Slide 2

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Distance Education



- Minimum face-to-face contact
- Print and non-print media used
- Interaction mainly through media
- Learning learner-based
- Learner support services
- Variety of evaluation methods
- Learner choice for:
 - Selection of content
 - Selection of media
 - Pace of study
 - Place of study
 - Entry and exit



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Slide 3

Distance Education



- Quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner
- Influence of an educational organization (planning, preparation of materials, support services etc.)
- Use of media to unite the teachers and learners and carry the content of the course
- Provision of two-way communication
- Quasi-permanent absence of learning groups



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Slide 4

Open Learning

Organized educational activity, based on the use of teaching materials, in which constraints on study are minimized either in terms of access, or of time and place, pace and so on.



Illustrations

- Relaxation during admission (Age, Qualification)
- Relaxation with regard to place and time of study
- Relaxation with regard to selection of courses



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Slide 5

Flexible Learning

- Convergence of multi-modal learning
- Learner choice and freedom to choose path
- Institutional flexibility to cater for all learner needs as also diversified needs of each learner
- Learner-centered/flexible
- Equity in curriculum and pedagogy
- Generic skills and lifelong learning



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Slide 6

Online Learning

- Collaborative engagement
- Student-student and student-tutor interaction
- Interactivity
- More student activity
- Both synchronous and asynchronous interaction
- Instant feedback
- Intelligent flexible feedback
- Online learning, interaction, mentoring, collaboration, knowledge construction and negotiation, assignments, evaluation and feedback, certification



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Slide 7

Blended Learning

- Blending of strategies towards learning performance
- Blending of approaches:
 - F2F (Classroom, workshops, tutorials, on-the-job training)
 - F2F informal (Work teams, peer interaction, role plays)
 - Self-paced learning (Web modules, online resources, audio and video, self-learning materials)
 - Virtual learning
 - Performance support (help systems, knowledge database, decision support tools)



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Evolving Distance Education



- Early 'correspondence education'
- Still continuing 'distance education'
- 'Open learning', 'flexible learning', 'distributed learning'.
- Current 'online learning', 'computer mediated communication'
- Evolving 'blended learning'



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1.3 PROCESS OF COURSE PRODUCTION

Let us consider another session plan.

Session Plan (1 hour 30 minutes)

Session Title: Process of Course Production

Topics

- Course planning
- Course development
- Course production

Objectives of the session

After attending the session, you should be able to:

- Plan developing a course in your own institution;
- You should be able to follow steps for course development;
- You should be able to follow steps for course production.

Strategies

- Slides (power point presentation)
- Interaction
- Discussion

Resources

- Reading materials (Handbook, Handouts)
- LCD Projector
- Paper/writing pad, pen etc.
- Flip chart
- Video on Open University

Evaluation

- Verbal feedback
- Written report from the participants

In this session, you may discuss the process of course preparation. You may discuss the first stage i.e. course planning. The main points to be discussed are: need assessment, how to define objectives of the programme/course, analysis of resources, availability of resources, and suitable approach for course delivery. Briefly discuss the development process – how to arrange the topics in courses, Blocks, and Units/Lessons. Also discuss the course production stage – printing, preparation of non-print media, and so on.

A few sample materials are given below for power point presentation which you may later improve on to suit your situation.

Slide 9



Course Planning

- Assessment of needs
- Defining objectives
- Identify the most important objectives
- State objectives in comprehensive terms
- Analysing resources and constraints
- Budgetary provision
- Availability of media (print, audio, video, face-to-face contact)
- Approaches (Independent, Complementary, Supplementary, Integrated)
- Delivery of teaching materials



Slide 10

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Course Development

- Arranging the topics
- Following logical sequence
- Textual body covering a topic called unit/ lesson
- Preparing unit outlines
- Writing the text



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Slide 11



Course Production

- Print material
- Non print material
- Editing (content, language, format)
- CRC preparation
- Printing



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1.4 INTRODUCTION TO SELF-LEARNING MATERIALS

Session Plan (1 hour 30 minutes)

Session Title: Introduction to Self-learning Materials

Topics

- Characteristics of self-learning materials
- Difference between self-learning materials and text-book
- Sample programme structure of an open university

Objectives of the session

After attending this session, you should be able to:

- Discuss the characteristics of self-learning materials;
- Differentiate between the self-learning materials and text book; and
- Explain the structure of a particular programme.

Strategies

- Slides (power point presentation)
- Interaction
- Discussion

Resources

- Reading materials (Handbook, Handouts)
- LCD Projector
- Paper/writing pad, pen etc.
- Flip chart
- Video on Open University

Evaluation

- Verbal feedback
- Written report from the participants

In this session, you may discuss the characteristics of self-learning materials, and can discuss the structure of the distance learning programme with an example.

Slide 12



Characteristics of Self-Learning Material

- Self explanatory
- Self directed
- Self motivated
- Self contained
- Self evaluated



Slide 13



Programme Structure (IGNOU Sample)

The curriculum or combination of courses in a particular field of study

Course

Teaching materials and other components of study — text, audio, video, contact session, project, laboratory work, assignments.

Block

Appears in the form of Booklet. Around 60/80 printed pages (A4 size paper). Presents one unified theme

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Slide 14



Unit

A self-contained portion of a distance teaching text, distinct from other portions. Approx. 5000-6000 words. Should contain orientation for the student, introducing him to the content, explanations of the topics covered, and exercises to help the student learn the material. Divided into sections and sub-sections for the clarity of the presentation of concepts, information, illustration etc.

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1.5 BEGINNING PART OF UNIT

Session plan (1 hour 30 minutes)

Session Title: Beginning Part of a Unit

Topics

Unit structure

Beginning part of a unit- Title, Objectives, Introduction

Objectives of the session

After attending this session, you should be able to:

- Describe the structure of a unit;
- Discuss how to write the objectives of a unit; and
- Discuss how to write the introduction of a unit.

Strategies

- Slides (power point presentation)
- Interaction
- Discussion

Resources

- Reading materials (Handbook, Handouts)
- LCD Projector
- Paper/writing pad, pen etc.
- Flip chart
- Video on Open University

Evaluation

- Verbal feedback
- Written report from the participants

In this session, you may discuss how to develop the beginning part of a unit. You should focus on the development of structure of a unit, formulating objectives of a unit, and writing introduction of a unit.

Slide 15

Unit Structure (Unit X)

X.0 Objectives

X.1 Introduction

X.2 Section 1 (Main theme)

X.2.1 Sub-section 1 of section 1

X.2.2 Sub-section 2 of section 1

Check Your Progress

Activity

X.3 Section 2 (Main theme)

X.3.1 Sub-section 1 of section 2

X.3.2 Sub-section 2 of section 2

Check Your Progress

Activity

/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/
/	/	/	/	/

X.n+1 Let Us Sum Up

X.n+2 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises





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Slide 16

Beginning of a unit

- Structure of the unit
- Title (precise, clear, communicative)
- Contents outline/Structure (heading, sub-headings of main themes)
- Objectives
- Introduction





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Slide 17



Unit Structure

(Detailed itemization of the content broken into sections and sub-sections)

- Presents – A clear outline of the content (main themes, sub-themes, and their logical linkages).
- Helps – (the learner) – Overview the text, locate the desired content
- Makes – (the text) more learner oriented.



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Slide 18



Numbering Section and Sub-Section

- Should be simple and clear
- Should make the content more accessible.

UNIT 3

• Section 1 of unit 3	-	3.1
• Section 2 of unit 3	-	3.2
• 1 st sub-section of Section 2 of unit 3	-	3.2.1
• 2 nd sub-section of Section 2 of unit 3	-	3.2.2



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Slide 19



Objectives of Unit

Presentation of objectives in behavioural terms (observable and/or measureable)

Three components of a complete statement of objective (in behavioural terms)

- Term that identify '*behaviour or action*' (a verb is used)
- Standard or level*: how well the learner is to perform
- Condition/situation* under which the learner is to perform



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Objectives (Examples)

- 1) Given the names of 7 prime ministers of India, you should be able to *list* them in chronological order without any error.
- 2) After one week practice, you should be able to *calculate* TA and DA for local journey.
- 3) You should be able to *argue* with your friends with regard to bad effect of smoking.



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Kind of Objectives

(Types of performance called for)

Cognitive Domain:

Objectives pertain to the development of mental, processes, like remembering, thinking, analyzing, solving problem, and so on.

(Use of verbs: Recall, Recognize, Reproduce, Distinguish, Differentiate, Assess, List, Analyze, Verify, Describe, Identify, Categorize and so on.)



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Psychomotor Domain

Practical skills involved in manipulating tools/ machines or performing experiments, engaging construction of buildings, and so on.

(Use of verbs: Draw, Prepare, Handle, Manipulate, Compute, Calculate, Construct, Tabulate, Build, Collect, Assemble, Dismantle, Devise, Calibrate, Conduct, Sketch and so on)



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Slide 23



Affective Domain

Development of interest, attitudes, values toward certain ideas and activities.

(Use of verbs: Argue, Enquire, Answer, Share, Defend, Praise, Pursue, Negotiate, Respond and so on)

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Slide 24



Introduction of Unit

Explains – The content being discussed in a particular unit
Relates – The unit with the previous unit/existing knowledge
Motivates – The learner

Components of Introduction

Structural: Previous-present-Future unit
Thematic: Main concept/theme (present unit)
Guidance: What the learner supposed to do before starts reading the unit: Special activities, practical works, reference articles and books, equipment, related audio/video materials, time needed to complete the unit etc.

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Introduction

The introduction of a unit serves as an access device when it explains the content being discussed in the particular unit, relates the unit with previous units and also with the existing knowledge of the students. The introduction should be brief to provide adequate help to the students in starting their study. In the introduction you need to receive, welcome and motivate the students by giving them the impression that what they are going to study in the unit.

There are three components of an introduction:

- i) **Structural component:** In an introduction you may give information about the previous content i.e. what is gone before. Thus, you may establish a link between what a learner has already learned and what he is going to study in the unit at hand.
- ii) **Thematic component:** This is an overview describing the main concepts to be discussed in a particular unit. Its function is to attract the students' interest and focus their attention on the content given in the unit. Besides, it should build a basis for and promise friendly and purposeful communication with learners. It is done best by talking informally about the items in the structure, i.e. theme of the unit, what content we have planned to include in this unit, etc.

- iii) **Guidance component:** It provides study guidance to the students. It explains the study requirements such as, time, special activities, back/cross references, equipment, books etc. It should inform the students about all that he needs to get the best out of the unit.

1.6 BODY AND ENDING PART OF UNIT

Session plan (1 hour 30 minutes)

Session Title: Body and Ending Part of Unit

Topics

- Content analysis
- Principles of ordering the contents
- Language
- Self-assessment
- Illustrations

Objectives of the session

After attending this session, you should be able to:

- Discuss how to develop the contents (section-wise);
- Develop self-assessment questions;
- Discuss how to use illustrations; and
- Discuss how to write the end part of a unit.

Strategies

- Slides (power point presentation)
- Interaction
- Discussion

Resources

- Reading materials (Handbook, Handouts)
- LCD Projector
- Paper/writing pad, pen etc.
- Flip chart
- Video on Open University

Evaluation

- Verbal feedback
- Written report from the participants

In this session, you may discuss how to analyse the contents, how to order the contents, how to use illustrations, how to write self-assessment questions, what kind of language can be used in self-learning materials, and then you may discuss the ending part of the unit i.e. how to write summary, answers to check your progress, glossary, references, reflective questions, and so on.

Content analysis

- Determines course description and breaks down the course into successive blocks;
- Determines the content of the assigned block and breaks down the content into main units;
- Determines the concept of each unit and breaks down the concept into topics;
- Determines the 'content' of each sub-concept and breaks them down into smaller concepts;
- Group the main concepts, sub-concepts in to appropriate order (model flow chart format, outline format).

Slide 25



Body Part of a Unit

- Headings/Sub-headings with numbering
- In-text questions
- Check your progress
- Sign posts: Fixed symbols (pen, instrument, open book etc.)
- Illustrations: Graphics, pictures etc.



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Slide 26



Ordering or Arranging the Content

Few Principles

- From known to unknown
- From simple to complex
- From concrete to abstract
- From actual to representative
- From specific to general
- From earliest to latest



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After arranging the contents, we have to allot a serial number to every step/section and sub-section. There can be various ways of numbering steps/sections and subsections. The main consideration should be that the number is simple, clear and it makes the content more accessible. One way could be to give a serial number to your unit. Suppose that you have allotted serial number 3 (whole number) to the unit. The steps/sections may be numbered in a sequence using decimal point e.g. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3....., similarly a sub-section may be represented using second decimal points e.g. under section 3.1, sub-sections may be 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, and so on.



Language

- Course writer to decide based on his experience the level of language for the target group
- The unit should not make learners consult the dictionary quite often.
- Sentence: Short and simple
- Vocabulary: Simple/known words
- Paragraphs: Small paragraph-one idea in one paragraph
- Conversational and friendly language: try to write as you speak
- Use of personal pronouns: Use of 'you' and 'we', writing should be personal, warm and brief.



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Illustrations

- Photographs
- Graphs
- Line diagrams
- Maps
- Charts
- Cartoons
- Drawings
- Tables etc.



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Check Your Progress Questions

- True-False
- Matching
- Fill in the blanks
- Completion of sentences
- Sequencing
- Multiple choice
- Problem solving
- Descriptive
- Crossword puzzle
- Graphic based questions



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Ending

- Summary (Paragraphs, Matrices, Table, Diagram etc.)
- Answers to self-assessment questions
- Glossary
- Reference materials
- Assignments
- Suggested readings.



Prof. P.K. Biswas

1.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have presented an outline of a training programme for course writers. In this context, we have provided sample session plans, sample slides and brief discussions on some important areas. The main idea is that you may prepare a session plan, and resource materials while taking part in a training programme for the course writers as a resource person.

In our last Block (5), we have presented training design and reports of two training programmes conducted by us in IGNOU.

Activity

- Select any topic of your interest. Develop a sample Unit. Write the 'title' of the unit. Prepare a 'Unit Structure'. Write the 'objectives'. Write an 'introduction', develop a 'section', prepare sample 'check your progress' questions, write the 'summary' of the Unit.
- Request two/three students or your friends who are familiar with the topics, to read the Unit and give feedback. Modify the Unit considering their feedback. Keep the Unit with you for future use, whenever you are called for taking active part in any training programme for the course writers in distance education.

UNIT 2 TRAINING IN STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Student Support Services
- 2.3 Organization of Academic Counsellor Training
- 2.4 Session-wise Topics for Academic Counsellor Training
- 2.5 Let Us Sum Up

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you have learned how to organize training sessions for the course writers. In this unit we shall concentrate on academic counsellors. Training of the academic counsellors is one of the crucial factors in providing effective student support services. The academic counsellors have to perform various functions which include tutoring and counseling. Training programme for the academic counsellors proposes to provide necessary knowledge and skills to become effective practitioners. The counsellors are thus expected to take knowledge which is often theoretical in nature, to real life situations and apply it in practice. Training should help reduce gap between the actual practice and the theoretical inputs imparted to promote the relevance of counsellor training programmes and substantially guide their practice.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the importance of student support service;
- plan and design a workshop for the academic counsellors in your own situation.

2.2 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

You will agree to the fact that the multimedia package of instructional material forms the core of instruction. The materials are supposed to be self-instructional. Yet, given the heterogeneity of the learners in terms of age, experience, educational background and socio-economic status, some content areas of self-learning materials might pose conceptual problems to some learners, if not all. Added to this, are the inherent problems associated with the system such as the distance between the teacher and the learner, isolation of the learner from other learners and the institution, and the absence of chances of regular interaction with colleagues, peers, teachers. Student support services, therefore, become essential to provide solutions for certain problems, gaps, difficulties, etc. which the distance teacher, the institution and the teaching-learning materials are unable to meet or provide. In order to provide effective support services to students, suitable personnel are to be identified, selected and trained keeping in view the nature and kind of support services needed by the students.

You have acquired knowledge and skills while studying the course MDE 413. There is no need to discuss the issues related to students support services here. We shall concentrate on the training aspects of the academic counsellors in face-to-face situations only.

2.3 ORGANIZATION OF ACADEMIC COUNSELLOR TRAINING

Organization of 3-day workshop

You may organize a 3-day workshop (face-to-face) for the academic counsellors. In the following pages we shall give you an idea. You may develop your own training schedule depending on your own situation. The objectives of the workshop may be the following:

Objectives of the session

- To orient the participants with the concept and practice of ODL;
- To provide hands-on experience in face-to-face counselling;
- To provide hands-on experience in evaluation of assignments

Participants

- You may select 30 participants (Max.)

Methods

You may follow various methods depending upon your own situation. Some methods are:

- Power-point presentation
- Discussion/Interaction
- Individual activity
- Group activity
- Presentation by the participants
- Feedback/Evaluation

Resource persons

- Select 4-6 resource persons.
- Distribute the sessions among the resource persons according to their expertise in a particular area.
- Use 2 resource persons in a day.

Preparation of a tentative schedule

- Keep four (4) sessions per day.
- Total 12 sessions (including Inaugural and valedictory sessions).
- Each session may be 1 hr. 30 min. duration.
- Session 1 will be inaugural session.
- Use some time from inaugural session for participants' introduction and ice-breaking.
- Apply a short pre-workshop evaluation test.

2.4 SESSION-WISE TOPICS FOR ACADEMIC COUNSELLOR TRAINING

Day 1

Session 1: Inaugural Session



Session 2: Open and Distance Education

This session almost similar to the session we have discussed in unit 1. There should be a brief presentation on ODL concept and practice followed by interaction. The topics may include:

- Meaning/Definition of distance education
- Characteristics of distance education
- Clarification of various concepts
- Learner profile
- Media used in distance education
- ICT

Session 3

Student Support Services

There may be a power point presentation followed by interaction. The topics may include:

- Meaning of learner support
- Need of learner support
- Types of learner support
- Models of learner support
- Meaning and types of counselling
- Meaning of Tutoring
- Practical Training / Hands on experience
- Feedback on assessment and progress
- Administrative problem solving
- Library facility
- Conduct of examination / practical
- Maintenance of Learner Records
- Online support (where applicable)

Identifying main features of self-learning materials

Session 4: Group Activity

- Divide the participants into 5 groups. Try to keep participants from same or related disciplines in one group. Identify group leader in each group.
- Give them self-learning print materials. Ask them to identify the main features of these study materials, difference with the text book, and why these materials are important for the distance learners



- Give them 20 min for group discussion
- Each group leader/any participant should present the outcome of the discussion.
- After each group presentation, the members of the other group will interact with them.
- The resource person will also interact.
- Identify the common features identified by the groups and the specific or unique features identified by each group.
- Grade the group activity.

Day 2

Session 5: Academic Counselling

Review the first day activities. Identify participants for this task. After that there may be a brief power point presentation. The topics may include:

- Role of academic counsellor
- Difference between counselling and tutoring
- Qualities and skills of academic counsellors
- Methods of counselling
- Media used in academic counselling
- Practical and project
- Study skills

Session 6 and 7

- Live counselling (demonstration and practice)
- Bring few students and ask the participants to interact with the students.

Session 8

- Discussion on the activities performed by the participants during session 6 and 7.

- The resource person will clarify the problems presented by the students, modify the responses and style of presentations by the participant counsellors.

Day 3

Session 9

- Review of the second day activities by the participants

Tutor comments

The participants should learn how to evaluate assignments and write tutor comments on each answer written by the students. There may be a presentation on tutor comments.

Academic Communication

- To address every learner individually and write meaningful or teaching type comments on assignment responses
- Correct the learner if s/he responds incorrectly
- Point out and confirm acceptable points, examples, figure etc.
- Suggest to add a point or elaborate on the issue
- Assess the level of achievement and explain the basis of that

Personal communication

- Try to break the feeling of 'isolation' of the learner
- Help to go ahead smoothly to achieve the stipulated learning objectives
- Motivate the learner

Supplemental Communication

- May be initiated by the learner or the distance teacher
- When learner reacts strongly to the comments or challenges the grade
- Teacher may send the probable answer to the learner

Types of Comments

Positive comments: "Your explanation with regard to information processing theory is very good. I appreciate your diagram number one".

Constructive comments: "You could have discussed the temperate climate and the modern methods of farming as important factors of high production of wheat in the prairies".

Personal comments

"I appreciate your style of presentation. It is new to me. No other student has presented the diagram on information processing theory. Carry on please. You will definitely be able to achieve learning objectives."

Overall (Global) comments

"This is good you have submitted your assignment in time and attempted both the questions. This is also good that you have not crossed the word limit. Your overall response is good. However, you have missed some important points (see margin comments inside). With regard to the first question you could have mentioned three reasons: temperate climate, fertile

land and plenty of water provided by the two major rivers Mississippi and Missouri along with modern methods of farming which have helped in the high production of wheat in the prairies. In your response to the second question also you have missed some points e.g., how the farmers of the prairies use machines for agriculture, how they rear animals in Ranches and so on (see margin comments). As you have missed these important points I have given you 'C' grade. Your handwriting is neat. But you should give more attention to spelling.

This is your first assignment response. Hope, in your next assignment you will do better. If you face any difficulty with your studies do not hesitate to write to me”.

Session 10: Individual activity

Each participant will be given an answer written by the student to an assignment. The participants will evaluate the answer, grade them and teach the students through written comments.

Session 11: Counselling using ICT

This session may be devoted to discuss how ICT can be used for academic counseling.

Session 12

- Feedback/post workshop evaluation
- Valediction



2.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we gave you an idea about a 3-day training workshop (face-to-face) for the academic counsellors. We have suggested the way you may organize a training workshop for the counsellors. In our last Block (5), we have presented training design and report of a 15-day training programme for the academic counsellors conducted by us in IGNOU.

Activity

Modify the contents and strategies suggested in various sessions of the 3-day workshop. Prepare session plans for 2-day orientation programme for the academic counsellors.

UNIT 3 TRAINING OF NON-TEACHING SUPPORT STAFF

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Role and Activities of Support Staff
 - 3.2.1 Word Processing
 - 3.2.2 Understanding the Collective and Complex Nature of Work
 - 3.2.3 Keeping Records
 - 3.2.4 Getting the Correct Information
 - 3.2.5 Equipment Maintenance
 - 3.2.6 Learning from Teaching/Service Units
 - 3.2.7 Sharing the Work
 - 3.2.8 Hospitality
 - 3.2.9 Professionalism
 - 3.2.10 Sense of Responsibility
 - 3.2.11 Self-discipline
- 3.3 Job Description
- 3.4 Staff Training and Development
 - 3.4.1 Types of Activities
 - 3.4.2 Role of Management Information System (MIS) in Training
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Non-teaching staff have a significant role to play in making distance education programmes and the institution a success. They have to undertake a wide range of activities related to course development, course delivery and course/programme implementation, including student support services.

Junior-assistant-cum-typist, computer operators, section officers/superintendents, stenographers, personal assistants, etc., in the open/distance teaching institutions perform their functions in close collaboration with the academics. Without proper awareness and a general understanding of the distance mode of teaching-learning and a degree of sensitivity to the problems of learners, it is not possible to make distance teaching a meaningful activity. The academics, the administrators, and the non-teaching staff must work in tandem and their focus should always be on the student. There is not a single activity in an open university that can be viewed in isolation, though each category of the personnel may be engaged in different sets of activities. This being what it is, we have highlighted the important role of support staff in ensuring better servicing to our clients, particularly students. Further, we have touched upon the need for effecting change, notwithstanding some resistance, for effecting functioning of distance education system. In this unit we have also discussed the need for management information System (MIS) for the top-management to guide the staff properly and profitably. In essence, you should consider this unit as an input for drawing out a training programme for the non-teaching staff on your own and increasing their participation and commitment by involving them in different staff development activities.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

This unit should provide you with an overview of the role of non-teaching/support/allied staff in distance teaching contexts and the need to train them. After going through this unit, you should be able to

- explain how non-teaching staff make a difference in servicing clients – both internal and external,
- explain the need for ‘change’ through training that will help an organisation function better,
- discuss the need for and the nuances involved in management information system and say how it contributes to effective functioning of an organisation, and
- Conduct a training programme for allied staff (keeping the above three objectives in view), when required.

3.2 ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF SUPPORT STAFF

In an open university different categories of non-teaching personnel are engaged in different sets of activities. However, there is not a single activity which can be viewed in isolation. Each activity is related to a teaching activity whether falling under programme/course development, delivery or implementation. The implication is that, the failure in one activity would adversely affect each of the related activities. In other words, a minor problem or failure in an activity or operation might lead to breakdown of the entire system. The role exposition below would make it very clear to you.

In open universities, the failure in one activity may bring to halt the gigantic wheel – the distance teaching system. Failure to carry out a minor task will stop major operations leading to demotivation of the people involved, and also make the institution vulnerable to public criticism. Imagine a situation where you have all the course materials for a one year programme except a few pages of assignments which are yet to be printed and therefore, the registered students are not sent their course materials for a few months. The whole exercise of launching/running a course will be ridiculed by the students as well as the public because of the negligence or default of a few persons. Therefore, the allied staff including top-officials should be aware of the nature of their work and the desired qualities required to do it.

Here are a few activities and patterns of behaviour expected of allied staff which have implications for major teaching functions. The trainer has to keep all these functions given below in mind and be able to impress upon the concerned their value and importance.

3.2.1 Word Processing

Distance learners primarily depend on the study materials they receive from a distance teaching institution. Since their learning is a self-directed one, the study materials must be prepared with utmost care and thoroughness. The academics take the responsibility of the content, language etc., but the technical execution of getting the materials ready in a desirable form depends on the non-teaching staff. For example, a good typist or computer operator (CO) saves the time and labour of many and thus saves the resources for the institution. If the typist or CO is careless and incompetent, academics will have problems in finalising scripts; s/he will have to repeat

the same drafts many times; there will be delays in printing the courses, dispatching them and in organizing counselling sessions for the students. One can avoid this chain reaction that affects all the operations adversely, if the typist or CO knows his/her job well, is careful and also has the required level of awareness about the system.

However, with the advancement of technology, most of the distance teaching institutions have word processors installed to accelerate the process of course development and production. Word processors facilitate course developers in a number of ways. Apart from getting the drafts ready quickly, editing the drafts is much easier if we use the word processor. Once we get the camera-ready copy from the word processor, printing also takes less time than what it would otherwise in the case of typed manuscripts. To appreciate the obvious advantages of using word processors and the PC's they (the CO etc.) need professional training. Of course, many of them may learn about the uses of word processors on the job, but a systematic training at the initial stage will enable them to perform their duties better and learn more about the machine and the system in a professional way. Irrespective of the kind of technology in use, it is important that the staff is efficient in using it.

3.2.2 Understanding the Collective and Complex Nature of Work

Every institution appoints Junior Assistants/Typists, Assistants, Senior Assistants, PAs, Stenos and so on. The work expected of them is usually taken for granted. But a distance teaching institution with its multi-media instructional system will have different kinds of tasks for them, although they may have been recruited under the traditional nomenclatures such as PAs, Stenos, etc. When you give some work to them, they may ask: "Is this the job of a ...? You may not be the only one who is troubled by such questions because this confusion about roles and functions would prevail initially at all levels in any new organisation moving on to a new system. Many academics and administrators would have raised questions regarding the ambiguity about their roles and functions. Once the institution chalks out its own rules, job descriptions, and terms and conditions of appointing different categories of personnel the confusion will be cleared. Till then, most of us expect our allied staff to perform different types of tasks related to various aspects of the system. Strict compartmentalisation of work is neither possible nor desirable in an open learning system. In fact, as has been done at many places in the world, we may have to rename/re-designate many categories of personnel to accommodate this need for role-switching.

3.2.3 Keeping Records

In open universities, there is a need to collect and record enormous amounts of data and retrieve them from time to time. Starting from enquiries and admissions to the completion of the course or programme concerned – sometimes even after its completion – the university has to maintain student records, information regarding the courses, dispatch of materials, complaints, requests or enquiries from students, counselling sessions, assignments, examinations, question papers and other learning activities of the students. Information is to be provided from time to time to various personnel at the university and outside it for research, annual reports, budget proposals and so on. Sometimes valuable information gets misplaced or lost because of sheer carelessness or faulty/defective filing systems. The routine information brochures, circulars, newsletters etc. many get discarded as unimportant or simply dumped somewhere without proper arrangements

for retrieval. Details about expert committees, course writers, the tasks assigned to writers, editors, printers, graphic artists, media persons, requirements sent to the administration, etc. may appear to be very 'ordinary' or unimportant, but they are actually very important for the people involved in distance education systems. Clearly, an appropriate, adequate and efficient filing and record-keeping system is essential. And to sustain the efficiency of such a system, each member of the staff needs to be highly sensitive, thoughtful and careful. Training can develop all these among allied staff. Once the right attitude and expertise is achieved, the rest of the operations regarding database of record keeping (manually and using computer both) will become easier.

3.2.4 Getting the Correct Information

All the necessary and correct information about a university as well as the students is essential to enable the planners, policy makers, academics and administrators to get the right kind of information at the right time. If such a database can be built only with the help of computer, it is equally important to feed the computer with correct information and data. Any wrong information feed into the machine will have disastrous consequences. Recording is a skill that could be acquired and perfected only through one's involvement in the system and by becoming aware of the necessity to have the correct and updated information. While categorising and updating records and files, we should make it clear to the non-teaching staff that they should consult the senior officers so that the information is not simply stored somewhere but also arranged in such a way that it is easily retrieved for use whenever needed. Information that cannot be retrieved without loss of time is information lost. Valuable machines are often underused or unused because of lack of skilled personnel to handle them or because of lack of interest and care among the skilled personnel. Sometimes, because of sheer negligence and indifferences of a few individuals and often because of the lack of knowledge and awareness, we lose large amounts of data and information forever.

3.2.5 Equipment Maintenance

Maintenance of equipment is as important as using it. Take the example of word processors and photocopiers. What will happen if the machines remain out of order most of the time? We can neither build up fresh data nor use the data already stored. Failure of machines is mostly the result of the failure of human beings in maintaining them. In such cases, the more traditional ways of keeping records prove to be more useful and effective. Ironically instead of improving efficiency and saving time, sophisticated machines make people less efficient and cause inordinate delays in situations where the use of technology is not properly understood or socially internalized.

Similarly, we can see typewriters, computers, etc., left uncovered and unprotected against dust and damages. It is also not unusual to leave a machine on and forget about it the whole day long. A fan or a cooler too is a machine – how many of us care to switch them off when we leave our rooms at the close of the day?

3.2.6 Learning from Teaching/Service Units

You must be clear that the work at an open university or a distance education institution is of a complex nature and we will have to work not only individually but also within teams. This requires some conscious

training and patience to orient ourselves to a new situation. We need to impress on the staff that work becomes easy and enjoyable if we start our career or work with a mind and willingness to learn more, give more and take more. There should be an attitude of allowing everyone to grow professionally as well as intellectually. A CO should not think that he/she would always remain a computer operator. An organisation grows when its employees give their best to it and grow themselves. And the employees grow when they work hard and learn from each other.

Of course, not everyone will be doing everything in a School or Division, but the non-teaching staff should know what is necessary for the general functioning of the School or Division in which they work. For example, let us suppose that there are two typists or COs working with four academics and they have two word processors. One typist goes on leave without informing the academics concerned. The academics are in dire need of completing a piece of work which needs another two hours of word processing. But they do not know where the typist/CO has kept the relevant papers, or how to open the file in the computer. The other typist/CO also does not know anything in this regard nor can he/she work on the other word processor. How do we overcome such problems? The answer to the question is that, in an open university, we have to have a collective approach to work and, therefore, we would be more effective in our work, if we get a general understanding about the work done by others as well. Consider another illustration. In preparing the Annual report of a School or Division, someone may be writing the report after collecting the relevant information. But, while collecting the information, the person who is preparing the report will depend on others for correct information. Every bit of information will have to be checked and processed in order that the unit's achievements and failures are properly reflected in the report. This is possible only when every one realises the significance of the report and contributes individually to compile the collective report. If the work is treated solely as someone's individual responsibility, then, quite a few important activities of the unit may be lost sight of. This can be avoided if the non-teaching staff and the teaching staff have an overall understanding about the activities of the given unit. Training provides this understanding in good measure.

3.2.7 Sharing the Work

The commonly tendency among all of us is that we should not be burdened with the work of others. Of course, there will not be any such problems if everyone does his/her work according to a proper schedule. But sometimes it so happens that, in spite of our best efforts, we are not able to meet the schedules because of some unforeseen events. Keeping in view the overall interests of the students, we may have to work a little more to complete course preparation, dispatch of the materials etc., and thus meet the overall schedule. In fact, if there is proper work allocation, we can pace our work and complete it without more strain. But one cannot expect to have ideal conditions always. It is true that in any organisation there will be a few elements who would avoid work. We are not concerned with talking about such people here, but with sharing of work at times.

What does sharing mean in our present context? Sharing of work should not mean that some will over-work and some others will shirk work. It simply means that colleagues should help each other from time to time when some of us have to work under pressure of time. Sharing should be reciprocal. We assume that all our staff are working sincerely to meet the schedules and yet we may find some colleagues lagging behind. At such times, do we see any

volunteers to help them in their typing, word processing, etc? Therefore, prior planning and sharing of work at times of need are necessary.

3.2.8 Hospitality

The profile of distance students being very different from that of the students of conventional universities and colleges, dealing with them in an appropriate manner is essential. We need to impress upon the non-teaching staff about this fact.

Students and others who come to a distance teaching institution come with a specific purpose to learn and study. Some of them travel long distances, sometimes thousands of kilometers, spending time and money to get their problems solved at the institution. Naturally, they expect us to attend to their problems immediately. What will be their impression about the institution, if they do not get a proper treatment and the right answers? We may not be able to give them right answers sometimes, but we can talk to them politely, share their concern and guide them to meet people who would advise them. After all, the image of an institution depends on the impression the students and the public form about it. Similarly, sometimes one writes a letter or makes a telephone call asking for some special information. We should try to help one to the best of our ability. Rude replies are signs of lack of culture. An empathetic reply and polite words would make the other person feel happy even if he/she does not get the right answer.

In a distance education system, students look for 'gentle treatment' precisely because they miss the human factor which is available in face-to-face education. Since distance students do not get immediate feedback, they have lots of questions to ask whenever they write to us or happen to meet us in our offices. If possible that some of the staff may feel bored to answer routine questions especially when they do not have solutions. They may sometimes try to shift the responsibility of answering the questions to some other colleagues. In any case, the students are not going to leave us without getting the answers to their questions. In fact, we should anticipate certain problems which should defy immediate solutions in spite of our best efforts and intentions to solve them, and be ready to look for different solutions without getting panicky. If they are insistent, we may sometimes even ignore their queries or give rude replies to them. Such behavioural traits, if we possess them, will not help the students, nor the institution nor our own growth in our careers. As professionals, we should appreciate their problems and anxieties, and try to help them in every possible way, instead of becoming impolite and rude when faced with genuine questions from them. The role of non-teaching in the context is very important, as they are there to provide a human staff touch to an otherwise mechanical operation.

3.2.9 Professionalism

The main difference between a good worker and a bad one is the difference in the quality of work and the manner in which it is done. For example, one is given a 20 page handwritten unit and asked to prepare a typed manuscript for press; if he/she could do it in the shortest possible time with the minimum corrections needed for the second draft, he/she would be considered a 'professional'- a good worker with the necessary skills and qualities to do the work given. Suppose the same is given to someone else, who types the manuscript three or four times and even then the manuscript is no good he/she is a non-professional. If the person is indifferent to the task assigned, he/she will go on repeating the same mistakes and at times may

make new ones. In the process, the entire operation becomes tedious and there will be inordinate delays in finalising the manuscript and getting the materials printed. If we have good professional typist/CO, all the above mentioned problems would not arise.

Professionalism in typing/word processing is only one example. In fact, we need a professional approach from every one who works in a distance teaching institution. But professionalism can't be developed automatically (see unit 2, block 4 of this course). We should cultivate it deliberately so as to carry out our tasks effectively. For instance, someone may have been a good assistant in a government office drafting, preparing notes, etc., in an excellent manner suitable to that office, but when he/she is appointed as an assistant in an open university or a distance education institution, there may be variations in the style of drafting and preparing 'notes'. It is our ability to transfer our previous knowledge and skills to the new situation that makes us professionals. People who lack this ability would usually go on complaining about both real and imaginary difficulties in any situation. Such an attitude would hinder our growth as professionals.

'Natural' gifts or talents may be found in some people who are quick to adapt to new situations and jobs and contribute substantially to the growth of the new institution. However, the 'natural' talents would disappear gradually if the people concerned do not also make use of their talents in a systematic way. Every activity can be improved to a higher level in operation terms only when we impose strict discipline on ourselves and regulate our activities. Professionalism comes through constant practice and desire to improve our work style and the quality of our output. This is true of typing/word processing, photocopying, filing, arranging meetings, fixing appointments, organising, seminars/workshops, etc.

3.2.10 Sense of Responsibility

Educational programmes of distance teaching institutions can be successful only when they are implemented with a spirit of collective responsibility and commitment. It would be good if each one of us does his/her work sincerely and regularly. But if the work is done in isolation or in a mechanical manner, the ultimate goal of making the programmes a success may yet remain unattained. For example, the academics write the course materials, the non-teaching staff completes the word processing etc, printing and publication unit prints the materials and the material distribution unit sends the materials to the students. This is the general pattern of work so far as the process of preparation, production and delivery of course material is concerned. However, there needs to be a proper coordination and joint effort to make the entire series of operations successful. Without realizing the significance of the joint responsibility, we can't ensure the preparation and production of materials in the desired form, nor can we meet the schedule of deadlines of delivery, course completion and certification.

What is true of materials production is true of all other aspects of distance education, such as audio-video production, providing support, evaluation of assignment-responses, conducting counselling sessions, holding examinations and declaring results. In all these operations, each one working at a distance education system must work with a sense of responsibility so as to achieve client satisfaction.

3.2.11 Self-discipline

In a distance education system, which has been described as a democratised system of education, the responsibilities of staff are more varied, and hence self-discipline is very important. In any organisation rules may be there, but 'paper-rules' cannot make one work. (It is common place to say that every rule can be circumvented if the persons concerned do not want to follow it).

Punctuality and promptness are the two basic requirements to discipline oneself so as to become a good worker and a professional. You may have witnessed quite a few things common in the offices which are not conducive to work. For example, some people come to the office late deliberately. Some others would come in time, sign the attendance register, gossip with their colleagues for some time and then go to the canteen, and spend long stretches for time there. There are a few who themselves would not work and would not allow others to work either. It is likely that because of such negative tendencies of a few people, even sincere and good workers gradually acquire a sense of indifference towards their work. Of course, such things could be checked by senior officers, but unless each one realizes his/her own responsibility, it is difficult to maintain discipline by force. The best form of discipline is that which is self-imposed and self-generated.

When we are positive in our attitude, we will enjoy our work, and there will be ample opportunities to interact with our colleagues, discuss the work related issues and think creatively to solve the problems in new ways. Many of our creative suggestions would help others improve their efficiency. Work becomes pleasure when we do it with involvement and gradually work becomes part of our being, which brings about a positive change in our personality. All this is possible if we cultivate self-discipline.

A word of caution

During a training session to cover these aspects of the domain of non-teaching staff; it is necessary to exercise adequate care to see that it does not create the wrong impression that an average employee is seen or thought of as a bad worker necessarily. It needs to be said in no uncertain terms that nobody should think of an average employee as a bad worker. What we have talked about are the common features of a typical work culture which we may experience and face at many work places. The purpose of our talking about them is not to print to an individual or group of individuals, but to bring home the fact that if we want to survive as a learning society, we have to contribute to this survival by bringing about visible, concrete and permanent positive changes in our work culture.

Activity 1

Do you think the areas listed in 3.2.1 are identical to the situation in your institution? Whether your answer to this question is 'yes' or 'no'; please identify crucial areas in which your support staff may need training.

Note: Space is given below for your response. We have not provided any response at the end of the unit.

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.3 JOB DESCRIPTION

A few sample job descriptions are given below for gaining more insights into some of the aspects we have just been looking into.

Department	:	Registrar's Office
Job Title (Designation)	:	Assistant

A) Primary function: To provide secretarial assistance to Superintendents, Assistant Registrars and Senior Officers

B) Main duties

- 1) Examines the matters entrusted to him/her with reference to the University rules/regulations, university calendar, syllabi of various courses, etc.
- 2) Records office notes on papers under consideration.
- 3) Initiates and maintains correspondence with other departments/ colleges and other external agencies.
- 4) Initiates follow up action on correspondence and puts up reminders where necessary.
- 5) Puts up draft communications for setting up examination centres, appointment of examiners, other supporting staff.
- 6) Prepares draft plans for entrusting work to various examination centers.
- 7) Prepares statements or other materials from data available in office records received from external agencies.
- 8) Sorts, compiles and presents data received from other agencies.
- 9) Puts up print orders.
- 10) Proof-reads official documents when required.
- 11) Compares notes with clear, stenciled/typed material/approved drafts.
- 12) Compares requirements of cyclostyled/photocopied and printed materials and arranges for their reproduction.
- 13) Submits proposals for modification of planned activities, where necessary, e.g. substitutes for examiners, etc.
- 14) Prepares authorisations for payment of dues.
- 15) Submit proposals for authorization of travel by means/class other than that entitled.
- 16) Maintains files and other records connected with the work allotted to him/her and traces out old references.

C) Secondary duties

- 1) Prepares papers for submission to university bodies, etc.
- 2) Assists officers attending meetings of university bodies.
- 3) Maintains Liaison with teachers/heads of departments/colleges on official matters.
- 4) Attends to public enquiries where specifically authorised to do so.

- 5) Assists the officers in comparing papers and verification of data/information.
- 6) Undertakes any other duty as may be assigned to him/her by senior officers.

D) Tools and equipment used

Common office equipment.

E) Work procedure

Follows normal office procedures.

F) Job Characteristics

- **Skill**

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| a) Education | As prescribed by the University/institution |
| Employment (training and experience) | By promotion from amongst the clerks |

- **Complexity of duties**

- 1) Consolidation of statistical data
- 2) Proof reading

- **Contact with others**

Contact with staff of department/colleges for expedition action or delivery of urgent and important papers.

- **Efforts**

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| a) Physical effort | 1) Manual dexterity in handling office equipment. |
| | 2) Moving about when personally contacting colleagues in other departments |
| b) Mental effort | Close attention while performing duties |

- **Responsibility**

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| a) For operations | Accuracy and promptness in disposal of Work |
| b) For mental | Careful handling of office machines and equipment |
| c) For other matters | Nil |
| d) Confidential data | Has access to confidential data, disclosure of which can affect the image and functioning of the unit |

- **Working conditions**

Normal office conditions

- **Environmental conditions**

Normal

Department	:	Registrar's office
Job Title (Designation)	:	Superintendent/Section Officer

A) Primary function

- i) Routine decision-making in respect of the work under his/her charge.
- ii) Assistance to the Assistant Registrars/Deputy Registrars in decision-making in the area of work assigned to him/her.
- iii) General supervision of the function of the section under his/her charge.

B) Main Duties

- 1) Attends to day-to-day correspondence relating to his/her tasks.
- 2) Submits drafts to Assistant Registrars/Deputy Registrars after discussions with them, where necessary.
- 3) Keeps addresses of officers of other institutions, offices and departments/branches for collection of data, and for communication of decisions, sanctions, etc.
- 4) Takes routine decisions with respect to cases work under his/her charge.
- 5) Collects, where necessary, relevant information from appropriate sources, required for decision-making at his/her own or at a senior level.
- 6) Compiles, where necessary, data of confidential nature for submission to senior levels.
- 7) Initiates action on important matters of policy procedure and any other complex matter.
- 8) Communicates decisions taken by him/her in matters falling within his/her area of authority or decisions on matters in cases where the rules are clear or where higher officers or other departments have concurred in the proposed course of action.
- 9) Makes references to other institutions/departments/branches seeking advice/information.
- 10) Consults other officers/institutions/departments/branches to facilitate disposal of his/her work.
- 11) Prepares agenda notes/briefs for the meetings of the university bodies/committees, in respect of important matters within his/her sphere of authority.
- 12) Attends such meetings (see item 11) and drafts minutes when so required, and takes follow up action on the decisions taken at the meetings.
- 13) Lays down tasks for the staff working under his/her control.
- 14) Institutes corrective action where actual performance has been or is likely to be below the planned level of efficiency. Guides the staff under his/her control in discharging their functions.

- 15) Checks, according to given standards, the work submitted by the subordinate staff.
- 16) Trains newly inducted members of the staff and the existing staff in new procedures as may be necessary.
- 17) Exercises day-to-day disciplinary control over the staff under his/her control.
- 18) Appraises the performance of staff working under his/her control.
- 19) Examines complaints from public/outside agencies/employees in respect of matters within his/her jurisdiction. Attends to enquiries by the visitors referred to him/her by higher officers.
- 20) Ensures compliance with security instructions and custody of records and any other equipment or materials.
- 21) Keeps confidential or secret documents in his personal custody
- 22) Ensures timely submission of reports and returns in respect of matters within his/her jurisdiction.
- 23) Supervises the upkeep of books of relevant rules, regulations, reference folders/guard files, mailing lists, etc.
- 24) Prepares standing notices on important topics and policy decisions,
- 25) Directs closing of files on which action has been completed and consigns of closed files for records
- 26) Attends to periodical review and weeding of recorded files and destruction of obsolete ones.
- 27) Visits institutions to make and inspect administrative or other arrangements in connection with various university matters.

C) Secondary duties

- 1) Maintains liaison with other officers, heads of departments/colleges on official matters.
- 2) Provides assistance to his/her colleagues where required.
- 3) Ensures general cleanliness of offices and common utilities and the safety of furniture, fixtures and equipment in his/her custody.
- 4) Attends to the welfare/problems of his/her subordinates staff.
- 5) Performs such other duties as may be assigned by higher officers from time to time.

D) Tools and equipment used

Normal office equipment

E) Work Procedure

Follows the work procedure as prescribed in the university manuals, rules and regulations.

F) Sources of supervision

Assistant Registrar/Deputy Registrar.

- **Skill**

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Postgraduate or equivalent degree. ii) Assistants and stenographers, who are graduates and have at least 15 years of service/experience. |
| b) Employment, training and experience | By promotion from amongst the Assistants on the basis of seniority-cum-merit including suitability and proven efficiency. |

- **Complexity of duties**

- i) Has to solve complicated problems requiring an analytical approach.
- ii) Has to initiate action on complex matters.
- iii) Has to interpret/apply rules and regulations.
- iv) Has to participate in higher level meetings
- v) Has to perform his/her duties in strenuous circumstances.

- **Contact with others**

- i) Counterparts and higher officers in the university.
- ii) Other institutions/agencies.
- iii) Candidates at various examinations.
- iv) Members of the public
- v) Staff association and affected employees.

- **Purpose of contacts**

- i) To obtain information and to clarify decisions.
- ii) To clarify points of view and resolve differences.
- iii) To listen to grievances and resolve them.

- **Degree of commitment**

To the extent authorised by the unit head

- **Effort**

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| a) Mental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ability to grasp, analyse and interpret facts/data. ii) Clarity of thought, skills in expression and drafting. iii) Tact in dealing with people. iv) Concentrated thinking. v) Ability to plan or handle multiple tasks simultaneously. |
|-----------|--|

b) Physical

- i) Has to be alert, energetic and diligent
- ii) Must possess stamina to bear strain and tension.
- iii) Should be physically fit to move about to make personal efforts and contacts and frequent visits to outstations to inspect administrative and other arrangements regarding various university matters.

• **Responsibility**

- a) For operations (work)
 - i) Ensures speedy disposal of cases falling within his/her powers and timely submission of cases requiring decisions at higher levels.
 - ii) Has to ensure completion of tasks under his/her charge according to time-schedule indicated by higher officers or laid.
 - iii) Ensures accuracy of work submitted by him/herself.
- b) For materials and equipment
 - Has to ensure proper utilisation of material and handling of equipment under his/her charge.
- c) For subordinate staff
 - Supervises and guides the subordinate staff.
- d) For confidential data
 - Deals with confidential secret data/documents.

• **Working conditions**

Usual office conditions. He/She is often required to work beyond normal working hours and sometimes on holidays.

Department	:	Registrar's Office
Job (Designation)	:	Assistant

A) Primary function

To take dictation and transcribe the same and perform other secretarial functions.

B) Main Duties

- 1) Takes dictation in shorthand and transcribes. Also types directly from Dictaphone/tape recorder.
- 2) Receives, opens and sorts out mail and submits it to the officers.
- 3) Maintains a dairy to note time, date and place of meetings and other engagements and keeps track of all these.

- 4) Fixes appointments for the officers (and cancels them if necessary). Reminds the officers of engagements and accompanies them, if required.
- 5) Ensures completion of the papers required by the officers for meetings/conferences to be attended by them. Also ensures booking of staff car.
- 6) Operates telephones (incoming and outgoing calls) and keeps records for verification of bills.
- 7) Attends routine enquiries in person, writing or over phone.
- 8) Types tour programmes, secret/confidential letters, policy matters, research papers, reports, background papers and other materials.
- 9) Keeps important and confidential records securely.
- 10) Destroys/weeds out by burning/shredding stenographic record of secret/confidential letters, after they are typed and issued.
- 11) Carries out corrections in the officers' reference books/records.
- 12) Assists officers in arranging seminars/training programmes and providing general assistance to participants/trainees.
- 13) Attends to other jobs as and when required.

C) Secondary duties

- 1) Attends routine correspondence on behalf of the officers
- 2) Maintain diary for recording movement of papers coming to or returned/submitted by the officers.
- 3) Types from printed books/journals and cuts stencils/makes photocopies.
- 4) Keeps track of progress of action and attends to such other functions as may be assigned by the officers.
- 5) Receives visitors/trainees/participants at the airport/railway stations/bus terminus, when required.

D) **Work Procedures:** Following normal procedure.

E) **Sources of supervision:** Officer(s) with whom, posted

G) Job characteristics

• Skills

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| a) Education | 10+2 |
| b) Experience and training | Speed in Shorthand (100 words per minute). |
| c) Complexity of duties | The job requires fluency in conversation, tact in dealing with visitors/trainees, operation of telephone, consulting various directories, etc. |

- d) Contact with others Visitors/trainees/other officers/ other offices/airport authorities, etc.
- i) Purpose
For performing in his/her duties generally.
- ii) Degree of commitment
Has to be courteous, tactful and punctual.

• **Efforts**

- a) Mental Alertness, smartness, concentration
- b) Physical Normal

• **Responsibility**

- a) For operations Prompt assistance to the officers.
- b) For equipment/material Safety against loss/damage.
- c) Confidential data Safe custody and prevention of leakage.

Instead of outlining the job description of other categories of staff including Assistant Registrars, Deputy Registrars and Joint Registrar who assist the Registrar in his/her functions, suffice it here to outline the job description of the Registrar, so as to complete the picture of one major office of a DE institution.

Department	:	Registrar's Office
Job designation	:	Registrar

A) Primary function

To exercise all statutory powers related to the property, non teaching staff, conduct of meetings and to represent in law suits and proceedings, etc. of the University.

B) Primary duties (Example from the IGNOU Act, 1985)

- 1) Acts as the custodian of records, the common seal and such other properties of the university as the Board of Management may commit to his charge;
- 2) Issues notices and convenes meetings of the Board of Management, the Academic Council, Planning Board and of the committees appointed by these authorities;
- 3) Keeps the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Management, the Academic Council and the Planning Board and of the Committees appointed by such authorities;
- 4) Conducts the official proceedings and correspondence of the Board of Management the Academic Council and the Planning Board;
- 5) Supplies to the Visitor a copy of the agenda of the meetings of the authorities of the university as soon as they are issued and the minutes of such meetings;
- 6) Represents the university in suits or proceedings, by or against the university, sign powers of attorney, verifies pleadings and deposes his representative for the purpose;

- 7) Performs such other functions as may be specified in the Statutes, ordinances or Regulations or as may be required from time to time by the Board of Management or the Vice-Chancellor.

C) Secondary duties

- 1) Takes disciplinary action against such of the employees, excluding teachers and other members as may be specified by the Board of Management by order;
- 2) Acts as Secretary or Member-Secretary of Board of Management, Academic Council, Planning Board, etc.;
- 3) Makes a report to the Vice-Chancellor on all the matters in respect of which any enquiry discloses a punishment beyond the powers of the Registrar along with this recommendation for such action as the Vice-Chancellor may deem fit.

D) Work Procedures

Follows the Act, students and regulations and rules of the university.

E) Sources of Supervision

Pro-Vice-Chancellors/Vice-Chancellor.

F) Job characteristics

• Skills

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Education | As prescribed by the Board of Management from time to time. |
| b) Employment
(Training experience) | Direct recruitment (As stated in the relevant University documents). |

• Responsibility

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| a) For operations (work) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Keeps the records, seal and all other properties of the university in safe custody. ii) Takes all necessary action to convene meetings of authorities, to conduct official proceedings and to keep their minutes. iii) Performs a wide variety of functions for effective administration of the personnel, material and finances. |
| b) For materials and Equipment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Ensures safe custody |
| c) Confidential matters | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Exercises utmost care in dealing with them, ensures their safe custody and prevention of leakage. |

• Complexity of duties

- i) Adeptness in organizing high level meetings, in dealing with personnel, material and funds/finances from diverse sources.

- ii) Require ability to manage any unforeseen event and to diffuse any crisis situation in the organisation.
- **Contact with others**
 - i) Directors of Schools, Divisions or Centres, Pro-Vice Chancellors and the Vice-Chancellor.
 - ii) Members of different authorities of the university.
 - iii) Leaders of staff associations.
 - iv) Department of Education in the Ministry concerned.
 - v) Other institutions/agencies and the public.
- **Purpose of Contact**
 - i) To protect and promote the interests of the university and the staff as well.
 - ii) To manage all the affairs of the university.
- **Effort**
 - a) Mental
 - i) Ability to manage people, materials and money.
 - ii) Clear understanding of the university Act, Statutes, Regulations, Rules, etc.
 - iii) Ability to manage the affairs with concentration and skill, despite mental strain and tension at all times.
 - b) Physical
 - i) Has to be alert energetic and diligent.
 - ii) Must possess stamina to bear strain and stress.
 - iii) Must be able to move and visit any place and person in and outside the university.

From the above job descriptions of an Assistant, Superintendent, Personal Assistant and the Registrar, you may observe that different categories of non-teaching staff perform different functions, may discharge diverse duties by following specified procedure under given conditions. You will also notice that different categories of job require different skills, capabilities and efforts which together make a person fit for those responsibilities.

The above job descriptions pertain to certain categories of non-teaching staff working in one particular office i.e., the Registrar's office. Here we must remember two things i) The job descriptions are not universal in character. Depending upon the nature, size and complexity of the office vis-à-vis the organisation the job descriptions would be different for the same categories of staff in another office at the same organisation. ii) The job descriptions are

given keeping in view just one university and hence they cannot even be treated as comprehensive nor applicable to all organisations. It is all intended to give you an idea of the job descriptions of non-teaching staff that work in a particular office. It would help you imagine the job descriptions for any job in different office in difficult situations. iii) Certain functions, duties and responsibilities assigned to one category of staff in different institution in one institution may be assigned to another category of staff in a different institution. For instance, a task assigned to a Registrar in a conventional university may be assigned a Deputy or Joint Registrar in an open university of vice-versa. The point that is being made is that the variations in job descriptions are possible depending upon, nature, size, stage, and complexity of the institution and there is nothing wrong in such variations.

3.4 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

So far we have discussed the different roles and functions of support/non-teaching staff, their job descriptions, the need to train them and the need for changing their attitudes. It is clear, that the training and staff development activities should be congruent with the functions, duties, responsibilities and overall job characteristics of different kinds of support staff. Development of one particular course or training programme for all the staff categories is, therefore, not advisable. It becomes essential to identify different kinds of staff development activities that save time, energy and the expenditure involved. It is essential because, certain staff development activities are appropriate to only some specific categories of staff. Also, equal suitability of a particular kind of activity to the staff members with different abilities within the same category is also doubtful. The point is that the multiplicity of staff development activities, irrespective of certain training courses being made available for certain categories of staff, is fundamental to effective training of staff (see block 5).

3.4.1 Types of Activities

Sibbald (1998) lists out different types of staff development activities, other than courses, that might assist this process (staff development).

- coaching by a senior colleague;
- secondments;
- temporary membership of a task force or working party;
- custom designed projects;
- job rotation or shadowing;
- standing in;
- in-house informal seminars/workshops/discussion groups;
- tutoring by peers;
- tutoring of peers;
- visits;
- sitting in as observers on committees and *ad-hoc* meetings;
- committee work inside and outside the university;
- training junior staff;
- self-paced open learning and distance learning;

- representing the department/faculty/university in the wider community;
- giving formal or informal presentations;
- organizing formal events;
- guided reading;
- learning resources (libraries, media services, etc.);
- learning contracts or portfolio approaches.

The above list, however, is suggestive only and not exhaustive.

Activity 2

Write your comments on the type of activities identified by Sibbald for staff development.

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As a trainer of trainers the significance lies in grouping the support staff on the basis of the nature, quality and extent of development required by them for making them efficient and proficient in their jobs. Once this is done, the kind of staff development activity/(ies) which is/(are) appropriate to each of the groups is/are to be selected. Some times staff of different categories may fall into a particular group.

For instance, the staff who are all computer illiterate can be put in one group, in case the number of employees in each category is one or two. Obviously, they can be engaged in the common activity of imparting computer literacy to them in a single group. What is important is to identify what the common activity can be? Then the activity can be effected through tutoring by peers through formal training or through any other strategy. This process is equally valid for each of the groups. This is so because no one activity will be equally appropriate/suitable and effective for all the categories of staff or the groups formed on the basis of their training or staff development needs.

Training of higher level/categories of non-teaching staff requires complete, comprehensive and integrated management information system (MIS). Let us discuss below the role of MIS in Training.

3.4.2 Role of Management Information System (MIS) in Training

Information is a critical resource in the process of management. The success of any enterprise largely depends on whether or not its decision-making process is based on a comprehensive and integrated information system. Management information system (MIS) entails collecting, processing, recording and utilising information for organisational needs by means of a network of communication channels which can extend into every corner of an institution and may involve many external relationships as well. It is therefore, necessary for an institution to develop and maintain a well

designed system of information flow which covers all the activities performed at various levels.

The need for designing an integrated and comprehensive system of information flow which encompasses all the activities of an institution is becoming an imperative due to the emergence of a number of factors, such as:

- i) the growing size and complexity of the activities normally performed by a modern institution like an open university;
- ii) the increasing cost of errors in decision-making.
- iii) the development of modern electronic data processing technology, etc.,

The above factors have created conditions in which managements find that there is either insufficiency or abundance of information, which make decision-making process either too dilatory or too cumbersome.

Some of the major deficiencies one can notice in the information systems of large organisations may be as follows:

- i) delay and/or irregularity in information input or flow
- ii) inadequacy or inaccuracy of information
- iii) lack of updated information
- iv) disparity and conflict in information obtained from different sources.
- v) lack of uniformity in standards or scale of information across units/divisions etc.
- vi) excessive details of facts and figures.

One of the major reasons for deficiencies is the ad hoc basis on which we collect and store data. This quick-fix arrangement is to meet a particular situation at a particular time. But an integrated system of information, if developed, can effectively meet the changing needs of an organisation.

An essential prerequisite to the design and effective control of a management information system is a clear appreciation of its value to the planning and control functions of officers at the various levels of an organisation. For this purpose, it may be useful to classify information into the following three broad categories:

- a) **Vital:** Information without which the activities of the top management cannot progress.
- b) **Essential:** Information which is considered to be necessary and must be regular, systematic and efficient for the performance of the various activities of senior officials.
- c) **Desirable:** This includes items of information which supplement the vital and essential items of the information for meeting the demand of ad hoc decisions required to be taken from time to time. In the absence of such information, senior officials cannot continue to discharge their prescribed roles with an acceptable degree of efficiency.

Another way of looking at the value of information is from the view point of its availability, i.e., most easy to obtain, available with some effort, and most difficult to obtain. You should therefore try to make the top level non-teaching staff appreciate the role and value of MIS.

i) **Developing an MIS**

Before we go for developing an MIS, it is necessary that we obtain a clear understanding of the objectives of our organisation and the plan of action which may have been formulated to achieve those objectives. This will involve a thorough analysis of the various planning and control functions which have to be performed, and their inter-relationships. While doing so, it may be necessary to find answers to the following questions from the various decision-making levels with regard to the inflow of information in consultation with suppliers – internal/external.

- i) WHAT information does a worker/official need for performing his/her designated tasks?
- ii) WHEN does he/she require and/or get it?
- iii) HOW shall he/she get it?
- iv) FROM WHERE should he/she get it?
- v) WHO should be responsible for furnishing it?

Similarly, a further set of questions would need to be answered with regard to the outflow of information, in consultation with the clients/consumers. Some of these can be:

- i) WHAT information should a worker/official give?
- ii) TO WHOM should he/she give it?
- iii) HOW shall he/she give it?
- iv) WHEN should he/she give it?
- v) WHERE should he/she do so?

We can record the answers to the above questions in the form of tables depicting the existing and proposed information flows. Of course, we should admit that analysing the inputs and outputs of information is a difficult task. Whatever the case, to develop an effective MIS we need the following components:

Input: This can be in the form of the data generated within an organisation during the course of performing its prescribed functions as well as the data collected from outside sources such as competing organisations or by a study of the general political, social and economic environment. The aim should be to collect the right amount of data from the right source at the right time. Where certain types of data are regularly required for periodic planning and control activities, it may be desirable to prescribe specific reports for the purpose. Again, wherever possible, the data should be quantifiable and capable of being converted into both physical and monetary terms. For quick processing, analysis and utilisation, it may be useful to obtain data in a manner which facilitates preparation of statistical tables, charts, diagrams and graphs and storing with the help of modern mechanical/electronic data processing devices, wherever possible. This would entail considerable effort in the design of forms for the submission of the required reports. So far as the external data are concerned, the organisation may have to supplement its own periodic internal operational reports by research involving study of relevant papers, periodicals, journals, books etc.

Processing of data: This will involve converting the collected data into information with a view to analyse trends and variations and anticipating

results. Some of the major considerations that we should keep in view while processing any data are:

- it should follow an integrated system approach covering as large a part of the institution as it is economically possible;
- it should be related to the information at various levels of the organisation and should be provided both for vertical and horizontal communication;
- it should be predictable and exception-oriented;
- it should provide information within prescribed tolerances of accuracy, timeliness, consistency, adequacy and flexibility.

We can process/analyse data through manual, mechanical or electronic devices. While selecting a particular method, it is important to remember that the chosen method should not only be economical but also speedy and accurate enough to cope with the amount of refined information requirement.

Storage: The major consideration, while designing a data storage, should be speed and accuracy with which data can be retrieved. This would involve classification, sorting, summarising, coding and storing large volumes of data either through manually operated filing system (both files and cards) as well as electronically operated devices like tapes, discs, etc. To make the storage system economical and effective, it will be necessary to coordinate the activities of

- the ORIGINATOR of the data;
- the INDEXER who determines the data to be classified, sorted, coded and stored;
- the SEARCHER who would need to locate the data of a particular nature for a specific action/purpose.

This effort at coordination can prove to be highly profitable as it can help in reducing the incidence of omissions or overlapping in data storage and retrieval.

Output: Only such information should be reproduced and transmitted which is of direct concern to and the responsibility of the recipient. To illustrate, the operational levels of management will need detailed day-to-day information while the senior levels will require summaries of information relating to key result areas. The form in which the output is to be given will depend on a variety of factors:

- the frequency with which information is required to be submitted;
- the level of understanding of the recipient;
- the nature of equipment available;
- the urgency of the need;
- the 'value' of the decision.

Feedback/Feedforward: All types of systems control themselves by information feedback which indicates shortfalls in achieving the goals and initiates corrective action. In other words, a system uses some of its energy to feed back information that compares performance with a standard.

One of the difficulties with gathering feedback for purposes of control lies in the fact that it provides historical data which may be more in the form of a *post mortem* rather than a projection. Intelligent and alert management today is therefore, seeking feedforward control systems instead of depending upon accounting and statistical data regarding post-information. Development of feedforward systems for projections is a difficult task. However, one of the techniques of future driven control is the technique of network planning which can help any management to take anticipatory corrective action in the critical areas of an activity.

ii) Organisation of MIS

The responsibility for determining information requirements is primarily of those who are to use it. Management information needs are intimately interwoven with the requirements of the management process. Unless the top management is willing to spend time and effort required in guiding the development of an effective MIS, there will not be any hope for improvement in the management's decision-making process.

As an institution grows in terms of size and complexity of its activities, it usually requires enhanced services of professional specialists who will not only have a good grasp of the functional information in the organisation but also an understanding of the sophisticated information technologies supported by modern electronic data processing (EDP) devices. Even where an organisation decides against expensive EDP based information systems, it will often find it worthwhile to employ an information specialist to coordinate information systems which are economical, efficient, and effective. The information specialist will be continuously engaged in reviewing the existing information flow to detect symptoms of over-abundance or deficiency and advise suitable corrective action. He/she will have to be on the look out for changes in the internal and external environment in which the organisation operates to adjust the system with a view to providing for new information subsystems – within the overall system to deal with new problems and new sources of information.

It is therefore, necessary to ensure that the workforce has a major say in the development of information systems while the technical interests of the specialist will have a supportive role. In actual practice, it will be necessary to create the right organisational climate in which system specialists and workforce can cooperate fully and freely in developing the information system.

Having talked about the development and organisation of management information system, we need to be aware of some of the reasons for its 'failure' as well. They may be due to:

- lack of a sound and comprehensive system of planning and control within the institution.
- lack of top-management's participation in the development of MIS.
- inappropriate organisational arrangements for the development of MIS leading to open or covert hostility of workforce.
- overemphasis on hardware rather than on a paper design of the information system.
- failure to appreciate the true potential capability of electronic data processing system.

- overemphasis on development of information systems for the control of organizational activities rather than the design of information systems for the purpose of planning.
- lack of selectivity in MIS objectives (often resulting in a frontal attack on all aspects of the work of the organisation rather than concentrating on a few critical areas at a time).

The functionaries who constitute the top management must be appropriately oriented to the development and the use of MIS whenever necessary. Of course, this is the biggest challenge before any trainer.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

The focus of this unit is on training non-teaching staff. Usually, distance education systems give importance to training faculty members, and the role of non-teaching staff in making the systems, function efficiently and effectively is taken for granted. This unit points to the significant role played by the support staff and how they can be trained so as to ensure effective system-functioning. By identifying various areas of operation, the unit outlines the role the support staff has to play for the smooth functioning of distance education systems. The unit highlights the importance of MIS, its various components and uses, and the need to orient the top management to it. The obvious implication is that any comprehensive training programme of the non-teaching staff should include appropriate training components which would orient and enable to top management as well as the lower cadres to discharge their duties efficiently and intelligently.

UNIT 4 EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Definition of Evaluation
- 4.3 Reasons for Evaluation
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4.0 INTRODUCTION

Evaluation of training programmes must become an integral part of training policies and practices. Like the general evaluation of education programmes, evaluation of training programmes too has to follow principles and procedures relevant to its purpose. Evaluation results can impact on everyone involved in training. It is, therefore, essential that it be planned and carried out appropriately and without bias. The more it is separated from the training process, the more it can become an irrelevant, a distracting, suspected, even resented intrusion. Hence, we recommend that we should be actively involved in designing a training evaluation system to be used. It should be in harmony with what we are trying to do and how we plan to do it. Our optional contribution would be in assuring that the goals and methods of instruction are covered and are in consonance with the evaluation process. Of course, the means for measuring the variables identified and analysing the data gathered can be a demanding process. There is a distinction between an evaluation that is done as thoroughly as *possible* and one that is done as thoroughly as *practical*. The former approach views as uppermost the internal consistency of the evaluation (Does it validly assess achievement of all training objectives?). The latter seeks to find out what those using the evaluation want to know by the easiest, least costly, least intrusive measures.

The term 'evaluation' commonly implies a judgement of effective versus ineffective. The connotation constricts its value. Instead, it is better viewed as a process of providing *information* to those involved in training regarding questions they genuinely want answered. In a training context, it is difficult to know what exactly is going on within participants-what works and what does not, how the trainer is being perceived, what difference the experience actually is making. Evaluation data can obviously satisfy the trainer's curiosity, sponsors of training programmes will also be anxious. They are likely to wonder whether they made wise decisions in setting up the programme, whether they sent the right people for training, if it requires follow-up, etc. They too, need evaluation data. Further, trainees themselves are curious about their own growth, about how their newly learned

behaviours would be viewed by peers and about their impact on the organisation's output. Evaluation data can yield this information, as well.

Evaluation, therefore, simply is a feedback mechanism. When done well, we can use it as a mirror through which all involved in the training process can see meaningful reflections of themselves. They can use that cybernetic information to give themselves a pat on the back, or it can be used to guide adjustments in their *modus operandi*, making them more likely to achieve desired results. Keeping all this in view, we have designed this unit to discuss various issues involved in the evaluation of a training programme. We have begun it with definition of evaluation, reasons for evaluation, then presented an overview of the important frameworks for evaluation of training programmes as proposed by various authors. We have also discussed the changes effected by a training programme at knowledge, skills and attitudinal levels of the participants.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- define evaluation;
- discuss the reasons for evaluation;
- describe various approaches to evaluation of training programme;
- explain the changes effected by a training programme at knowledge, skill and attitudinal levels of the participants; and
- discuss the benefits of training.

4.2 DEFINITION OF EVALUATION

During the last three decades there have been tremendous theoretical and methodological developments within the field of evaluation (Hurteau, Houle, & Mongiat, 2009). Evaluation has been defined in various ways. One of the most popular definitions by Thorpe (1988) states: *evaluation is the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education and training, as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have.*

According to Stufflebeam (cited in, Reeve & Peerbhoy, 2007, p.122) *evaluation is a study designed to assist some audience to assess an object's merit and worth.* Reeve and Peerbhoy (2007, p. 122) stated that evaluation "is a contested term", as 'evaluators' use the term to describe as assessment, or investigation of a programme, whilst others simply understand evaluation as being synonymous with applied research.

While analyzing definitions of evaluation Marsden (1991) stated that any definition of evaluation in the context of training and development should include a number of elements: what it is, what it involves and what it leads to. Evaluation is an analytical process. It involves the collection of subjective and objective data from a number of sources using a variety of strategies or techniques about training programme and the reduction of such data. Evaluation leads to the synthesis of the data into a report containing a summary of results and recommendations, with valid rationales about the training programme. Marsden also stated that a well written report presents arguments clearly and concisely so that decision makers have the evidence

before them for consideration of the trainers' recommendations. A written report provides a permanent record of the evaluation outcomes and the reasons for modification to a programme.

4.3 REASONS FOR EVALUATION

There are various reasons to conduct evaluation, such as,

- To determine the effectiveness of programme for participants;
- To report that programme objectives have been met;
- To provide information about service delivery that will be useful to programme staff and others;
- To enable programme staff to make changes that improve programme effectiveness.

Evaluation helps to foster accountability, determine whether programmes "make a difference", and give staff the information they need to improve service delivery (Muraskin, 1998).

Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, (2006) identified three specific reasons for evaluation of the training programmes.

- i) To justify the existence and budget of the training department by showing how it contributes to the organization's objectives and goals.
- ii) To decide whether to continue or discontinue training programmes.
- iii) To gain information on how to improve future training programmes.

As compared to other functions of human resources training is considered to be the least important function by some of the organizations. In this sense training becomes optional, and its effectiveness to the organization depends on how the top executives' view training as a function of human resources. As a trainer in any organization you should earn trust and respect of the top management if you want to make it an important department that the organization will ever want to retain. In other words, you must justify the existence of your department.

The second reason for evaluating is to determine whether you should continue with the same training programme that you have been offering or you want to change it or you want to discontinue it. The contents and materials of some programmes may become obsolete. Some programmes, as those related with computers are constantly subject to change. Some programmes are offered on a pilot basis or some programmes are dry runs to see whether they can bring the results desired. These programmes should be evaluated to determine whether they should be continued. You have to take the cost benefit analysis of such programmes. If the cost incurred is more than the benefits generated, then the programme should be discontinued or modified.

To determine the effectiveness of a programme and ways in which it can be improved is the most common reason for evaluation. Usually, the decision to continue and discontinue is already been made, but to improve the training programme you need to be attentive. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006) have given eight factors in question forms that are required to improve training programs:

- 1) To what extent does the subject content meet the needs of those attending?

- 2) Is the leader the one best qualified to teach?
- 3) Does the leader use the most effective methods for maintaining interest and teaching the desired attitudes, knowledge, and skills?
- 4) Are the facilities satisfactory?
- 5) Is the schedule appropriate for the participants?
- 6) Are the aids effective in improving communication and maintaining interest?
- 7) Was the coordination of the program satisfactory?
- 8) What else can be done to improve the program?

Check Your Progress 1

Answer the following questions in your own words. The questions are based on the previous sections. No answer has been provided at the end of the unit.

- i) Define evaluation.

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- ii) Point out three reasons of evaluation.

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4.4 APPROACHES TO EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Evaluation of training is a very complex process. When you think about evaluation many questions may come to your mind. What we should evaluate? Shall we evaluate content of training programme, strategies used, trainer's skills, technology used, attitudes of the trainees, time duration, cost, or other components of the training programme? According to this definition, we should gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of the training programme and other outcomes like change in knowledge, skills, attitude level of the trainee, increase in quality and quantity of production, and other benefits of the organisation.

Nickols (2010) stated that to evaluate training is to determine its value. However, value is relative. What is of great value to Mr 'X' is of little or no value to another. So, while evaluating training, you should know your target groups- the persons for whom the determination of value is to be made.

Nickols (2002) commented that there is no “cookbook” approach to the evaluation of training. If you want to evaluate your training properly, you should think about the purposes of the training, the purposes of evaluation, the audience for the results of the evaluation, the spans of points of which measurements will be taken, time span, and the overall framework to be utilized.

Eseryel (2002) noted that commonly used approaches to educational evaluation are typified by the instructional system development methodologies, which emerged in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s and are later represented in the works of Gagne and Briggs (1974), Goldstein (1993), and Mager (1962) and others. Evaluation is the final stage in a systematic approach, however, instructional system development models incorporate evaluation throughout the process (Tennyson, 1999).

Various approaches to educational evaluation have been reported (Bramley, 1991; Worthen & Sanders, 1987). Some approaches are the followings:

- Goal-based evaluation
- Goal-free evaluation
- Responsive evaluation
- Systems evaluation
- Professional review
- Quasi-legal (Eseryel, 2002).

Various frameworks for evaluation of training programmes have been proposed by the authors under the influence of goal-based and systems-based approaches. One of the best known model of evaluation is Kirkpatrick's model (1959, 2006) that follows the goal-based evaluation approach and is based on simple questions that translate into four levels of evaluation: reaction, learning, behaviour, and results. Under systems approach the most well known models are: Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) model (Worthen & Sanders, 1987); Training Validation System (TVS) approach (Fitz-Enz, 1994); and Input, Process, Output, Outcome (IPO) model (Bushnell, 1990; cited in Eseryel, 2002).

4.4.1 Goal-based Approach

Kirkpatrick's Framework

Let us briefly discuss the four levels of evaluation stated by Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006).

Reaction

Evaluation of this level measures how those who participate in the programme react to it. Kirkpatrick calls it a measure of customer satisfaction. Organizations incur huge costs to send their staff for training. It is obvious that the reaction of participants was a measure of customer satisfaction; here the customers are the trainees who have been sent to take the trainings.

Reaction to in-house programmes is also a measure of customer satisfaction. Many in-house programs are mandatory for the employees i.e. participants are required to attend. Even their reaction is important as it can also help managers and trainers in deciding future training programme. So, positive reactions are just as important for trainers who run in-house programmes as they are for those who offer training programmes outside organizations.

Learning

The extent to which participants change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or enhance skill as a result of attending the program is learning.

These are the three things that a training programme can accomplish. The specific objectives must be determined to evaluate training programmes. Skills can be improved by technical programmes. Training topics like leadership, motivation, and communication can aim at all three objectives.

Behaviour

Evaluation at this level measures the extent to which change in behaviour (job performance) has occurred because the participant attended the training programme. This is most important to assess whether the training objectives have been achieved.

In order for change to occur, four conditions are necessary:

- The person must have a desire to change.
- The person must know what to do and how to do.
- The person must work in the right climate.
- The person must be rewarded for changing.

Results

Results can be defined as the final results that occurred because the participants have attended the training programme. Increased production, improved quality, decreased costs, increased sales, etc. are all the results of training programmes. The final objectives of the training programme need to be stated in these terms.

This is the most difficult form of training evaluation. It is complex, time consuming and expensive. Many a cases (both educational and other organisations) the trainers or the organisers do not use the entire model. The training comes to an end by evaluating only at the reaction level and some cases the learning level.

Return-on-Investment

Return-on-investment (ROI) is the ultimate level of evaluation (Phillips, 1998).

This is a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment. To calculate ROI, the benefit or return of an investment is divided by the cost of the investment. The result is expressed as a percentage or a ratio. The ROI formula is:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{(\text{Gain from investment} - \text{Cost of investment})}{\text{Cost of Investment}}$$

4.4.2 Systems Approach

The CIPP model

In the 1960's Daniel L. Stufflebeam recognized the shortcomings of evaluation methods available in the literature and developed the Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) model. The CIPP model is a comprehensive framework for guiding formative and summative

evaluations of programmes, projects, personnel, products, institutions and systems (Stufflebeam, 1968). Stufflebeam (1999) claimed that the model has been used by many around the world in short-term and long-term investigations.

The CIPP framework aims to provide an analytic and rational basis from programmed decision making, based on a cycle of planning, structuring, implementing and revising decisions examined through a different aspect of evaluation such as context, input, process and product. Context evaluation provides information for the development of and evaluation of mission, vision, values, goals and objectives, and priorities. It defines the characteristics of the environment, determines the goals and specific objectives, identifies and diagnoses the problems or barriers which might inhibit achieving the goals and objectives. Input evaluation provides information for the development of programmes, designs through evaluation of data bases, internal and external stakeholders' interests. It designs a training programme to meet the objectives, determines the resources needed to deliver the programme, determines whether staff and available resources are adequate to implement the programme.

Process evaluation develops ongoing evaluation of the implementation of major strategies through various tactical programmes to accept, refine or modify the programme design. It provides decision makers with information necessary to determine if the programme needs to be accepted, amended or terminated. Product evaluation identify and assess outcomes, short-term and long-term to help staff keep an enterprise focused on achieving important outcomes and ultimately to help the broader group of users gauge the effort's success in meeting target needs (Stufflebeam, 1999).

IPO model

The Input, Process, Output (IPO) model given by Bushnell (1990) is a comprehensive view on evaluation. The first stage indicates the evaluation of system performance indicators such as trainee qualifications, availability of materials, appropriateness of training, and so on. Process embraces planning, design, development and delivery of training programmes. Output indicates gathering data resulting from the training interventions, whereas, the last stage outcomes indicates longer-term results associated with improvement in the corporation's bottom line- its profitability, competitiveness, etc.

An integrated evaluation model

Brinkerhoff (1988, p 67) provides six stages of HRD programme development and operation. These stages are:

- To determine that an identified problem represents a training need and to determine what the real goals are.
- To determine the most appropriate training strategy.
- To determine if the chosen strategy is successfully implemented.
- To determine if learning occurred and to what extent.
- To determine usage outcomes (at individual level).
- To determine impacts and worth (at organizational level).

This model is integrated to include instructional activities in the planning, design and implementation stages of the instructional process.

Check Your Progress 2

Answer the following question within 80 words. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

Fill in the blanks:

- i) CIPP stands for
- ii) IPO stands for
- iii) The four levels of evaluation as proposed by Kirkpatrick are:
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Instructional System Development Model

This training model was developed to answer the training problems. This is popular in various organisation because it is concerned with the training need on the job performance. Training objectives are very clear, narrow and specific. Objectives are formulated on the basis of job responsibilities. Individual performance is measured on the basis of the defined objectives. This model comprised of five stages:

- i) Analysis of training needs: Organisational, job and individual need analysis are made at this stage.
- ii) Planning: In this stage objectives are set, materials (contents) and media are selected, methods of evaluation are identified.
- iii) Development: Materials are developed. These include handbooks, handouts, workbooks, visual aids, models for demonstrations, and so on.
- iv) Execution: Logistics are arranged. These include equipments, hall arrangements, food, travel, training accessories, etc. and the training takes place.
- v) Evaluation: To ensure that the training has achieved all objectives. Strengths and weakness, if any, are identified for improvement in the future.

Training Evaluation Quintet

The Training Evaluation Quintet advocated by Rae (2002) consists of senior management, the trainer, line management, the trainer manager and the trainee. Each member of the Quintet has roles and responsibilities (see Rae, 2002).

However, if there is no Quintet support a full evaluation process may be followed which is summarized below (source: Lesli Rae content main workplace learning evaluation content and tools 2004-10; Alan Chapman edit and contextual materials 2004-10; online).

- Training needs identification and setting of objectives by the organisation;
- Planning, design and preparation of the training programmes against the objectives;
- Pre-course identification of people with needs and completion of the preparation required by the training programme;
- Provision of the agreed training programmes;
- Pre-course briefing meeting between the learner and the line manager;
- Pre-course or start of programme identification of learners' existing knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- Interim validation as programme proceeds;
- Assessment of terminal knowledge, skills etc., and completion of perceptions/change assessment;
- Completion of end-of-programme reactionnaire;
- Completion of end-of-programme learning questionnaire or key objectives learning questionnaire;
- Completion of action plan;
- Post-course debriefing meeting between learner and line manager;
- Line manager observation of implementation progress;
- Review meetings to discuss progress or implementation;
- Final implementation review meeting; and
- Assessment of Return-on-Investment.

4.5 THE CONTEXT OF A PROGRAMME

The context of a programme or an event refers, naturally, to the circumstances outside and beyond the programme itself. Evaluation of this context might include investigation into why the programme is being funded/run and what different aims and objectives of various stakeholders might be in this process. Depending on the overall purpose of evaluation, any data gathered from various stakeholders about aims and objectives might be used to confront other stakeholders with different perceptions and values as a way of checking that the programme really is representative of different views about its purpose. Data gathered about the context may also include a consideration of why the evaluation itself is being done since, particularly when extra funding and resources are involved, it is often even more political than the establishment of training and development itself.

Leaving aside political considerations for the time being, there are two basic orientations to identifying training and developmental needs for the work force. The first is concerned with the *maintenance* of the present functioning of the organisation and may sometimes have a remedial flavor to it. In practice this may be done by collating developmental recommendations from the workforce after performance appraisals have taken place, or by the 'template' method of identifying the ideal skills for the workforce in the current organisation and hence designing training programmes to close the

gap between this ideal state and the actual abilities and skills of personnel as presently identified. Another approach is to concentrate on the nature of work performed by each one of them and to ask them individually about those aspects of their work that they find more or less difficult.

Yet another way of considering the context of training and development is to evaluate *organisational cultures*, both as experienced and as desired. Cultures may also be examined in more everyday terms. A result that frequently crops up is that major decisions are heavily influenced by technical considerations and by professional groupings within an organisation. For example, in modern industrial organisations there are increasing pressures to emphasise commercial and business considerations in making decisions (thus affecting the wider culture of the organisation itself) and in many public service organisations, there is an increasing emphasis placed upon *managerial* considerations.

Since training aims at effecting changes at the levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, evaluation of a training programme also should appropriately be designed to measure the impact of training at these levels.

Knowledge levels:

- i) the basic level is that of isolated pieces of information, i.e., ability to recall simple lists or state simple rules, knowing a range of simple facts about the job area.
- ii) a higher level is to be able to arrange a good many of the pieces of information into procedures, how to do things, how to order sets of actions, etc.
- iii) higher still is the knowledge with which to analyse any particular situation for its key elements and thus to make a decision about whether procedure 'S' is more likely to be successful than, for example, procedure 'M'. This is essentially the skill, i.e., informed judgement, to be able to select the most appropriate procedures or method of doing something, given the nature of the problem, the organisational context, etc.

The implications of these levels for training could be

- analysing what is required at each of the three levels for satisfactory job performance,
- discovering what the trainees know at each level before they attend the training,
- trying to plug the gap, if any, and
- communicating to the institution, to what extent they are below satisfactory job performance levels at the end of training.

Level of skills

- the basic level is to be able to *communicate*; and for this it is necessary to be able to label items, to identify parts, to name the main components of distance education, etc.
- the second level involves the *ability to perform simple procedures*, often with the use of instructions or notes,

- the third level involves *performing physically skilled actions*. These usually involve hand-eye co-ordination and learning them requires considerable practice. This takes one to a still higher level that involves judging whether a piece of skilled work is of acceptable quality, etc.

Attitude change

The process of attitude training has the following four main strategies:

- i) *identifying desirable attitudes* which are expected to lead to some improvement, usually the culture or climate, in some parts of the organisation. The attitudes are usually of a fairly general nature like positive management; openness and trust in the workplace; being less prescriptive and more likely to delegate responsibility.
- ii) *assessing where the* participants are with respect to the desired attitude. This is usually done by self-analysis, often with an inventory. The participants' perceptions of their 'normal' work behaviour are classified and shown to have some categories which differ from the ideal.
- iii) *convincing the participants of the value of the desired* attitudes by supplying examples, models or counselling. This is reinforced by allowing them to experience some success in experimental learning, perhaps by role plays.
- iv) *ensuring the acceptance on the part of participants* of the new attitude. This they will display in their behaviour when they return to work.

Evaluating trainee learning

Training is intended to make the participants more competent than they were at entry. Therefore, *assessment of their competence* in the target areas of training is an important step in evaluation. What is to be measured at this point depends upon the *learning objectives* of the programme. We can specify these by identifying:

- the facts/concepts (principles, theories) they need to know
- the techniques (skills, methods, procedures) to be adopted
- the process involved in finding out where, when, how, for whom to apply the knowledge learned.
- the attitude or value that underlie participant-acceptance or enthusiasm for the training context.

Factual Knowledge

Items on the measuring instrument are likely to differ depending on the nature of the learning objectives. The most basic form of learning, *factual knowledge*, can be measured by *short-answer questions* which require the respondent to fill in missing information and ones that call for *recognition* of information (these are assessed by true/false or multiple-choice questions). The choice among these types of questions depends upon how those facts are to be used on the job (that is, must the learner memorise them or can they be looked up whenever they are needed?).

Conceptual knowledge

We can test *conceptual knowledge* by *short essay questions*, each of these call for the learner to relate to an aspect of what has to be learned and can be expressed in three to five lines. This permits a test to cover a fair number of points and enables pinpointing where gaps in knowledge exist.

The ability to carry out the techniques or procedures taught need to be assessed in as active and pragmatic a way as possible. (Sometimes, a performance test is obvious and simple to devise).

As learning goals become more complex, developing useful evaluation methods is increasingly difficult, for example, as we seek to assess whether trainees can *apply processes appropriately*, such as problem-solving skills, that must be integrated in the ongoing counselling session or at an intense crisis point on the job. *One cannot measure validly learning goals that require judgement, timing, tact, patience, and so on*, on a written test taken under conditions that are insulated from the pressures of interaction with others. Sometimes, more active evaluation experiences can be incorporated within the context of a training session. These could include simulations or role-playing episodes. This critical ingredient that expands these activities beyond being just practice and try-it-out sessions is the *use of systematic feedback*, that is, means for recording and comparing trainee behaviour in relation to the learning objectives for the programme. After each experimental evaluation exercise trainees can assess their own behaviour: *peers can observe and comment* upon what they see or the trainer can note what is being done and identify instances of component functioning and approaches that could be improved.

Attitudes

The final domain requiring evaluation is the trainee's *attitudes* or values about the training content. It usually is not enough for them simply to know the ideas a programme is intended to teach them; they also must *believe* that those ideas are worthwhile and be predisposed, or even enthusiastic, about putting those ideas into practice. The simplest way to evaluate the attitudes with which learners emerge from a workshop is to include, in whatever measurement instrument is used, items that call for this information.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Compare your answer with the one provided at the end of the unit.

Give at least one example each of changes effected by a training programme at the knowledge, skills and attitudinal levels of academics joining a distance teaching institution.

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4.6 BENEFITS OF TRAINING

Even if evaluation data indicate that trainees have fulfilled the programme's learning objectives, one cannot be assured that they actually will transfer or apply those new competencies in their work roles.

There are several ways to overcome these problems and obtain valid, comprehensive information about how trainees are performing.

One way to get a reading on trainees' on-the-job behaviour and simultaneously to learn about the environment, in which they work, is to ask people whom they contact to report their observations and opinions of the trainees' behaviour.

Most training programmes are directly or indirectly financed by the organizations that employ the people who participate in them. A fundamental issue in evaluation, therefore, is assessing the degree to which the functioning of the sponsoring organisation has been affected by that training. When we shift from looking at the behaviour of specific individuals to looking for evidence that quantifies their impact on the organisation in which they work, we face an increasingly demanding challenge.

The most important step is identifying indices that reveal how effectively an organisation is operating.

The impact of training on a sponsoring organisation differs depending on the purposes which the organisation is intended to fulfil.

The process of training itself can have effects that extend well beyond the learning objectives consciously intended for it, these include its impact on the trainees, the trainer, sponsoring organisation and even people not directly associated with the training programme at all.

Trainees can gain increased satisfaction, stimulation and pride, in the work that they do. The experience of learning new ideas and methods can be an inherently gratifying event, which enhances one's morale and keeps a job feeling fresh and invigorating. In an era in which worker alienation is increasing, training experiences offer a countervailing force. They can give an employee a sense of being recognised, affirmed, and supported. Often, new learning that is useful on the job also has relevance in situations elsewhere.

Trainees can benefit from their own training experiences, as well. Learning events in which all parties feel stimulated, surprised and/or personally expanded generally are the most successful. The process of professional growth can continue at every training event if trainers consciously seek input from the people they face. This process is more likely to provide honest and thorough information, if a systematic approach is taken.

Organizations also reap several "extracurricular" gains from the training programme which they sponsor. Recruitment of personnel, particularly those who perceive themselves to be upwardly mobile in technical and/or academic positions, is facilitated for an organization that has an outstanding training programme. Appropriate career counselling can also be provided by a trainer who has an opportunity to see what employees can do in tasks unrelated to their current position. A training programme also builds loyalty and productivity among personnel.

Finally, society at large is enriched by people who can do their jobs well and who enjoy them. These people contribute their skills to the professional, religious, political, and service groups they join in that they are healthier mentally and physically and they carry out a share of nation's economic performance. We are all interdependent and to that extent worthwhile training benefits everyone.

At this stage, you may be getting overwhelmed by the range of evaluation approaches and styles that are available. However, the aim of this section has been to demonstrate that there are a great many starting points, assumptions

and purposes that can direct the course of evaluation: we should not necessarily take any particular style for granted. It greatly depends on the purpose of evaluation, the expertise and resources available.

Notwithstanding the above discussion on the evaluation of training programmes in general, in the context of distance education quite a lot would depend on the institutional concerns, its approach to training, the constraints and the anxieties in genuinely evaluating a training programme. The evaluation criteria as such would vary from the set notions of evaluation which might have been valid in the conventional and culture specific (mostly western) situations. Some distance teaching institutions may go in for a professional approach towards training. In that case evaluation will become an integral part of a training programme, and the evaluation criteria would be developed specifically to judge the outcome of a programme. There are institutions which recognise the need for training but do not pay much attention to studying its impact on their activities. In this case, training itself would become a ritual, including the evaluation of it. So, the genuineness of evaluation of a training programme depends not on the mechanical application of well defined criteria but on the degree of seriousness with which a newly set up distance teaching institution uses it. The challenge here is not so much in recognising the need for training and the evaluation of it as in internalising both. Where training gets its rightful place, the quality of services (in our context distance teaching) is assured. And training improves its own quality by subjecting itself to rigorous evaluation continuously.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

Evaluation is the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education and training, as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have.

Evaluation determines the effectiveness of a training programme, helps to decide whether to continue or discontinue training programme, and provide information for improvement of the future training programme.

There are various approaches or frameworks for evaluation. The goal-based and systems-based approaches are popular.

The Kirkpatrick's model that follows the goal-based evaluation approach is based on simple questions that translate into four levels of evaluation: reaction, learning, behaviour, and results. Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) model and Input, Process, Output, Outcome (IPO) model are two important system-based approach we have discussed in this unit.

Training aims at effecting changes at the levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, so evaluation of a training programme also should appropriately be designed to measure the impact of training at these levels.

4.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Context, Input, Process, Product
- ii) Input, Process, Output
- iii) Reaction, learning, behaviour, results

Check Your Progress 3

After training, the new recruited staff should be able to do at least the following:

- i) At the knowledge level, they should be able to give an account of the growth of distance education during the last two centuries and explain the relevant concepts.
- ii) At the skills level, they should be able to outline and prepare a self-instructional unit (i.e. the format).
- iii) At the attitudinal level, they should be able to appreciate that distance teaching is also an effective mode of teaching, and their own subjects/disciplines can be taught through this system.

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