

PHARMACEUTICAL SALES MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL

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Dear Sales Training Professional,

We are half way through the year and there remain many challenges ahead. We want to continue with strategy of helping managers improve their coaching and training skills, as we have done in prior issues. Our newsletter is geared to all pharmaceutical sales management people, first and second line sales managers as well as sales trainers and sales training managers. It's our belief that the district manager is a critical person in the sales organization and we are committed to district manager training and development. Now in our third year, it is the goal of this newsletter to continue to provide management and training tips to our readers on a quarterly basis, and best of all, it's **free**.

In this newsletter we will cover the following topics: Preparing Training Materials (Non-Electronic), Adult Learning Principles, Needs Analysis, and Preparing Training Objectives.

We are also pleased to inform you that we will have the Spanish language version of this newsletter available too.

If you have missed any of our previous issues, you can find and download them on our web site at www.salecallplanners.com, on the "newsletters" page.

ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a brief review of adult learning principles. These principles are reviewed because they are so critical to the training process and directly applicable to preparing training materials for adults.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this section, you will be able to:

- Describe at least six major principles of how adults learn.
- Provide one or two examples of these six principles.

ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES

- **Motivation** – make training motivational, not a military boot camp, try games. ***When an adult's motivation to learn is high, learning itself is enhanced.*** *Creating a training environment in which Sales*

Representatives really want to learn substantially improves training effectiveness. This could be accomplished in many ways, such as stressing the satisfaction of gaining new and useful information and skills, the importance of training to ongoing development and advancement opportunities, the importance of training to increased sales and compensation, etc.

- **Small Doses** – give just enough at a time, don't overload, try not to do too much at one time. **Adults prefer to learn in small doses rather than lengthy training programs.** *By and large, most adults prefer this since they are very busy and also want to try out new skills learned between sessions.*
- **Active Involvement** – adults best learn by doing, avoid long lectures, get them up and moving around, working in groups and teams. **Active involvement of adult trainees in training is essential.** *Learning is enhanced considerably when trainees are actively involved in the training process and have many opportunities to practice and apply what they have learned. This is indeed one of the most important principles of adult learning and training.*
- **Structured Practice** – use good role-plays and case studies, have good clear instructions for each activity. **Structured, step-by-step practice is critical to effective learning.** *This is closely related to the previous principle; it is important to build practice into every training session where it applies. For building skills, such practice is essential. For example, no one learns how to sell a particular product without actually practicing sales calls over and over.*
- **Knowledge of Results** – let people know how well they did and why, feedback is critical to learning. **Knowledge of results is fundamental to effective adult learning.** *Feedback on how well actual performance compares to 'standard performance' is essential to judge whether all training objectives have been achieved. Knowledge of results or feedback can come from the task itself, from comparing actual results and performance to a 'model,' or from comments and observations of others.*
- **Short Sessions** – multiple sessions rather than longer, few sessions. **Adults are usually concerned about time they are spending in training; therefore programs should be short and spread over time rather than given in one session.**
- **Training To Fit Needs** – are the training subjects in line with the trainees needs? **Recognizing individual differences among trainees and adapting training to the needs of trainees is essential for effective adult learning.** *We must emphasize that the best training is customized to fit the needs of the learner. The rate at which information is presented, its level of difficulty, and the training methods selected should all be adjusted based on the trainee's knowledge, skills, abilities, etc.*
- **Order Of Presentation** – items of highest importance should be a priority. **The order of presentation of material and the selection of appropriate training methods is important for adult learning.** *Less complex topics*

and skills should be presented first, before more complicated and more sophisticated elements are explored. In addition, care must be given to select the appropriate method for training.

- **Relate Information To Similar Situations** – training must be real world and relevant. **Relating information to a similar but different situation in which training was actually provided, is an excellent way to determine whether adults have really learned the material.**

Throughout any training experience, basic principles and practices should be emphasized and many examples provided, so that trainees not only understand basic principles, but learn how to apply them in similar situations.

- **Provide Recognition** – this is a great venue to recognize achievements. **Providing appropriate rewards and recognition is certainly applicable when teaching young-sters, and also meaningful when training adults.** This is closely related to the ‘knowledge of results’ principle described earlier. This principle pertains to using appropriate recognition and rewards to reinforce desired behaviors and to help trainees polish specified knowledge and skills further. Positive feedback and encouragement are essential in effective adult training.

PRACTICE ACTIVITY

The following contains several statements about adult learning. Without discussion with other members of your team, review each statement, Circle an ‘A’ (for Agree) or s ‘D’ (for Disagree) in the Personal Choice column. Try to finish in 5 minutes.

When all members of your team have completed their personal choices, discuss each statement and decide on your Team Choice. Circle an ‘A’ (for Agree) or a ‘D’ (for Disagree) in the Team Choice column. Try to finish your team discussions in 10 minutes.

	Personal Choice	Team Choice
1. When an adult’s motivation to learn is high, learning itself is enhanced.	A D	A D
2. Adults prefer to learn in small ‘doses’ rather than lengthy training programs.	A D	A D
3. Active involvement of adults in training is essential.	A D	A D
4. Structured, step-by-step practice is critical to effective learning.	A D	A D
5. Knowledge of results is fundamental to effective adult learning.	A D	A D
6. Adults are usually concerned about time they are spending in training; therefore, programs should be short and spread over time, rather than given in one	A D	A D

<i>session.</i>		
<i>7. Recognizing individual differences among trainees and adapting training to the needs of the trainees is essential for effective adult learning.</i>	<i>A D</i>	<i>A D</i>
<i>8. The order of the presentation material and the selection of appropriate training methods is important for adult training.</i>	<i>A D</i>	<i>A D</i>
<i>9. Relating information to a similar but different situation in which training was actually provided, is an excellent way to determine whether adults have really learned the material.</i>	<i>A D</i>	<i>A D</i>
<i>10. Providing appropriate rewards and recognition is certainly applicable when teaching young people, and also meaningful when training adults.</i>	<i>A D</i>	<i>A D</i>

After all teams have completed the activity, ask each team to report on one statement at a time.

OTHER PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

For example, the following are just a few other principles that are important, but perhaps somewhat less important than the basic principles already discussed:

- ***Building some fun into a training experience*** is often useful in promoting learning.
- ***Mixing media is extremely important in training adults;*** it helps to maintain a high level of interest and a good change of pace. An effective training module, therefore integrates a variety of techniques, such as discussions, self-study materials, PowerPoint slides, DVD's, etc.
- ***The best adult training relates directly to job functions*** and can be applied immediately to specific job situations.

NEEDS ANALYSES (BRIEF SUMMARY)

INTRODUCTION

This section will explore the steps to identify target audience training need so effective program materials can be created to meet these needs.

OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this section, you will be able to:

- Recite at least eight Sales Representative core competencies.
- Describe at least two methods for gathering data for needs analysis.

- Describe at least one method for analyzing data and establishing priority needs.

A needs analysis is used to identify priorities for learning in a particular target group.

Generally, needs analysis findings are summarized in writing, and indicate the top priorities for learning. These priorities then become the foundation for training programs/materials.

Needs analysis are usually based on two major areas:

- Core competencies for the job
- Business objectives

(If you don't have core competencies for a job, use a job description)

Business Objectives

In addition to the Sales Representative's core competencies, you should also consider company/division/territory business objectives.

The combination of both business objectives and job-based core competencies are the driving forces for ongoing development and achieving business goals.

Determining The Scope Of The Needs Analysis

The scope of the needs analysis and one of the early steps...gathering data...is largely dependent on the following questions:

- ***How much time is available before the training program must be implemented?***
- ***How much money and other resources do I have at my disposal?***
- ***How many people are involved in the target group for which needs have been identified?***
- ***What will be done with the information obtained?***
- ***How precise does the analysis have to be?***

Step one – Gather Data

This is the core of the needs analysis. This is where most of the time is spent in gathering information about needs. There are, of course, many different approaches for obtaining information. Some of the most popular include:

- Observation during field visits
- Personal interviews
- Written and performance-based tests

- Written surveys
- Review of information contained in performance assessments
- Physician panels

Step two – Analyze Data

There are many ways to analyze data. More often than not, however, a rating scale is used to rate core competencies or other potential needs. It can be summarized in a table like the one shown here.

Survey Results

Core Competencies	Scale 5,4,3,2,1 5=Hi 1=Low
1. Knowing Company and Competitive Products	2.2
2. Knowing Territory and Customers	4.6
3. Positioning Products Against Competition	1.8
4. Using Observation Skills	2.3
5. Using and Understanding Effective Body Language	4.8
6. Continue, continue, continue	

So far, this analysis indicates that competencies 1, 3, and 4 need further work.

PREPARING TRAINING OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Preparing objectives for a training session is perhaps one of the most important issues Sales Trainers need to address.

Objectives define the purpose of the training program, and what trainees will be able to do when they complete it.

OBJECTIVES

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- **Describe why training objectives are so important**
- **Describe why training objectives should be linked to needs analysis and/or core competencies**
- **Prepare at least two objectives that are ‘SMART.’**
- **Check several objectives to make certain they are performance based.**

Characteristics Of Training Objectives

Objectives should be ‘SMART’:

- **Specific.** Be clearly worded, focused and must communicate their intentions.
- **Measurable.** Have a quantitative measure so people will know when the objective is achieved.
- **Action-oriented.** Include action words that describe what will be accomplished.
- **Realistic.** Challenging but not out of reach.
- **Time-based.** Contain a date by which they will be achieved.

Here are a few examples of ‘SMART’ objectives:

- A Sales Representative will increase his/her sales of Product M by 10% by year-end compared to last year.
- The District Manager will meet at least twice a month with each Sales Representative and focus on helping Sales Representatives achieve one of their objectives by year-end.

In our next issue we will cover the following topics: Principles Of Training Program Design, Preparing Training Materials (Lesson Units/Plans) and Examples Of Training Materials.

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Sincerely,
Wayne Smith
Black Dog Publishing Company