

CHECKLIST

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

Effective employee training has the power to transform your organisation. It can give your people the skills and knowledge they need to unleash their inner superheroes. And this will help you to stay ahead of the competition.

A training needs analysis (TNA) is your chance to plot the route to training success. This makes it a supremely important tool. If you get it right, you'll deliver the right training to the right people at the right time. As a result, you'll drive successful behaviour change, improve performance and create meaningful business impact.

But how can you ensure your training needs analysis is doing its job? Don't fret! We are here to help. Our checklist is a handy tool for anyone looking to conduct a successful training needs analysis. So work your way through the list to ensure you identify all your training needs!



Step 1: Determine Desired Outcomes

The best place to start is to articulate the desired goal of your training. After all, your training needs analysis is your strategy to achieve that goal. Your desired outcomes should correspond to your business objectives and reflect your organisation's mission and values.

- Determine what your company culture would be like if your values were being lived all day, every day.
- Identify which individuals or teams are essential in order to deliver your organisation's mission.
- Establish the behaviours your people need to deliver this mission.
- Based on these, define and articulate the ultimate goal of your training programme.
- Keep this goal in the forefront of your mind. This will ensure that your training needs analysis keeps the desired outcomes in sight.
- Break this goal down to a department or individual goal or focus on core competencies.
- Then define which on-the-job behaviours or skills contribute to the goal you have defined.
- And remember to set success criteria early on!

Step 2: Research Current Skills

After bringing your ultimate goal into focus and defining the required behaviours, it's time to begin the research process. You'll be looking at your existing organisational skill set and establishing your intellectual capital. A modern learning technology solution can help you to do this.

- Research and collect data on your learners' current skill levels. You can choose from various data-collection methods, such as:
 - Surveys
 - Reviews
 - Focus Groups
 - One-to-one interviews
 - Observation
- Request feedback directly from your learners to identify how they would assess their own competency levels.
- Add to that knowledge by analysing their employee, manager, peer or customer reviews.

Step 3: Evaluate Your Current Skills

Now that you have data on your organisation's talents, you need to analyse the results. This helps you to determine the extent to which your employees possess the skills you require.

- Use competency evaluations and tests or assessments to analyse the level of your learners' current skills. Your previously collected data will help you to make these evaluations more targeted.
- Make sure that your method of evaluation is valid for the targeted competency. For instance, performance evaluation surveys are best used to evaluate observable behaviours.
- Based on this, identify which skills your organisation is lacking. These can include behaviours and associated knowledge, skills, abilities or even personal characteristics.

Step 4: Identify Your Skills Shortages

After identifying and evaluating your employees' skills and behaviours, you need to determine how well these abilities match your ultimate goal. The difference between skills that you need your employees to have and skills that your workforce currently possess is called a [skills gap](#).

- Rank skills gaps based on their urgency and importance.
 - You can assess their importance with a five-point rating scale. The higher the number, the more important the skill is for successful performance.
- Start by addressing skills gaps that are both important and urgent.
 - These competencies should rate at least four out of five on the previously mentioned scale.
 - Make sure to prioritise any compliance-related skills gaps.
- You then need to determine where these absent skills are needed the most. This can vary drastically depending on your employees' job role or experience level.
- Identify how many, or what percentage, of your workforce needs training on that specific competency.
- After addressing the core skills gaps, work your way down the priority ladder until you've run out of budget or run out of skills gaps.



Step 5: Analyse the Causes Behind Skills Gaps

Once you have determined the skills gaps you need to bridge, you then need to identify the cause before you can choose the right solution. To do so, you should investigate all possible factors that affect employee performance.

- Analyse the tools and equipment your employees use to complete their tasks, to see if a lack of skills or knowledge is causing the performance gap.
- If this is the case, you should focus on evaluating your current training methods and their effectiveness
 - Look into average content completion rates and test results to gain important insights into the success of your training.
- Identify factors that influence employee motivation or capability to complete training. These could include:
 - Hard-to-use or broken learning technology (if relevant)
 - Too easy or too hard content
 - Monotonous training materials
 - Isolated learning interventions
 - Time-consuming training
 - Geographical limitations
 - Language barriers
- Ask for employee feedback to identify areas for improvement. This could include, for example, your training content, your instructors, your learning technology solution, and your tools and equipment.
- And finally, delve into your learning technology solution and existing training material to see if you are utilising them to their full potential.

Step 6: Assess Training Options

Once you have identified the causes of your performance problems, you need to assess the options you have in hand. Your organisational goals, priorities and resources will affect what action you can take.

- The cost of training is a significant factor when planning your training strategy. As such, determine how much you can invest in your training programme.
- Based on your budget and training needs, identify what learning approach will work the best for bridging your most urgent skills gaps. Typical methods include, for example:
 - Online learning
 - On-the-job training
 - Mentoring and coaching
 - Classroom learning

- Conferences and learning events

- Consider if you wish to offer training in-house or externally.
- Analyse how long it will take to close those urgent skills gaps and prioritise training accordingly.

Step 7: Take Action

The next step is to recommend solutions that help you to provide training that improves employee performance. You can identify the strengths and weaknesses of your current training strategy and focus on improving those weaknesses by adopting new and more effective approaches.

- Create, share and promote new training interventions that are designed to meet your skills gaps.
- And make sure your existing training content is up to date, useful and personalised to match your learners' profile.
- You can ensure your learners like their content by asking them to rate their learning material. This will also tell you if it needs improvement.
- Use various content formats to cater to different learning styles and preferences.
- Make learning more engaging by introducing gamification elements to your training interventions. This could include:
 - Experience Points (XP)
 - Badges
 - Levels
 - Leaderboards
- Enable social learning to ensure your employees can share knowledge and interact with their peers. These features could include:
 - Social Clubs
 - Social Feeds
 - Live Streams
 - Live Chat
 - The Experts Area
- Make sure to take advantage of your organisation's [subject matter experts](#). You can do so by creating an Experts Area in your learning technology solution and granting an Expert status to your SMEs.
- Ensure your learners understand what's in it for them and how training will benefit the organisation as a whole.
- And remember to monitor engagement and send reminders to make sure your learners complete all required content.

Step 8: Evaluate Outcomes

Finally, you should focus on assessing the actions you took to bridge your skills gaps. The final step involves evaluating your employees' performance against your goal, after they have received the required training opportunities.

- Assess if necessary skills are being developed. You can use, for instance, assessments and your learning platform analytics to evaluate performance.
- Highlight any improvements and recognise and reward employees. This can include anything from additional XP and public shoutouts to real-world rewards.
- Calculate the return on your training investment to show the value of your improved training strategy.

Here at Growth Engineering, we have first-hand experience of the importance of an in-depth training needs analysis. After all, it should be your go-to tool in order to bridge any prevailing skills or performance shortages.

We know that creating an effective training needs analysis can be time-consuming. As such, we hope that by following this checklist, you have been able to identify the talent gaps in your workforce that are holding your organisation back.

Eager to learn more? Make sure to check out our other [downloadable assets](#). These handy checklists are sure to supercharge your training interventions!



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