

Training Needs Analysis

A first step in planning training

What is training needs analysis?

A training needs analysis is a review of the learning and development needs of an organisation. It considers the skills, knowledge and behaviours that people need, and how to develop them effectively.

Conducting a training needs analysis

Training needs analysis is an effective first step in planning training. Aligning training directly with performance gaps leads to the most efficient use of resources including staff time and training funds. Training needs analysis has been used for many years and is generally regarded as the best available known practice to begin the training cycle, followed by planning, delivery and evaluation.¹

Training needs analysis can be undertaken at three levels:

- organisational level
- team/departmental level
- individual level.

Seeking stakeholder opinion has been highlighted in research as a key success factor for training needs analysis. Stakeholders should include a representative sample of both employees and consumers and may also include training providers and funders.²

Tools and resources

Listed below are several training needs analysis tools and resources that are freely available and can be used by services in the disability sector. We have included tools from both New Zealand and overseas.

- **Let's get real Team Planning Tool.** Te Pou has developed a Team Planning Tool that is currently being revised. The original tool utilised sound methodology to identify and plan training needs in an organisation, but was designed specifically for the mental health sector. The new tool will be updated to make it accessible to other sectors in April 2012. <http://www.tepou.co.nz/library/tepou/lets-get-real-team-planning-tool>.
- **Manager's Guide to Successful Training.** Careerforce have published a booklet 'Manager's Guide to Successful Training' that has a brief outline of aspects to consider when developing a training plan for qualifications on the NZQA framework. For a copy phone 0800 277 486 or [email info@careerforce.org.nz](mailto:info@careerforce.org.nz)

¹ Burke, L. & Hutchins, H. (2007). Training transfer: An Integrative Literature Review, *Human Resource Development Review*, 6(3), 263-296.

Gould, Dinah et al. (2004). Training needs analysis. A literature review and reappraisal. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 41, 471-486.

² Gould, Dinah et al. (2004). Training needs analysis. A literature review and reappraisal. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 41, 471-486.

- **Skills Third Sector: Training Needs Analysis.** Skills Third Sector in the United Kingdom has developed a step by step guide to carrying out a TNA across all levels of an organisation. This guide is specifically designed for people in charities and social enterprises and is applicable to the disability sector. http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk/documents/Training_Needs_Analysis_2010-STS.pdf
- **Person centred approach to organisational development.** Progress for Providers in the United Kingdom have published a tool to assist organisations to take a person centred approach to organisational development. It includes a section on workforce development that could be helpful to assist organisations assess training needs. <http://www.progressforproviders.org/P4P-support.html>
- **Free template.** BusinessBalls.com has designed a template which allows a business to highlight group training needs and priorities and also the training needs of individuals. This website has many free business templates. <http://www.businessballs.com/trainingneedsanalysis.pdf>.
- **Simple Training Needs Assessment.** About.com has published a very simple training needs analysis process on their website that involves the whole team and may be most appropriate for a small organisation. http://humanresources.about.com/od/trainingneedsassessment/ht/training_needs.htm

Planning for training

Your training needs analysis will have given you an indication of training needs. The next step is to make a plan (called a learning and development plan) to match training with these needs. There are a number of methods of meeting learning and training needs that can be written into this plan. These include in-house training courses, external training courses, conferences and events, national qualifications, e-learning, books and journals, and coaching and mentoring. Planning will then be followed by implementation of training and evaluation.

The [disability training directory](http://www.tepou.co.nz/library/tepou/disability-sector-training-directory) is now available to increase awareness of relevant training and learning activities. The directory has been developed by Disability Workforce Development and the New Zealand Federation of Vocational and Support Services (VASS), in partnership with the New Zealand Disability Support Network (NZDSN) and other key stakeholders. <http://www.tepou.co.nz/library/tepou/disability-sector-training-directory>

What are other disability organisations doing?

Visit the Disability Workforce Development website to find out how several disability services in New Zealand conduct their training needs analysis. <http://www.tepou.co.nz/training/disability-sector-training-needs-analysis>. If you would like to share your training needs analysis process with the sector, please email kathryn.owler@tepou.co.nz.

For further information

If your organisation would like further information on training needs analysis, please contact your Disability Workforce Development regional workforce facilitator.