
Bring Training Alive!

Concrete, Expert Strategies For Success In
Skyrocketing Morale and Cohesion in Your Organization



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“Training Never Works” Versus “Training Always Works”

I’m amused at the little that many human resource people know about training. The standard answer to their problems seems to be “send them for a workshop”. It reminds me of the cartoon ‘Dilbert’ – where management incompetence seems only to be worthwhile as entertainment.

Well don’t get me wrong – I’m not in the business of insulting management, especially when I’m part of it in my own company! What really bugs me is that nobody really knows how to design a training that works. Every time, it seems like you can send someone for a training, but nothing is transferred. You can send a person to learn communication skills, and he returns quietly. You can bring a department out for a team building workshop, and they return home on the company-sponsored coach ride home, arguing about who should be let off first.

Yes – it is ironic. Yes – some training workshops have issues. But WAIT!

There’s a saying that if there is a problem with a computer, it’s not with the computer – because a human being is at the controlling end (the guy who did all the programming as well as the one using the computer). If you really want to solve computer problems, look at the human being.

Likewise, if there is a problem with the people in an organization, don’t just look at the people! There’s more in the organizational dynamic than meets the eye.

3 Big Mistakes Managers Make In Training

To be really candid about the main mistakes made by managers, they rely too much on external training consultants without knowing how to make a proper assessment. The three biggest mistakes you could ever make include:

1. Not selecting the right training consultant

If you do not know how to select the right training consultant, read on – I provide some concrete strategies for selecting your training provider.

2. Not being clear on training objectives and deliverables

Many organizations are guilty of this, not because they don't care, but they don't know how. Too many times have training programs been used simply for the sake of using up a training budget. Sometimes, the symptom is not addressed at the root cause. For instance, if morale is low, you don't just create a motivational talk for your staff. You ought to assess the root causes so that your training isn't just a waste of time.

Training objectives must be thoroughly assessed. Often, a training consultant is supposed to do just that – provide you with the perspective that enables you to create more choice in your organization. We often provide direct feedback and emphasize that sometimes training is not the solution. I have had dialogues with companies that end up taking me on as a HR consultant rather than a trainer because the systems and policies need change rather than the skills and capabilities of the employees.

3. Expecting too much from a short and cheap training.

Okay, I know this will come across as an advertisement, but you know it's true – you get whatever you pay for. Not all the time, but this is generally true. More importantly, you will need a training organization that continues to remain committed to your cause. Rather than having to select and run a training over and over from scratch, why not strike up a partnership with training providers with solid training credentials?

So, while we provide motivational training, there are trainings that we do not provide. Partnering with other organizations can add tremendous value to you, so you don't have to hunt for other training providers all over again.

Managers Must Lead The Way

I've been in the training industry for some time, so I understand how tough it can be for managers to decide on a training budget. You'll ask questions like 'is it worth it', 'will it work' and 'will this be applied when he returns'. Well, there are different views and ideas, but whatever the case, I understand that it is tough for you to have to make a decision that is not guaranteed.

Not guaranteed. That is the catch phrase.

If you could pay for a guaranteed training, how much do you think it would cost?
\$100,000 a day?

The truth is we seldom do what we need to do for training and human resource development. In reality, everyone can't be really bothered about human resources. They've heard it, and they only think of the administrator who files their letters and documents. I've even heard experts saying that if you want to get a promotion, don't talk about human resources – talk about finance and marketing. This attitude towards HR is

damaging to the organization, because other than the bottom line figures, we need to look into the right approach to developing our staff and their capabilities.

It's about time that managers began to shift their thinking. Human resources are the ONLY thing that keeps the organization running. If you fail in human resources, you fail in morale, productivity and profitability.

Why Your Training Program Didn't Work: Three of the Biggest Cost Saving Reasons You Will Ever Find.

The process is supposed to be straightforward. First, you request for a proposal. Second, you meet your potential vendors. Third, you make a decision based on the budget you have, and finally, you end up managing the logistics to get your people into a training. Simple so far.

Then on the actual day of the training, a number of things worry you:

- What if the trainer gets boring?
- What if my staff don't like the trainer?
- What if my staff are non-responsive?
- What if...

And the list could go on.

The issue can't be resolved then. The only way you can be certain that a trainer is worth what they are talking about is to have an intimate knowledge about the way they deliver information. Many trainers do not have this mechanism because they are freelancers and lack the resources to provide this. So, sometimes, it appears somewhat clandestine when they hand you their resume (which you probably don't have time to plough through) without any chance for you to hear them speak and deliver.

I'll give you three of the biggest cost-saving tips for finding your training provider.

1. Ensure that they have a full-time complement of competent staff.

If you find your training provider using nothing more than a handful of freelancers from here and there, you'll probably expect to find that you can't rely on them even if they are subject matter experts. In fact, the more business they have, the less assured you might be of their commitment to training you.

Conversely, I've deliberately created a training team that serves select corporate accounts. When we provided our training to the Ministry of Defence, we had more than 80 adults to deal with in a skills intensive training. Our training complement and structure allowed for micro-skills coaching. In our group, we have the capacity to have a 1:8 ratio of Facilitators to Participants, and Trainers can handle up to 100 participants at any one go. This is because of our own commitment to the development of our training capabilities. These facilitators are all trained in NLP and support our Trainers. So, you can be assured that this is NOT a one-man operation.

The worst thing that could happen is that you end up having a trainer who says he can do something but can't demonstrate it. This is one of the reasons why you want to read this. You want to know if we live up to your expectations in the hope that we could render assistance to move your organization in the direction you want.

2. Work out proper training needs with your provider.

I'm amused that many people are still adopting the 'competencies' approach to training. Competencies are great as a measure of ability rather than as the result of a training program. Why? Because they are measures of skill *as well as willingness* to perform on the job. Just because someone is not exhibiting a competence does not mean that he or she does not have it.

I find that many organizations are barking up the wrong tree. If you do this, you will end up wasting a lot of resources and money. For instance, one company I went to

asked me to run a training on self-motivation. As an inquisitive person, I naturally asked her “What for?”

Her reply to me was appalling. She said that she wanted her employees to become motivated so that they would not defy her orders. You see, in this instance, no matter what kind of training you have, it is going to end up with an issue of the ‘system’. The dynamics in the system determine whether or not you are going to succeed after training. It’s part of the culture of the environment you are in. If you do not have the right culture and team cohesiveness, it is going to end up right where you started before the training ever happened, with a few thousand dollars less in your corporate bank account.

Competencies deal with things going on in a person’s behavior and skill. These are observable. But they are nothing more than observable behaviors. Haven’t you seen a situation where people simply jump to their workplace and pretend to work when their boss (or you) comes around? You get puzzled because they are working so hard, but nothing seems to get done. Then you suspect it is a training issue, and send them for a workshop...

Most of the time, I find that competencies and skills are not the only issue in an organization. Corporations must be able to look into their patterns of behavior and ask if there is something in the system that requires tweaking. I enjoy discussing different perspectives with managers and company directors because it opens up their perspective on their desired outcome for a training. For instance, skills trainings that are not infused with a dose of activity and inspiration end up fizzling out. Think of the last time you had a training where the speaker just went through a list of slides and then went off. How much do you really remember?

In addition, I’d like to add that it’s not in the skills that you get the greatest leverage. It’s in the application of those skills. And what better a way to teach communication than to put them in the position where they have to? What better way is there to teach

leadership than to make them do it? What better way is there to teach teamwork than to get them to experience it? We've done many trainings with various organizations focusing on the development of skills – but we have never simply run through skills like a technical lecturer. We want to put it inside the minds of the audience and get them to process it.

Beyond this is the idea of inspiration - you know, the fuel for the soul. The power of the effect of a motivated workforce cannot be measured by competence. The strange thing is in the blend of team cohesion, motivation and skills training, a well bonded group will tend to find solutions whenever they encounter problems.

As individuals, we often run out of fuel, but it's important as part of the training that we target to inspire our staff. We need it in the workplace because this is what turns us on and gets us to do the things we need to do.

When your workforce is motivated, they are also empowered to carry out certain things. Yes, it may be short lived – if there is no proper follow-up structure. But if it is infused properly together with honest dialog and clear training systems in place, motivation can be sustained, and the culture in the workplace can truly be worth enjoying. Every day could be a joy to come to work!

3. Boldly Ask for a Free Demonstration, and Build a Long-Term Relationship with Your Provider... just to keep in touch.

If your training provider is myopic, short-sighted and unable to walk their talk, asking this question will give you a flat NO. However, if your training provider is flexible enough, you will probably find that they are willing to work with you for a demonstration talk. Of course, don't expect to get everything for free – this is really a relationship building tool. Or, better, offer them an honorarium so they don't go hungry. I've never heard of a good training consultant who was dying of hunger.

Don't undermine their expertise by 'selling' them the promise for the future, such as 'if you do this talk for free, we can get your company in the next time around'. Truly, if you want to maintain a relationship with your training provider, all you need to do is ask for a favor.

I've built really close relationships with my clients over time by working through their constraints. Some of them have asked us for favors on occasion, and we have done our best to fulfill them. If you want us to give you a clear idea what we can do, then we'll have one of our consultants meet you and structure a meaningful presentation for your organization. Let us help your organization today!

Build a Cohesive Organization!

What has cohesion got to do with training? Well, do you like coming to work? Most of the time, individuals who enjoy coming to work do not come just because of the job. They come because of the people who are there. They enjoy the company of their colleagues. Do you have such a culture? Do you also have a sustaining culture so that people are not tempted to leave in spite of their good friendships?

The 7 Big Secrets Behind Cohesion Building In Organizations

1. Emotional impact.

Without emotional impact, cohesion will never take place. Even with people whom you have bonded with before, the process of familiarization, similarity and proximity gave you access to connect with your friends. You began to know them from a deeper perspective than just at a superficial level.

One case is where I remember running two separate trainings, one which was emotive in nature, the other which had no emotional spin whatsoever (it was a pure lecture). I discovered that the one which had an emotional impact was the one that was

remembered for a very, very long time. The other one, however, did not have as much of the intensity (as I expected) and recall. Everyone tended to ‘know’ what was being said at that time, but didn’t remember anything much.

To create this environment, the set up of the training needs to be done well. Training providers and managers should collaborate to bring about a transformation in perspective through any means required. To find out more about this unique approach, have a conversation with us, and we will be able to show you more. You can get our contact details when you [click here](#).

2. Group dynamics and processes that use shared learning

Debrief is the most important art in a training that is often overlooked by trainers. Many patterns of behavior can be analyzed simply through the observation of an interaction or a game. This evaluative talent resides in the mind of a perceptive and well-trained consultant who can observe a group’s performance through the way the game is played.

The facilitator can then structure a dialog that enables honest evaluation of the group’s performance by the group itself. That way, learning can be genuine and peels the veneers of protection because the learning environment allows for honesty without the threat of reprisal or ridicule.

Again, I’ve tested this with different organizations. Those who go through a program where every form of contact is superficial, cohesion does not take place. However, when there are challenges that create frustration or tension, there is a greater bonding effect. Through a proper debrief, the negative emotions are brought to closure, and perceptions are managed through a variety of different debriefing methods. To learn more about this, [have a discussion with us!](#)

3. Management support and leadership

As a manager, you are often looked to for leadership. If you are able to provide such leadership, you will have an edge because more people will trust you and find the environment safe. People won't be looking behind their back hoping to find a backstabber, or covering their mistakes because of a fear of reprisal.

If your system does not allow for honest communication, we will show you how. Through the development of genuine management, people in an organization are more willing and forthcoming to share their woes and problems for solution-ing. Support thus creates opportunities for contact *without evaluative judgement*. This reduces emotional tension and provides psychological safety to share an opinion.

4. The Language of Cohesion

Masters of language know that cohesion can be created through speech. World leaders who are influential and persuasive have used this ability for years. For an analysis of how this is done, visit www.stuarttan.com/resources/ for more information and downloads.

If you know how to use the language of the mind to make cohesion happen first in our perceptions, then the focus on animosity will disappear. This leads to an awareness of the cohesion and makes it an 'expectation'. Simple words for instance, using pronouns like "we" and "us" instead of "you" and "yours" can shift perceptions of cohesion easily. As managers, an influential pattern of communication needs to be within your repertoire of skills.

In addition, a common language is used in the training. Those who adopt the language often are the carriers of the transfer of learning to the workplace. This language is fostered throughout the training and is commonly used to debrief games and activities. What happens is that rapport is established with a common language while entraining the individual's behaviors.

When you decide to have a discussion with us, you will get first-hand information about the way this is being done in our training programs.

5. Situations Requiring Empathy.

Again, when emotions are involved, there is an opportunity to bond. When we provide situations that require empathy, people are open to share their feelings. Experiences that are shared allow the emotional bonding to take place as well. This is removed from the day-to-day 'masks' we have.

In our training programs, we provide ample opportunity for the display of empathy so that different individuals can share their feelings more openly in a safe and non-threatening environment, provided that management is willing to lead by example.

6. Tapping into Fun values.

America's poster-boy, Southwest Airlines, has always been known to emphasize fun as a corporate value. In reality, fun is a much desired value across any individual, and different people perceive fun differently. Organizations that bond are those that know how to have fun and use it as a productivity tool. After all, unless we can get an individual's buy in (what's in it for me), how well can they accept and live by the company's values?

This boils down to the active learning environment, and understanding how individuals learn. Brain theories have already lent their weight to build for us a strong model for adult learning and how adults process information. With a fun learning environment, learning sticks and continues to grow.

7. Creating “People Insights” with NLP

During the course of training, we often teach patterns of NLP (neuro-linguistic programming) that helps individuals learn about themselves and about each other. This allows them to foster better understanding and rapport with their colleagues, and gives them an opportunity to test out measures to be adaptable and flexible so that they can develop people mastery skills, thereby establishing a better workplace environment and understanding between individuals.

I’ve found that doing this will create a closer sense of bonding and also reduce the tension of conflict. Even if conflict were to arise, these skills could come into play and help them resolve their differences.

The Training Management System

I’ve included a way to think through your training management system. This may actually create the need for more thinking and planning, but it certainly will facilitate a better training intervention.

Why Plan? We’ve heard it so often – fail to plan = plan to fail. In this light, it is probably going to be prudent of you to spend a lot more time garnering skills and resources for the purposes of understanding training as a whole. I’m going to highlight four main questions I ask in order to establish the right kind of development initiative for my clients. Because this thinking process requires a bit of getting used to, I’ve made them simple to understand through the use of an illustration.

1. What are the symptoms surrounding the problem?

Company XYZ had an issue. They found their employees with very little motivation and morale was dipping to a low. There was a lot of distrust. Management knew

exactly what these symptoms were. However, they didn't look beyond it. As a result, they requested for motivational training to 'solve' the problem. The motivational trainer came in, did a fantastic inspirational training, and left. The employees, hyped up for the moment, ended back where they were after the training ended.

Symptoms are just the starting point. We need to go beyond this in order to explore the right kind of intervention to take!

2. What is the root cause of the symptom?

Strangely, in Company XYZ, the root cause of these symptoms were not just the lack of motivation, but the way management listened to and acted upon their employees' feedback. Upon surveying the ground, many employees were in a state of learned helplessness – they didn't contribute because there would be a lot of talk, but no action. To them, without the concrete action taken, it would be useless.

The root cause could very well be at the management level. Hence, the saying "For things to change, I must change first". Instead of blaming, everyone has to accept responsibility for maintaining some kind of accountability to each other.

Similarly, the symptom now lies with the management of XYZ – is it just that they don't listen or can't listen? Or is there more? XYZ actually does listen and does take action, but they do not have the means to communicate this effectively to their employees. Hence, it is an issue of communication. By changing the training intervention into something more facilitation based between management and employees, it would help XYZ much more, and build greater confidence.

3. What is the ultimate outcome?

To focus on our outcome, we need to take a step back and ask: what do we really want for the organization? In this sense, you can think of it as a goal based in very

concrete sensory terms. What do you see, hear and feel assuming that you have achieved this goal? What are people saying? What are people thinking? What feelings are predominant in this outcome?

This requires a bit of visualization and through the visualization, the formation of the vision takes place. It is a useful exercise and for managers, you will need to consider this more frequently because if you don't know specifically where you are going with the development of your staff, you won't know how to get there.

4. What resources do we need, knowing our outcome?

Resources include physical resources, but also capabilities, beliefs and shared values. These intangible resources are the ones that form the intellectual capital of the organization, and help to align the organization with its individual employees' values. By thinking in this fashion, we get to understand what we really need. These capabilities, beliefs and values are the ones that will help us to reach our outcome, eradicate the symptoms and deal with the root cause of the problem effectively.

What we do

By guiding you through the thinking process, I hope to have achieved the following:-

1. Give you a set of tools to think about what you really need for training in your organization;
2. Allow you to see more fully what training is and is not – that sometimes it is a combination of factors that allows training providers to work effectively together with you;
3. Show you that we are competent in this process and we have achieved significant results with such interventions on a corporate level.

Our training programs have been filled with activities for active learning, games and competitions for team building, but more importantly, infusing the spirit and soul of the human spirit through inspiration, appreciation and honesty. Our unique advantage lies in that we know how to turn learning into a transferable skill in the workplace through the power of NLP. Once again, I invite you to sample our skills by having a meeting with us. This way, you can discover the level of professional support we give to organizations and our style of training. We can also discuss how to help your staff and organization grow more fully so that your organization can grow toward greater productivity and excellence.

You Can Claim A Free 1 hour Workshop!

You can get your free seminar sample by contacting us right away! Call Desmond at [62554345](tel:62554345) or email at corporate@akltg.com and we'll furnish you with details on how you can hear our consultants for 1 hour – absolutely free! We are also available for a discussion on how we can help you, and we can meet up with you for no extra charge to identify your training needs and possibly provide you with some solutions on the spot. Why? Because we believe we have the right skills and we want to have an audience with you!

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