

EMPLOYEE TRAINING EXPERIENCE: INSIGHTS INTO POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS

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In modern organizations, employee training has become an essential element in promoting skill development and professional growth. This study investigates the "employee experience" framework with a focus on the employee training experience, aiming to understand how workers perceive their training and to identify factors contributing to both positive and negative outcomes. By exploring these factors, the research provides valuable insights for designing training programs that align with employee needs and organizational objectives.

The "employee experience" refers to the sum of interactions between an employee and their organization, encompassing various touchpoints from recruitment to exit. Within this framework, training plays a crucial role in shaping employee perceptions, influencing their emotional and cognitive engagement with the learning process. Key elements include the quality of training content, pedagogical strategies, and the skills of the trainer, all of which affect the overall learning experience (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2003). This study draws on qualitative research to explore how employees describe their training experiences, with the goal of providing a holistic understanding of what constitutes effective workplace learning.

The research utilized a qualitative approach, conducting two complementary studies. The first involved an open-ended questionnaire survey with 601 active professionals, designed to capture broad insights into their training experiences across various organizations. The second study comprised in-depth interviews with 15 workers, allowing for a deeper exploration of specific experiences.

This dual approach enabled the researchers to gather both wide-ranging and detailed data. The questionnaire highlighted general trends and common themes, while the interviews offered more nuanced perspectives on individual experiences. This method is consistent with best practices in qualitative research, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of complex phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

The analysis of responses from the first study revealed that most employees perceive their training experiences positively. Participants described their sessions as satisfying, useful, interesting, exciting, innovative, and challenging, emphasizing their role in fostering personal growth and skill development. Key factors contributing to a positive training experience included:

Impact and Outcomes: Employees highly valued training that led to practical, measurable results, such as acquiring new competencies or improving job performance.

Content Relevance: Training programs that aligned with employees' job roles and career goals were perceived more positively.

Communication and Interaction: The quality of interactions during training, including discussions and group activities, significantly influenced the learning experience.

Pedagogical Strategies: Interactive and engaging teaching methods were preferred, with employees responding well to approaches that involved active participation.

Trainer Competence: The expertise and delivery style of the trainer played a critical role in shaping the overall experience.

Organizational Support: Employees appreciated when their organization demonstrated commitment to training through well-structured programs and clear communication.

Conversely, negative training experiences were associated with:

Lack of Perceived Impact: Employees expressed frustration when training did not lead to tangible results or personal growth.

Ineffective Pedagogical Strategies: Passive learning environments, where employees felt disengaged, led to dissatisfaction.

Organizational Constraints: Issues such as poor scheduling or inflexible training times negatively affected the experience, as did dissatisfaction with the trainer or content.

The study's findings underscore the importance of designing training programs that not only meet organizational objectives but also resonate with employees on a personal level. A critical factor in positive training experiences is the perceived impact—employees expect training to result in measurable learning outcomes that contribute to their professional development. This aligns with the literature, which highlights the importance of aligning training with individual goals and job requirements (Garavan, 1997).

Pedagogical strategies also emerged as a central element in shaping the success of training. Interactive, hands-on methods that encouraged active learning were viewed favourably, while more passive, lecture-based approaches led to disengagement. These findings echo the principles of experiential learning, which emphasize the value of active participation in the learning process (Kolb, 1984).

Organizational factors, such as the structure and scheduling of training programs, also played a significant role in employee satisfaction. Flexible, well-organized sessions that considered employees' work schedules contributed to positive experiences, while rigid or poorly timed programs resulted in negative perceptions. Additionally, the quality of communication and interaction during training, particularly opportunities for collaboration and feedback, was a key determinant of employee engagement.

This study contributes to the growing body of research on employee training by providing detailed insights into the factors that shape positive and negative training experiences. The findings highlight that multiple elements—ranging from the content and pedagogical strategies to the competence of the trainer and organizational support—are crucial in determining the success of training programs.

Organizations can leverage these insights to design more effective training initiatives that foster employee engagement and satisfaction. By focusing on delivering practical outcomes, using interactive teaching methods, and providing organizational support, employers can create meaningful learning experiences that align with both individual and business goals.

Future research could benefit from incorporating mixed-method approaches, combining qualitative insights with quantitative data to capture a more comprehensive view of the employee training experience. Additionally, examining how demographic variables such as age, career stage, or industry influence perceptions of training could offer further guidance for tailoring programs to specific employee groups.

In conclusion, investing in well-structured, impactful training programs is essential for organizations seeking to promote employee development, satisfaction, and long-term engagement. By recognizing the diverse factors that contribute to the employee training experience, organizations can create more effective learning environments that enhance both individual growth and organizational success.

Employee Training Experience, Organisational Training, Training Programs, Learning, Development