

# TRAINING BOOTCAMP Series

## EPISODE 1

# Determining Your Training Needs

CENTER FOR  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

workforce.otc.edu • cwd@otc.edu  
(417) 447-8884

### WHY CONDUCT A TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

All problems have root causes, and successful businesses continuously look at operations, policies, processes, and procedures to root out those problems and improve business results. Without a clear understanding of WHY a problem is occurring, there's no way to know if training your employees is the correct solution. This is why time and resources spent on a training needs assessment is so important.

### WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR IN A NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

A well-designed and administered needs assessment provides you with answers as to *why* there is a gap in employee performance. Not all performance gaps are remedied with training...only the ones where the root cause is determined to be the result of a lack of knowledge and/or skill. Assessment tools, such as HR records, individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, questionnaires and self-assessments, and observations can provide answers to questions such as the following:

- What is currently happening that leads you to the conclusion there is a problem? What *should be* happening?
- How is this problem affecting our business strategy?
- What is the root cause of the problem? Who is involved?
- What is your role in solving this problem?
- Will training provide the outcomes you are looking for?
- Will the company value employee training as a viable solution?
- What outcomes will show you that the problem has been solved?
- If training will provide the desired outcomes, what choices are available?

The deeper you dive into performance gaps and the root cause of problems, the more likely you are to find the appropriate solution—whether it be better communication strategies, more efficient workspaces, greater machine capacity/efficiency, or stronger employee knowledge and skills.

### SHOULD I SEEK OUTSIDE HELP WITH THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

No one knows your company better than you; however, it's often helpful to seek an expert outside perspective to guide you through the needs assessment. Conducting a needs assessment takes time, and if you aren't familiar with the process and pitfalls of doing it incorrectly, using an outside professional with experience may make more sense.

The Business Solutions Team at the Center for Workforce Development is dedicated to helping our clients find and implement consulting, training, and professional development solutions to work smarter and reach your strategic goals and objectives. Be sure to check out our next white paper discussing training solution methods.