

Training and Development Program for Apple Inc.

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Introduction

Training and Development Programs whatever the size is has been given by most organizations outright importance in the present business environment. It can range from training the staff or employees on how to use a new piece of software, complete a form, give good customer service or write a professional letter. What is important is that training is an essential part of every organization's management. Practically speaking, the idea of investing on the employees or on the people within the organization makes a good business sense. This is why most companies formalize training these people and even allocate budget and resources for the said training. In doing so, it creates an impact on the company whether to acknowledge training and development relevant in terms of earning a profit since it is a given that investing for this does not guarantee that it will be a good or an effective one and may just add up to losses in time, money and effort.

The course project is designed to provide you with real life practical experience in conducting a training/OD needs assessment for a selected organization and developing a training or intervention strategy to address the needs that have been identified.

In this case, the selected organization will be Apple Inc. and for the purpose of this paper, a Needs Assessment for the selected organization was developed and conducted to identify necessary training needs based on the analysis of data collected. In addition, an appropriate Training or Intervention Strategy was developed in order to address the identified training need. And finally, to be able to check the effectiveness of the Needs Assessment and the Training or Intervention Strategy, the cost should be determined and the results should be quantified by employing an over-all evaluation of the Training and Development program.

PART 1 Selection of an Organization: Apple Inc.

Apple Inc. formerly known as Apple Computers Inc. was chosen for this term project. The most logical thing done at this phase of the project is becoming familiarized with the organization's business, goals, objectives and mission for purposes of completing the project successfully. It is because understanding what drives the company to achieve its goal makes it easier to identify the areas that they need to focus into and provides vital information regarding the culture within the company and the culture of its employees. This was the jumping board in the development of the appropriate training/intervention strategy with reference to the analysis of the collected data and into the identification of what training is needed by the company. And for an organization such as the Apple Inc. with a history that is very rich in experiencing both the best and the worst from the industry but has still managed to emerge as one of the significant and influential leaders in the computer industry. It can be attributed to kind of corporate culture that is being practiced within the company and within all of its employees.

A. Background Information on Apple Inc.

Type	Public (NASDAQ: AAPL, LSE: ACP, FWB: APC)
Founded	April 1, 1976 at California
Headquarters	Cupertino, California, USA
Key People	Steve Jobs, CEO and co-founder Steve Wozniak, Co-founder Timothy D. Cook, COO Peter Oppenheimer, CFO Philip W. Schiller, SVP Marketing Jonathan Ive, SVP Industrial Design Tony Fadell, SVP iPod Division Ron Johnson, SVP Retail Sina Tamaddon, SVP Applications

	Bertrand Serlet, SVP Software Engineering
Industry	Computer Hardware Computer Software Computer Electronics
Products	Macintosh, Mac OSX, Mac OS X Server, iPod, QuickTime, iLife, iWork, Apple Remote Desktop, Xsan, Final Cut Studio, Aperture, Logic Pro, Cinema Display, AirPort, Xserve, Xserve RAID, iPhone, Apple TV
Revenue	US\$ 19.3 billion (TTM First Quarter of 2006)
Operating Income	US\$ 2.12 billion (TTM First Quarter of 2006)
Net Income	US\$ 1.73 billion (TTM First Quarter of 2006)
Employees	17,787 full-time; 2,399 temporary (As of September 30, 2006)
Website	Apple.com

B. Apple Inc. Business Summary

Apple Computer, Inc. is an American computer technology company that is known for its innovative but closed and proprietary hardware and software. It creates, designs, produces, sells and supports personal computers and other related personal-computing solutions for the use by customers on education, creative, consumer and business. Apple Inc.'s personal-computing products consist of desktop and notebook PCs, related devices and peripherals, networking and connectivity products and various third-party hardware products. Listed, as its software products and computer technology are the operating systems, professional application software, consumer-oriented application software, education-oriented application software, business-oriented application software, Internet products and technologies, wireless connectivity and networking products. In addition, it has also retail stores that which also carries third-party hardware and software products besides its own line of merchandise.

Apple Inc. is relatively a new corporate name. Traditionally, Apple Inc. carries the name Apple Computer Inc. for almost 30 years and it is previously focusing only on the personal computers, computer hardware and computer software arena. But in the advent of technology and the ever-changing consumer need, they were able to evolve and add a shift in their business by going into consumer electronics market. It started with its introduction of the portable media players, famous of which are the iPods and then eventually they were able to introduce smartphone, iPhone and AppleTV digital video systems.

In terms of the span of the Apple brand, it was also able to go global wherein it allows consumers from at least 42 countries including, to name a few, Australia, Brazil, Germany and Taiwan to purchase its products. As of now, Apple Inc. operates more than 170 retail stores in the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and United Kingdom. Most of its products go into these big markets and has been showing a steady increase in revenues and sales. It is for a fact that Apple Computer Inc. has also suffered big losses in the past due to the claims of complicated personal computers but they were still able to regain their position in the industry by innovating their design. It was the creation of more people-friendly personal computers and personalized consumer electronics that gave them the advantage. This feature together with the marketing strategy of flooding the market with retail stores paved way for the Apple computers to hit bigger sales.

All of these achievements were anchored on the people behind its operations starting from those who develops and designs the product down to those who staffs the retail stores. There are approximately 20,000 employees working for the Apple Inc. This would include permanent and temporary employees worldwide all of which are embracing the ideology of the Apple brand as exemplified by its corporation to “Think Different.”

C. Apple Inc. Culture

Corporate Mission Statement:

Apple Inc. is committed to bringing the best personal computing experience to students, educators, creative professionals and consumers around the world through its innovative hardware, software and Internet offerings.

Corporate Goals:

1. Apple Inc. plans to keep creating and releasing computers and consumer electronics that are more user-friendly.
2. Apple Inc. will focus more opening more stores even on international locations to help increase in sales.

Corporate Culture:

Apple Inc. is considered to be one of the most highly successful companies founded in the 1970s. It went away from the traditional corporate culture that is known to most companies at that time and continued to be different in its own unique method of managing its organization. Basically, the company worked on the concept of informal corporate culture within the technology industry where it favored a flat organizational hierarchy rather than the tall version. Another illustration is that working in Apple Inc. does not require its people to wear formal attire but they can freely work with their casual clothes on. This trait says a lot on what kind of corporate culture they have and differentiated them from their competitors. It might sound absurd but they actually value the quality of work, creativity, innovation and raw talent

amongst other things. Moreover, Apple Inc. is known for fostering individuality and this attributes to the talented people employed by the company. This generally contributed to the notion of the informal corporate culture due to the respect of people's identity and the harmonious co-existence of cultural differences within them geared toward achieving their goal. This is where the wide range of philosophy falls in terms of aesthetic design, the countercultural roots. The goal of Apple Inc. is related more on emphasizing the user experience over the technology involved in bringing that experience. With this, the company was able to cultivate a customer base that is more particular to the company and its brand.

User Culture:

The existence of Apple Inc. user culture can be explained as the product of the corporate culture being followed by the company. We can say that most of the company goals, objectives and mission are all leaning towards customer satisfaction. This is because the character of the company gives more importance on the benefit and the pleasure being given by the Apple computer products to its end-user. Making them the target of all the improvements in the product consequently created amongst the user a certain phenomenon called brand loyalty. Based on studies, it is the Apple brand that is leading in the highest brand and repurchase loyalty from all of the computer manufacturers. In fact, market research showed that most of the consumers of Apple computer and electronic products are those that are equally creative, unusually artistic and well-educated population. They can even tap wider market. But it was actually part of the strategy by the chief executives of the company to create this condition by flooding the market with innovative, creatively designed and user friendly products and put up a non-stop marketing scheme.

PART 2 Training Needs Analysis (Needs Assessment) for Apple Inc.

Apple computer has experienced both good and bad times as a main player in the computer industry. It has been a leader in computer technology in the past but has struggled recently in keeping pace in the fast developing computer industry. Emergent technology and developing computer applications have contributed to a business environment that is very competitive. Survival in this industry needs the skill to foresee changes and to effectively react to market demands. The computer industry has grown for the last two decades due to the popularity of personal computers even as a household item. This market is no longer limited to the business and educational environment; computers are a consumer good worldwide. Apple Computer, Inc. must respond to this business environment if it is to survive in the future. This is the driving factor for this project. Training Needs Analysis can be complex and demands a creative, people focused environment. Basing from the introduction for the Apple Inc. it seemed that the people needed to prepare the Training Needs Analysis are already within their organization. It would just be a matter of forming the team maybe from the management or from the HR/Training and Development Department. For this to be successful, the process should be designed in a way that it is simple to use but is effective. Again, this is parallel with the basic philosophy of Apple Inc. that is to be user friendly.

The purpose of a Training Needs Analysis is to ensure the best possible returns for the organization. It works in such a way that Training and Development activities for the company depending on the target training audience should be planned and managed similarly with what we are doing with investments. The Training and Development Program that will be implemented must be dependent on the identified training needs that were properly identified and prioritized for the organization to achieve its objectives.

The familiarization towards the selected organization which is the Apple Inc. was already made in the first phase of this project. The overview is not that enough in determining right away to what to do for the training since the company in focus is quite large in terms of employment and its share in the market is worldwide. So it is better to start the analysis on a higher level. The first stage then, is to decide where to begin. There are a number of advantages to starting your analysis at a high level:

- a. You identify the purpose of each individual role in relation to the overall organizational aims and objectives.
- b. Training can be easily prioritized according to its importance to the overall organizational objectives, rather than its importance to an individual role.
- c. For a new project, department or team, it enables you to identify the individual responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the team, and individuals within the team, without losing sight of the overall objective.

There are numerous situations wherein training needs can be assessed from and they can be from an individual role, project team, department, or an entire organization. These are called business entities but they are simply levels of organization where we can extract the training need. Since we don't have any idea where to start, we can choose to take a high level overview of training needs from organization down to staff because the further the analysis is, the more accurate it is likely to be.

Selection of Analysis to Employ for Apple Inc.

This means that there is a need to employ either of the three; Organizational analysis, Person analysis or Task analysis.

1. **Organizational analysis** involves determining the appropriateness of training, given the organization's business strategy, its resources available for training, and support by managers and peers for training activities.
2. **Person analysis** involves determining whether performance deficiencies result from a lack of knowledge, skill, or ability (a training issue) or from a motivational or work-design problem and (2) identifying who needs training and (3) determining employees' readiness for training.
3. **Task analysis** identifies the important tasks and knowledge, skill and behaviors that need to be emphasized in training for employee to complete their tasks.

Determining the Size of the Training Audience

Another important consideration is to which level the training will be. The size desired training program for Apple Inc. will determine the nature of assessment, so start by determining the size of your potential training pool.

- a. For a few members in a single department, very informal assessment methods like interviews, observation, and review of work samples may work well.
- b. For a group of 10-20, or for a cross-functional group, you may need to use slightly more structured methods, such as questionnaires.
- c. Larger groups are often assessed through sampling - using a few representative individuals instead of everyone.

In general, it would be a daunting task to figure out which analysis to do for the case of Apple Inc. because based on its objectives there are a lot of important things that can be considered and it seems everything needs to be prioritized. But using assessment methods such

as reviewing business document, conducting interviews, doing observations, and passing out assessment questionnaires will help in this aspect.

Selecting the Appropriate Assessment Methods

Observations are sometimes considered the most direct method of collecting needs assessment data, although in many cases, a great deal of inference is involved in interpreting observations. Interviews are considered the easiest way of collecting needs assessment data. Questionnaires and focus groups may also be relatively effective and efficient methods. It is sometimes important to verify the results of interviews with observations and document analysis. The assessment of training needs is accomplished through a questionnaire that focuses on seven major skill competencies: Work, communication, people, leadership, customer focus, business and analytical skills.

Assessment Questionnaires:

Please rate the importance of the following skills using 1=not important and 9=very important.

1. WORK SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Seeks and utilizes opportunities for continuous learning and self improvement</i>	
<i>b. Responds to changing organizations</i>	
<i>c. Anticipates unexpected hurdles or obstacles to a project</i>	
2. COMMUNICATION SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Accurately attends to/understands ideas which are exchanged</i>	
<i>b. Delivers influential presentations</i>	
<i>c. Listens carefully</i>	
3. PEOPLE SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Displays confidence in others' talents and abilities</i>	
<i>b. Recognizes and rewards people for doing their best</i>	
<i>c. Constructively receives criticism and suggestions from others</i>	
4. LEADERSHIP SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Motivates other in order to achieve organizational goals</i>	
<i>b. Empowers others to achieve results and holds them accountable for actions</i>	

<i>c. Gives others direct, constructive, and actionable feedback which can be used</i>	
5. CUSTOMER FOCUS SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Considers customers point of view when making decisions</i>	
<i>b. Is effective in satisfying customer needs</i>	
<i>c. Pursues the best customer-focused responses that add value to the business</i>	
6. BUSINESS SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Able to align resources to meet the business needs of the company</i>	
<i>b. Understands the costs, profits, markets, and added value of issues</i>	
<i>c. Focuses on needs of customers</i>	
7. ANALYTICAL SKILLS	RATE
<i>a. Selects the appropriate techniques for analysis</i>	
<i>b. Interprets financial data, reports, balance sheets, and cash flow analysis</i>	
<i>c. Generates alternative solutions to problems and challenges.</i>	

Another effective way of determining training needs is by reviewing business documents. This offers a more formal basis of determining the exact area that needs solution or corrective action or it can be used to determine areas of poor performance developmental needs. Documentation review, e.g., looking at employee personnel records, can provide useful needs assessment data. Of course, in some situations, it may be difficult or impossible to obtain desired documents. Examples of documents that can be reviewed from the files of the Apple Inc. include:

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1. Unit Productivity Reports
 2. Customer Satisfaction Surveys
 3. Communication Survey Reports
 4. Competitive Analysis Report
-

At this point, we will be using a survey form to be able to gauge what is needed by most of the employees within the organization. The strategy that can be used is sampling for all of the departments of Apple Inc. which means a survey will be given to representative groups from each of the department. The Training Needs Survey form is shown below.

TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY FORM		Apple Inc.			
<i>Division:</i> _____					
<i>Job Level:</i> _____					
<i>Length of stay:</i> _____					
<i>Basis of Employment:</i> _____					
1. What areas listed below would you like for training programs? Select your top three.					
<i>Supervisor/Management Skills</i>	<i>Affirmative Action</i>	<i>Conflict Management</i>			
<i>Workplace Technology</i>	<i>Stress Management</i>	<i>Work Life Issues</i>			
<i>Hiring and Recruitment</i>	<i>Hiring and Firing Procedures</i>	<i>Customer Service</i>			
<i>Sexual Harassment</i>	<i>Strategic Planning</i>	<i>Performance Management</i>			
<i>Rewards and Recognition</i>	<i>Organizational Skills</i>	<i>Others (Please specify.)</i>			
2. How important are the following training topics? (Please check.)					
<i>Training Topics</i>	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Not Now</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
<i>Grievance Procedure</i>					
<i>Employee Performance Management</i>					
<i>Customer Service Skills</i>					
<i>Workplace Ethics</i>					
<i>Conflict Management</i>					
<i>Strategic Planning</i>					
<i>Organizational Skills</i>					
<i>Hiring and Firing Procedures</i>					
<i>Presentation Skills</i>					
<i>Et al</i>					

PART 3 Identification of Training Needs based on Data Analysis

Training needs for the Apple Inc. were based on the three assessment employed that included assessment questionnaires for the different skills of the employees, the formal basis using document reviews of the company and the data of employees and lastly, Training and Development survey form for representative people per department.

Assuming that the questionnaires and survey forms were already given to the target audience, the next step would be evaluating which training needs should be chosen. The data should be put up against result of the document review. Every activity undertaken within the organization should contribute to the achievement of these objectives. Whether or not such a plan exists however, you will still need to work with line management to identify the primary and secondary business objectives for the business entity being reviewed.

Most likely, the training needs for the Apple Inc. will be more on the general, technical and soft skills training that would prepare them in complying with business objectives of the company. It should be noted that the character of the employee needed by the company are those that are critical and yet have high regards for individuality. They should be as flexible as the designs they make for their products.

PART 4 Training and Intervention Strategies

Training can be defined as making available to employees planned and coordinated educational programs of instruction in professional, technical, or other fields that are or will be related to the employee's job responsibilities. Training can be accomplished through a variety of approaches, such as classroom training, e-learning, and professional conferences that are educational or instructional in nature. Development is generally considered to include training,

structured on-the-job learning experiences, and education. Developmental programs can include experiences such as coaching, mentoring, or rotational assignments. The essential aim of training and development programs is to assist the agency in achieving its mission and goals by improving individual and, ultimately, organizational performance.

It has been said that the objective of the investigative segment of the Training and Development Program lies on the creation of a developmental strategy. This is why the identification of training needs does not necessarily guarantee that this will already bring benefits to the Apple Inc. It would only serve as a reminder for the superiors to look into the weak points and come up with the appropriate solution and in this case it is the actual selection of the training and development program and the method that should be employed targeting the best results.

There two ways that will help in the choice for what training method to use. First, after the identification of the training needs, the willingness of the company should be checked and so with the employees as to how far they can go for the project. It will involve confirming their budget, time and the acknowledgement of the project as urgent and important for them and for the company. With all of these, the management can now look into the most suitable methods based on their assessed stand of the company and there are actually a lot available to choose from depending on the allowed scope, budget and time by the management. It should be tailored for the training needs and it can be taken from the following list:

<i>TYPE OF METHOD</i>	<i>EXAMPLES</i>
<i>Training Sessions</i>	<i>Traditional Classroom Simulations Self-Managed Strategies Performance Opportunity</i>
<i>Career Management Systems</i>	<i>Self-assessment Programs Mentoring Systems Action Planning</i>
<i>Organizational Development</i>	<i>Team Building</i>

<i>Intervention Activities</i>	<i>Inter-group Activities</i> <i>Survey Feedback Activities</i> <i>Education and Training Activities</i> <i>Structural Activities</i> <i>Process Consultation</i> <i>Blake-Mouton Grid Activities</i> <i>Third Party Peacemaking</i> <i>Coaching and Counseling</i> <i>Career Planning</i> <i>Goal Setting</i>
<i>System Redesign</i>	<i>Search Conferences</i> <i>Confrontation Meetings</i> <i>Strategic Planning</i>

The next option is to get the general opinion of the participants. Depending on the identified training need for the case of Apple Inc. training audience, it would be best to conduct a survey amongst the participants to be able to determine the best method of training to employ.

A sample survey that can be used is illustrated in the table below.

Instruction: Please rate the method of training you feel would be most effective to achieve your learning goals: (Please check)

	<i>Not Very Effective</i>	<i>Somewhat Effective</i>	<i>Very Effective</i>
<i>Classroom</i>			
<i>Video</i>			
<i>Online</i>			
<i>Workshops</i>			
<i>Computer-based Training</i>			
<i>Web Conferencing</i>			

From this survey, it will help the management to align the scope, budget and time with the most suitable training method chosen by the training audience and will also serve as gauge in determining which is the most effective for the training audience. It will at least help in reducing the efforts in considering the training or intervention strategy to use. In a way, it will cater to many advantages since, there are direct data to be used as basis for the decision and it also provides flexibility since many options were given. It would just be in the optimizing the resources based on the training needs.

PART 5 Cost-Benefit Analysis for the Training and Development Program

The most logical thing to do next after identifying the training needs for the Apple Inc. and determining the appropriate method of training is to conduct a Cost-Benefit Analysis. The idea here is to simply sum up all of the costs entailed in conducting training needs assessment and total costs in the actual training and development of the training audience, and weigh it versus the anticipated results. A solid cost-benefit analysis relies mainly on the proper identification of the impact of the changes or the proposal before the training and development were conducted. Example of which are the lesser rejection leading to higher productivity rate, faster operations due to deletion of redundant processes in the system, significant cost savings due to the acquisition of new equipment, and many other examples. Only at this condition, we can directly confirm if there were improvements in the system, reduction of losses in the process or simply if there were more benefits than expenses.

For the case of the Apple Inc., the cost-benefit criterion means that as a system is changed, it's expected additional benefits should exceed its expected additional costs. Often times the benefits are difficult to measure because of the intangible considerations such as human

motivation for work, morale boosts and confidence at work or even the possibility of a team reaching a level of better decision-making. All of the said examples are considered good benefits but the measurement of its impact on the actual costs will be vague. Sometimes this becomes the reason of reluctance in adopting new suggestions or actively supporting the training and development programs because of the fact that the apparent benefits do not exceed the obvious costs of gathering and interpreting the information plus the actual training. It is a serious decision that should be taken by the management of Apple Inc. in the approval of the conduct of training needs analysis and the formal training.

At this point, it is also best to consider in conducting a needs assessment to have a forward planning that would include the feasibility of the possible outcome of the assessment. In such a case, it should be flexible enough for the various possible scenarios and have alternatives options just in case there will be uncalled for changes alteration in the program.

PART 6 Training and Development Program Evaluation

Determinants of a Successful Training and Development Program

Effective training and development programs are an essential component of a learning environment that can improve the Apple Inc.'s ability to attract and retain employees with the skills and competencies needed to achieve results for the benefit of the company. Training and developing new and current staff to fill up new roles and work in dissimilar ways will be a decisive part in the endeavors of the company to meet its transformation challenges. Ways that employees learn and achieve results will also continue to transform how Apple Inc. do business

and engage or force the employees in further innovation and improvements in line with its objectives.

Specific Outcomes Expected from the Training and Development Program

Effectively implementing this program would generally empower employees and improve their performance. These are the basic outcomes that can be expected though it is very hard to set or find clearly identifiable information on how training and development efforts contributed to improved performance, reduced costs, or a greater capacity to meet new and emerging transformation challenges. The conduct of evaluations of training and development programs is often discussed in terms of levels. One usually established model consists of five levels of assessment that gauge

- (1) participant reaction to the training program,
- (2) changes in employee skills, knowledge, or abilities,
- (3) changes in on-the-job behaviors,
- (4) the impact of the training on program or organizational results, and
- (5) a return on investment.

Method of Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Training and Development Program

Effectiveness of the Training and Development program is automatically justified if it was able to target the goals and objectives to the dot. Logically because of the fact that the training was conducted to address the identified training needs. The immediate way of evaluating

whether the program was effective is by way of giving out Training Evaluation Form right after the actual training. This is gathering feedback.

An example of which is shown below:

TRAINING EVALUATION FORM

Apple Inc.

Course Title:

Participant:

Please check the box that best describes each item based on your evaluation.

ITEMS DESCRIPTIONS	RATING			SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	Excellent 5	Good 3	Fair 1	
ON TRAINORS / FACILITATORS				
<i>Inter-personal skills</i>				
<i>Communication sills</i>				
<i>Knowledge of subject matter</i>				
<i>Ability to arouse interest and sustain participation</i>				
ON THE SEMINAR				
<i>Clarity of course objectives</i>				
<i>Effectiveness of Training Methodology Used</i>				
<i>Handouts quality and quantity</i>				
<i>Learning from the workshop activities</i>				
<i>Relevance of the workshop</i>				
OTHER TRAINING FACTORS				
<i>The venue and training facility</i>				
<i>Time allotment for each topic</i>				
<i>Accommodations</i>				
<i>Service Quality</i>				
OVER-ALL RATING OF PROGRAM				

_____ Thank you for your active participation _____

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