



An Outline For Successful TNA Project Planning

About MTD



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Sean McPheat is the **Chief Executive Officer** of the multi-award winning **MTD Training Group**.

Founded in 2001 and having trained hundreds of thousands of staff since, MTD specialise in management and leadership development and also sales effectiveness programmes.

There are **3 specific divisions** to the group:

Management/Leadership



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Sales Effectiveness



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TRAINING NEEDS – PROJECT PLANNING

This document is designed to give you a high level planning and control aid so that you can manage a “Training Needs Analysis” project.

Assessing the training needs of your organisation is one of the most vital activities of a Training Manager.

Why is this?

Well, it's quite simple really – in order to achieve the business objectives and mission your staff will need to be equipped with the skills, knowledge and behaviour that will turn those objectives into reality.

The first stop you need to make however is to work out what those skills need to be and then work out where the gaps are in terms of what abilities your staff currently have.

This can be quite a daunting task even if you are a very small company.

So where do you start?

This short guide is not supposed to give you a step by step plan of what to do and how to do it as there are too many variables to consider and each business is different. Instead, it is intended to give you a starting point and to give you some focus and clarity on what you need to achieve and where to start to run a successful TNA project.

IT COULD DRIVE YOU COMPLETELY POTTY

Before we look at the project process, I'd like you to think about what you are actually setting out to do because not only have you got to do it but you have also got to describe it to others too!

This could include your MD, the managers of the business, the staff – you name it.

It will really pay you to keep it simple because the more people you have “buy in” with, the easier your job will become.

How do you this?

Well, keep the informed at every step of the way. Make sure they know what they can expect to receive and when and what their involvement in the process is.

If your idea of providing training needs is at a team level for the respective manager to draw out the final detail on yet the manager thinks you are going to provide individual development plans for every member of their team, then you are going to have a big problem! These need to be ironed out BEFORE you start the process.

	BAGGAGE	PRESENT	FUTURE
ORGANISATION			
ROLES			
INDIVIDUAL			

The training needs matrix above explains what you want to achieve from this process.

Let me go through what I mean here.

Let's look at organisation needs first. With this you will want to know what the general weaknesses are of the organisation as a whole or various parts of the business. What needs will the organisation have to have in order to achieve its business objectives.

What baggage does the organisation bring? i.e Did you have a merger some years ago but the integration issues are still ongoing? Are there various parts of the business that are and have been ignored? Have areas of the business not had adequate training in the past? You need to face these issues and identify them full on.

Look at the organisations present and future needs in terms knowledge, skills, behaviours, ability to implement change and innovation etc Next, you want to assess the roles of the business in the same light – do you need new roles? What knowledge and skills are required for each role.

Do any of the roles bring baggage with them? What are the present and future needs for each role?

The final analysis you need to look at are individual needs. What I mean by this is all about performance in the role.

You have assessed the roles themselves for shortcomings and strengths and now you need to look at what is required for the high level of desired performance within each role.

What is required? What are the shortcomings? etc

So that's a high level overview of what you need to get but how do you go about getting it all done?

Here is a process on how to manage the project as a whole. Over the coming weeks and months we will delve into each area in detail.

It is spilt up into 6 main areas:

- Planning and organisation
- Information gathering
- What are the problems and the priorities
- Develop high level solutions
- Discuss with stakeholders
- Final findings/report discussed/presented and signed off

Let's look at each one in turn:

Planning and organisation

- Identify the scope of the TNA project
- Set milestones, priorities and success criteria
- Set up a project plan with timelines for the whole process
- Gain agreement of what is expected of you (very important!)

Information gathering

- Get out and about and gather the needs
- Identify problem areas
- Use surveys, focus groups, appraisal forms, customer feedback, employee opinion surveys, business results etc
- Get line managers to take an active role to help you

What are the problems and the priorities?

- List and categorise the problems
- Analyse the problems
- Impact analysis on each problem – impact, risk etc
- Establish a weighting method for determining the priorities
- Get feedback from others in the business as to the impact of the problems
- Create a “Hit List” of the needs

Develop high level solutions

- Develop a think tank from your training team and/or other managers and develop some solutions
- What can be done in-house? From external suppliers?
- Highlight resources and budget required
- Develop constraints
- Measure needs against business requirements
- What will the “pay off” be of attaining these needs? Business benefits both in tangible and intangible terms
- Produce a draft document and get some initial comments from managers and authority figures

Discuss with stakeholders

- Go through the output and plan with the key stakeholders within the business
- Confirm agreement on the approach and the priorities contained within the plan
- Get their “buy in” in to helping you to make it happen
- Get their opinions on how best to implement the plan in reality

Final findings/report discussed/presented and signed off

- Make sure that no new material is included within the final sign off document that everyone has not already seen and had chance to comment on
- There should be no surprises within the report
- The report should clearly state what your function will do to assist the organisation’s people to achieve the business objectives