Chapter VII

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation
Today, Public Enterprises in India are contributing considerably to the economic development of the nation. In many areas of operation they have to compete with the private sector. Therefore, they must be equipped not only with sophisticated machinery and abundance of capital but skilled and knowledgeable personnel with a high morale as well.

The managers are the most important resources in business organisations and are likely to become obsolete fast if not replenished. This replenishment should take place in terms of updating the knowledge and technical and managerial competence for achieving excellence in their fields. Training goes a long way in enhancing much needed confidence, authority and respect. Training not only pave the way for growth and development of an organisation, but also goes a long way towards placing management of a country on a sound professional basis.

Training occupies a significant position in the Public Enterprises as there has been a growing interest in 'training function' in such undertakings. Public Enterprises recognise human resources as their prime asset. Furthermore, in view of the fact that India is engaged in the task of bringing about a basic transformation in its industrial and economic structure, training assumes greatest purpose and urgency both at the central and state levels.
The SLPEs have an important role to play in achieving the objectives of national development. However, for various reasons the SLPE'S all over the country are facing a number of problems and a number of studies made in this direction have revealed that the problem of human efficiency is one of the main factors responsible for poor performance of SLPEs. In this regard systematic approach towards management training and development can play a crucial role in improving overall organisational performance of SLPEs.

In view of the importance of training in the SLPEs it was proposed to make an indepth study of the training and development practices of the SLPEs of Assam.

The objectives of the study were to review the training and development policies and practices of the SLPEs, examine changes in policy, study the specific measures adopted by the department of Public Enterprises for creating Institutional infrastructure and finally assess the need for further development.

These objectives were based on the following hypothesis.

1) There is a correlation between training and employee performance.
2) Training is an indispensable tool for improving the
Public Enterprises.

3) There is no systematic training policy in the SLPEs.

4) Training is least important area for the Public Enterprises.

5) Only those who can be spared are nominated by the Public Enterprises for attending training programmes.

For this purpose, the study was an Empirical Research based on the survey method covering all the forty eight SLPEs of Assam with an indelph study of the training and development efforts of three SLPEs - STATFED, AEDC and APOL. The SLPEs of Assam have been divided into five categories - manufacturing, trading, miscellaneous, promotional and welfare enterprises. The 48 enterprises as on March'1993, comprised of 9 promotional and welfare oriented enterprise, 21 manufacturing enterprise, 6 trading enterprise, 7 Agro and Plantation based, 3 construction based and 2 miscellaneous enterprise. The SLPEs are engaged in a wide spectrum of activities but training is one of the most neglected aspect of Personnel Management. Moreover, the SLPEs as we know are highly varied and so it is obvious that while units under one category of P.E.'s may have common training needs, requirements of another category of P.E.'s may be essentially different from other categories. There are however some areas in which the requirement of all units converge example in fields of labour relations and career development of
personnel. The review of training practices of the SLPEs revealed that most of the SLPEs were making some efforts in imparting management training to its managers but training continued to remain a low priority area. Most of the managers in charge of the training activity in the SLPEs felt that training has not been accepted by top management as an important activity of the organisation. In most of the SLPEs, no separate budget is sanctioned for training activities. Organisations either do not feel that this task is important enough to think of a budget or their training efforts are insignificant that it does not require a budget. Human Resource Development is however never possible in the absence of adequate financial support. Through discussions it was found that the SLPEs did not make any systematic efforts in identifying needs of the employees before imparting any training. By and large, they nominated persons who had not attended any programmes earlier or who were not doing a fruitful job or whom the departmental head wanted to favour. Based on own observations and discussion with trainees, it was found that some of the methods used by the SLPEs for determining training needs were - Interviews, discussion with trainees and superiors, subordinates and peers, analysis of organisational plans and performance appraisal. There was on the whole an absence of clear identification of training needs.
It was found that most of the selection and nomination of managers for various training programmes was done arbitrarily. Training budget was one of the determinants of sponsoring managers for training. In many situations, there was a pressure particularly, towards the end of the financial year to send more personnel for training. Managers were often nominated to training without really considering the specific training requirements. Various factors like minimum period of service, seniority and budget availability were taken into consideration while nominating a manager for a training programme.

After attending any training programme, very rarely was there any discussion between the trainees and his/her boss as to what was learnt and what could be transferred. In most cases feedback was sought by simply asking the trainees how they liked the place and the course with no emphasis on any concrete action plan.

The indepth study of the three selected SLPEs - STATFED, APOL AEDC revealed that training was an insignificant activity of the personnel department. The reason for nominating managers to attend training programmes were often a combination of factors like organisational policy for taking up higher responsibility and for improving certain areas of weaknesses. Nominations were also made to utilise the training
budget or to give holiday to a few employees every year or to develop employees capabilities in an unplanned way rather than as a part of planned strategy for improving performance in the present job or to prepare for future roles. Since there was no HRD philosophy, the employees did not interpret organisational decisions from a developmental perspective resulting in employee loosing a development opportunity without even being aware of it.

There was no effective post-training follow-up. After attending training programmes, there was often a routine discussion between the trainees and his boss. Very rarely was there a discussion between the trainees and his boss as to what was learnt and what could be transferred. The views of the trainees regarding various training programmes which they attended was quite positive. Apart from the direct benefits of training in the form of additional knowledge and skills, most of the cases revealed that training helped to develop self confidence of the trainees. The training programme which included course inputs which were not only directly related to the trainees area of work, but also generalist in nature, helped the trainees to view the organisations problems in totality, improved their attitudes and enhanced their decision making skills.

Identification of training needs serves as a basis
for any effective training and development effort. Proper identification of training needs help to assess the gap between the standard competence required in a job and the existing competence. In an organisation, training needs exist at the individual level, occupational level and organisational level. Some of the ways of identifying training needs include:

1) Performance appraisal, 2) Discussions with seniors and 3) Conducting a survey. It was found that the three SLPEs indicated performance appraisal of the individual and personal interview with the superior of the manager as the most favoured methods. However, the performance appraisal system could not be followed successfully as the performance appraisal system in the three SLPEs were not developmental oriented and did not indicate any systematic effort towards developing subordinates.

A close look at the various criteria used for identifying training needs revealed that the three selected SLPEs adopted an adhoc approach towards identifying the training needs of the managers. Although each enterprise had some procedure for identifying training needs, but the procedure was not systematic. It was seen that there was a column in their annual appraisal report with regard to the training needs. However, in reality in most cases while taking training decisions, the appraisal reports were rarely consulted and even if they were consulted not much weightage
was given to them.

Comparison of the three selected SLPEs on the basis of the following criteria - 1) Setting Training Objectives, 2) Training Needs Assessment, 3) Selection/Nomination of participants and 4) Post Training follow-up revealed some common approaches forwards training and development.

It was found that the organisations lacked clarity and were vague about the objectives of training. When training objectives are inadequately formulated, even very good training objectives will not be effective. It was found that none of the three SLPEs had a set pattern of discussing training objectives with training institutions and with their nominees. It is only when there is a clarity of objectives that the trainees will be able to derive maximum benefit personally and professionally from the training programme.

Proper Selection/Nomination of participants is another important dimension of training. If proper selection procedures are not applied, then the very purpose of training can get defeated. Selection of the right person for the right course, motivates the trainee to learn and implement the acquired knowledge and skill. The three selected SLPEs adopted some common criteria for selection of managers like-
1) Looking into the course content of the programmes.
2) Training as preparation for promotion.
3) For overcoming certain areas of weakness.
4) Informal discussions between trainee, his boss and training department regarding training needs.

However, none of the three SLPEs had systematised their selection/nomination practice.

Organisational support in the form of systematic post training follow-up is necessary. This ensures that after training, the manager takes some initiative in introducing changes and gets the support of the management. Without post-training follow-up the managers becomes critical of the training activity. The three SLPEs had not evolved any formal method of post-training follow-up. It was mostly carried out in an unstructured and disorderly manner. No deliberate effort was made to ensure that training resulted in learning. A common feeling existing in Personnel/Training department was that their duty was over by sponsoring employees for training. The transfer of learning to the job could be made effective when learning acquired during training is reinforced by a systematic follow-up of the trainee when he returns to the organisation.
The study of Assam Institute of Management (AIM) which was promoted by the department of Public Enterprises revealed the efforts made by the Institute in the development of human resources of the SLPEs. A large number of Managers of the SLPEs were trained in the various Management Development Programmes (MDP) organised by the Institute. The Assam Institute of Management organised a number of MDP's in various functional areas of management and majority of the managers of the SLPEs had their first exposure to training at the AIM. The main achievement of the AIM has been the awareness that it has generated about the importance of training.

Since the eighties, the SLPEs are facing the threats of privatisation and staying in the competitive environment requires innovative approaches. The organisations would have to be flexible, adaptive, sensitive and responsive. In this context, the SLPEs will have to make a conscious effort to change in order to cope with the emerging environment. There has to be a change in the orientation of the public sector managers. It is necessary for managers to take a view of the technological changes, the social perspectives, employment, market and operation perspectives as the demand on the managers will be ever increasing. Routine training programmes will have to be replaced by training programmes which are designed after careful assessment of people’s
profile and organisation. The three major challenges which training faces in the nineties are - how to provide lifelong learning, how to provide efficient training and how to provide effective learning. Validity and effectiveness of training become the most crucial issue. Technological innovation in the form of video, computers and optical laser discs are already a part of the training environment and use of tele-conferencing and satellite transmission are also gaining popularity.

The SLPEs can develop a strategic plan where a concrete vision of the training function can be defined. Active involvement of the top management is also necessary and the SLPEs which are striving for effectiveness and excellence will have to transform itself.

Organisational Development can be carried with the help of the high performance change model which emphasises on the critical nature of organisational leadership especially its philosophy, role and style. Some of the modes of transforming the SLPEs include-

a) Sincerity of the Top Man.
b) Equal partnership.
c) Systematic Enquiry.
d) Trust and confidence and
e) Sustaining through continuous reaffirmation and reinforcement.
From the study the following general conclusion have been drawn.

1) There is a need to reorient the managerial personnel, having no formal management education, to modern management practices.

2) There is also a need to develop certain basic skills in problem solving and handling complex but frequently arising situations that public enterprise managers have to generally face.

3) Finally there is also a need to develop certain attitudes and behaviour patterns and also develop some kind of team spirit which enables the public enterprise manager to view himself as an integral part of the entire managerial cadre of the enterprise.

Based on the conclusions arrived at, the following recommendations are made.

The role of the Personnel/Training department must change and the training department must take up the following activities.

1) Provide professional guidance and advice on matters relating to development of skills and knowledge.

2) Coordinate training activities and prepare corporate long...
term training plans.

3) Collect and interpret inputs relating to performance problems in the enterprise.

4) Identify training needs and analyse post training performance with the collaboration of managers.

5) Develop systems and procedures for integrating policies relating to career planning, training and human resource development.

6) Conduct and coordinate training programmes on the basis of specific needs that are determined in collaboration with managers.

The training department has to develop collaborative relationship with other departments. It should be aware of all changes in policies structures and objectives of an enterprise. There should be a comprehensive training policy, which should outline the scope of all training activities, approaches to determining training needs, assessment of priorities, linkage of training with career planning and development of guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of training. A comprehensive, and coherent training policy must become an integral part of the SLPEs personnel function. Evolution of policy alone is not enough, it must also be implemented. A commitment on the part of top management is an important requirement for its successful implementation.
A final step in the strategy for making training effective is to strengthen a programme of research and development for training. The Assam Institute of Management, which is a nodal agency responsible for training in the governmental set up can play a key role in this direction by coordinating the assessment of training needs by different organisations and using their evaluation reports in different training activities for evolving a new curricula and methodology to improve training effectiveness. Above all, The Institute through frequent conferences, meetings and seminars and collaborative research projects should establish continuous dialogues between universities and training Institutions and provide a much needed linkage between training and developmental goals.

To sum up, the strategy for training should be to provide continuous training and training should be linked to strategic objectives of the organisation. The emphasis should be on tailor made training programmes and there should be complete involvement of top Management in planning and preferably implementation of training programmes.