Chapter IV

Comparative analysis of the three selected SLP.
INTRODUCTION

An organisation’s concern before training lie mainly in four areas: clarifying the precise objectives of training and the use the organisation expects to make of the participants after training; selection of suitable participants; building favourable expectations and motivation in the participants prior to training; and planning for changes that improved task performance will require in addition to training, such as physical and organisational rearrangements, including, perhaps some capital expenditure (1).

Every organisation which thinks in terms of making a serious effort towards training and development of its managers must look into the following four aspects.

1. Training objective,
2. Training need assessment,
3. Selection/Nomination of participants,
4. Post training follow-up.

All the above stated factors are equally important and the neglect of any one of the above factors might nullify the efforts made towards adopting a systematic approach towards training and development of its managers.
The three SLPEs taken up for study has been compared on the basis of the parameters stated above.

Setting Training Objectives

An organisation must have systematically defined training objectives which are incongruence with the objectives of the organisation. Setting training objectives is of strategic importance because it defines and controls quality of a product as well as it substantially influences all the subsequent stages of the training system.

Objectives are normally developed on the basis of each identified training need derived from job requirements. Training objectives tend to fall in three categories: knowledge, ability and attitude giving rise to different terms such as cognitive objective, conative objective and affective objective respectively. Knowledge, skill and attitude are complementary and supplementary to each other. They are concerned with promoting and guiding learning in the learner. They in turn develop confidence in him to apply learning in job situation to achieve organisational objectives. But they vary in degree on various counts so far as determination of their objectives is concerned. It is always desirable that the training objective is job oriented and is expressed in behavioural terms.
Cognitive Objective

Cognitive objective relates to knowledge component of training. In course of a training, the trainee acquires basic knowledge and understanding of subjects, situations, procedures etc necessary for job performance and interprets and applies in his own way to specific situations. Cognitive objectives are thus more person oriented and less job oriented. It is highly useful for the top managers whose jobs are highly unstructured and require more of knowledge inputs of diverse fields like conceptual, behavioural, technical and communication and lesser degree of skills. However, middle managers whose jobs are semi-structured, require comparatively lesser knowledge and more skill inputs while supervisory managers require substantial skill inputs and comparatively lesser knowledge because their jobs are highly structured.

Conative Objectives

Conative objectives are related to skill component of training. Conative objectives of training are relevant for all managerial and non-managerial personnel of an organisation seeking training. They are job centred and are thus tailor made.
Affective Objective

Relate to developing or improving attitude to elicit desired behaviour. Attitude is a subjective aspect and is formed in an individual on the basis of his knowledge, experience and his relationships with other people and outside world. Although it is a complete phenomena, it is easier to develop attitude than improve knowledge and skill if some kind of positive motivation is provided to the person.

Training objectives classified into cognitive, conative and affective objectives denote three segments of training - knowledge, skill and attitude. Sometimes the three objectives can be combined together and the training objective may be to have a composite training programme.

Training objectives can further be classified into (i) Specific learning objective where a statement of ideal or standard specification of performance for which the learner will be trained is stated and (ii) Overall learning objective - which refers to the summary of all specific learning objectives.

Training objectives denote two aspects of a training - quantity and quality. Quantitative objective is concerned with the number of persons to be trained during a particular period of time. This numerical expression of
training objective may be treated as training targets. Qualitative objective is associated with the standard of competence to which the learner will be trained. Qualitative objectives must be determined consciously and deliberately and at the same time, the quantitative objectives must not be undermined. Training is an expensive activity which must strike a judicious balance between quantity and quality to justify costs and none of them should be sacrificed at the cost of each other.\(^{(2)}\)

To take maximum advantage of training it is important for the organisation to have a set policy of training so that before an executive is nominated for training, his weakness and his future needs are identified according to organisational requirements.

The organisation should have an integrated manpower development programme. The objective of such an integrated programme is to make better use of the existing man power and to ensure that both in the long run and in the short run, there will be enough people at all levels and in all departments of the organisation. The main concern is of course to ensure that suitable people will be available to fill key posts in the organisation as needs arise.

The objectives of training can be as follows:

1. Objectives of the organisation at large,
2. Objectives of the organisation for enhancing personnel output in terms of the job performance, individual behaviour and attitude and for future development purposes,

3. Objectives of the personnel for self development.

When these objectives are borne in mind for formulating a training programme, it will create a sense of involvement in the trainees and motivate them to accept and make use of training more effectively. It is essential to ensure that the target groups (trainees) are demarcated with respect to the specific areas of works, and also not disturbed by change of job/area of job immediately after training, so as to enable transfer of training to the job.

There are certain considerations which have to be kept in mind while designing training objectives.

1. Focussing on Resources

The resources that can be allocated to training will always seem inadequate. The challenge is not to see how far they can be spread, but how wisely they can be spent. Spending them wisely usually means focussing on some things at the expense of others. This does not make those other things unimportant, merely less important.

2. Defining the target group of trainees

The organisation should plan with a clear
definition of the target group. With a core of common need identification, programmes can more accurately be planned to respond to the needs of the target group.

3. Involving the trainees

Organisation should always try to involve the trainees because the trainees can also specify what they want & in the process the training programmes can be made practical.

4. Getting the boss involved

The top management must also be appraised of what is going on.

5. Spread the programme over time

Very few changes result from a one shot approach. It is necessary to break the programme into manageable units of time that consider the work demands & schedule of the trainees.

Repeated interaction creates both the opportunity to influence behaviour & the chance for participants to establish relationships & informal networks.
The socialization aspect of a training with repeated exposures is important to the development of values and shared understanding.

Need for having a clear training objectives

An organisation may think of strengthening its training function for one more of the following reasons:

1. It is planning to increase its production substantially necessitating more skilled manpower and more trained managerial personnel to handle various functions.

2. It is planning to expand through diversification and setting up new units and factories.

3. The market conditions have changed requiring managers and other staff to change their attitudes and develop new competencies to meet new challenges.

4. The technology has changed requiring the company also to change or adapt its technology or modernise itself.

5. The role of the organisation in society is changing the demands on the organisation and expectations of the client system require that employees undertake new tasks and respond to environmental changes.
6. The organisation has reached a saturation point in its growth. Employees are stagnating due to lack of growth opportunities. Level of frustration among employees is on the increase.

7. A vacuum at senior and middle levels of management is likely because a number of persons are to retire soon.

8. Internal management situation is messy and management systems and controls are weak.

2. Training Need Identification

It is a very important step in the process of nominating a manager for training. The second part of the third chapter has focussed on this parameter and it has been found that none of the three selected SLPE had followed a proper training need identification process.

3. Selection/Nomination of Participants

Training need identification is followed by selection procedure for training. To ensure motivation to learn and apply the acquired knowledge, utmost care has to be taken to select the right person for the right course/training.

Faulty selection procedures for training can defeat
the very objectives of training. The trainees will not be as receptive as they ought to be for training & training effectiveness will be lost. The motivation to learn is closely linked with the selection process, because if the organisation is not serious about selecting the right persons, for the right learning, the question of motivation to learn & implementation of acquired knowledge & skill does not arise.

If the individual is highly motivated prior to attending the actual course, his learning will be high provided other conditions are also suitable. If the initial motivation to learn is lacking during the programme, the learning will be low and so will the transfer.

Selecting suitable participants is a complicated matter. It involves the organisations readiness and the individual’s readiness and the individual’s convenience at the time. It needs to avoid questions of popularity or reward for past services. Some organisations have clarified their operations sufficiently to pinpoint personnel for definite plans for growth & diversification. The question of who is to be involved in the selection is also important. Ideally selection becomes a joint responsibility of organisation and candidate that carries through to helping participants use their, training afterwards. Certainly, candidates’ immediate superiors need to be involved. So do immediate colleagues who will be affected by their absence and by their different jobs.
performance after training. The people with whom candidates work better than others their suitability, performances and prospects for training. Moreover, if others are not involved in the process at this stage, they may express their resentment later, when their colleagues return from training(4).

It is important that the participants selected leave for training assured that the organisation considers the training thoroughly worthwhile and is taking steps to enable them to use their new competence when they return. This requirement is clear. The question is how to meet it. (5)

It is a complex question for the same reason that the relationship between training & learning is complex. Two points of view are involved - what influences the participants expectations and motivations is not organizational action or inaction as such, but the view they take of it. This is determined immediately by the context, relationships & general atmosphere in the organisation, and more particularly by the many personal and historical factors over which the organisation has little or no control. (6)

If the organisations training needs are clear, and the minimum qualification/experience is specified, then the selection procedure, becomes simpler and the right man gets selected for the right training programme.
4. Post Training Follow-up

The trainees after attending a meaningful training programme, go back to their organisations with motivation and enthusiasm and they are often eager to put to use what they have learned on the job. It is at the point the need for organisational support arises. The trainee looks out for support and verbal support alone is not sufficient. Other preconditions, such as adequate equipment, basic attitudes of colleagues and organisational policy, have to line up with the change. If the organisational support and the other preconditions are not available, the trainee is often frustrated. The participant's learning depends on continuity. It must suffer no break during any of the several stages when the usefulness of an item or its acceptability to others is questioned at the first trial stage for example, or on returning home. At these stages, the process must be able to carry the accumulated burden of doubt and anxiety or it will fail. These are the stages when the onward process resembles a spiral staircase. Either each round supports the next or even a momentary frustration causes moral to plummet and prejudices further opportunities for learning, thus forming a vicious circle. At these stages participants need support and need to feel it. (7)

One major objective of any management training is to bring in organisational change and improvement. Therefore,
training has to be linked with the areas in the organisation which can be improved. One method of linking training with organisational improvements is by having a systematic follow-up of the managerial training activities. The objective is to ensure that after training, the manager takes some initiative in introducing changes and gets the support of the management. If follow-up steps are not taken, the training activity can have two types of reactions. Either the manager becomes critical of the training activity considering it impractical, unreal, theoretical and not suited to their conditions of work or they become critical and dissatisfied with the organisation when they find they cannot bring in any changes. This happens because after undergoing training executives themselves helpless while trying to rectify them. In such a situation, the training activity becomes damaging to the organisation, rather than resulting in improvements. Follow-up of training thus assumes great importance. (8)

Though it is desirable to have the major process of follow up done by the trained manager and his boss, the involvement of the top management and others in the organisation will greatly enhance the benefits that can be derived from training.

Further, to get the best out of the trained personnel, the training and his subsequent job have to be complementary. While analysing the three SLPEs, it was found
that in a number of instances a person sent for a particular training programme to acquire skills in a specific area was transferred or given a task which had little in common with the training. This in turn resulted in frustration of the trained manager. Faulty placement also results in a wastage of time, effort and resources of the sponsoring organisation.

Post-training follow-up is a must for an organisation because through post-training follow-up, the organisations can review the approach to the planning of any procedures of carrying out various training activities such as preparation of the budget, identification of training needs and the choice of programmes so that it highlights the steps that need to be taken for improvement. Organisations sponsoring their managers to various training programmes might then realise that they are not deriving maximum benefit from training.

The post-training support or follow-up is the most important facet. Often it so happens that the participants learn many new things during a training programme and as they learn newer and newer things the gap between them and their colleagues in the organisation widens. The gap is particularly noticeable if it occurs in the realm of attitudes and values. The colleagues at work may appear indifferent and less enlightened and the participant returning from training starts feeling alienated. This in turn leads to general resentment.
and isolation at work. Sooner or later, the initial impetus of training wanes and the participants starts doubting the wisdom of training.

Another post-training scenario which often occurs is when the participants try to bring in some changes and they face role conflicts, work pressures and vested interests. This happens when the work organisations do not actively support or approve a training programme.

A particular training programme might be highly appropriate and also might be of a very high quality but by itself is not enough. The organisation preparedness also matters greatly. Even when the organisation is prepared, the participants must also be helped to anticipate and cope with the strategic problems they will encounter at work.

Whatever change (big or small) the participant tries to bring, they face quite a lot of problems. For dealing with problems, three sets of activities are necessary.

1. Stimulating and ensuring sufficient interest on the part of the colleagues.
2. Helping colleagues evaluate the proposed change in idea.
3. Trying an acceptable change in actual practice.

A participant intending to bring in changes whether small or big must act as change agents. Here the important
aspect is that the organisation must give them a fair chance to act as change agents.

There is no precise and exhaustive definition of post-training follow-up of management training. It is usually considered to be the various activities which are carried out after the completion of a training programme. The purpose of these activities is to examine and evaluate the practical usefulness of training, to help in the application of what has been learned, and to provide for a continuity of training and education.

Although it is generally recognised that a formal (institutionalised) training course is only one step or event in the process of developing managers and properly utilising their skills, the value of follow-up is still underestimated and follow-up itself is often completely neglected. This is due to a number of reasons: follow-up demands co-ordination and a great deal of work on the part of the organisations and the people involved. It requires solving delicate human problems in addition to professional ones; and it rarely shows any spectacular immediate results.

In order to make the training programmes effective it is necessary to measure the effect of a particular training imparted to a group of employees, follow-up and monitor the group to discuss whether the desired inputs provided in the
training to reach a desired goal have been,

1. grasped by the group,
2. have been used by the group,
3. to what extent these have been useful in bringing the desired results,
4. if the tools or inputs have not been fully understood. A follow-up training to those lacking in it,
5. if the inputs have not been sufficient or effective. Modify/develop separate programmes.

Post training follow-up is actually as important as training itself and should be a built-in part of the training process. In all the three SLPEs it was found that post-training follow-up was carried out in an unstructured and disorderly manner.

Post training follow-up can be done by making an evaluation of the training programme. Generally evaluation can be considered from four levels of training criteria.

Analysis

Much of what the individual trainee gains through the course depends on his perceptions about the training his existing level of knowledge, his attitudes & his potential for improvement. Based on the indepth study of the three SLPEs- AEDC, STATFED & APOL, it has been found that the organisations
lack clarity and are vague about the objectives of training. The objectives of the boss in nominating his subordinates for training often differ from those of the trainee which in turn do not always concur with the programme objectives. The lack of goal congruence becomes a major problem because critical evaluation of any training has to be done in the light of objectives intended to be achieved.

It was found that STATFED during the period 1989-92 specific training objectives were laid down for training and based on the objectives, the participants were nominated to attend various training programmes. After 1992, the training as an activity lost its importance and training objectives were pushed to the background and later forgotten.

APOL did not have laid down objectives for training its managers. Discussion with the Director (P&A) revealed that the basic training objectives of organisation was to help managers acquire new skills and knowledge and provide opportunities for interchange of experiences.

The AEDC had the following broad objectives for training the managers of the corporation:

a) To impart to new entrants basic knowledge & skills.
b) To build up a second line of competent officers and prepare them as a part of their career progression to occupy more reasonable positions.
c) To broaden the minds of Senior Managers by providing them opportunities for interchange of experiences within and outside with a view to correcting the narrowness of outlook that may arise from overspecialisation.

If training objectives are inadequately formulated even a very good training programme will not be effective. Inadequacy in setting training objectives often results from faulty job analysis or the participants are shifted from job to job so frequently that no one job analysis or training can be relevant to their future work. Sometimes there is inadequate organisational commitment and support.

Often it so happens that the organisations set our training objectives but the organisation itself is not ready to implement change. This is a common phenomenon with most of the state level public enterprises.

It is necessary that once the organisations have formulated their training objectives, they must have a well established training policy. Having such a policy will represent the top Management commitment to training of its employees and would also comprise of rules and procedures governing the standard scope of training. A training policy is considered necessary for the following reasons.

a) To indicate an organisations intention to develop its personnel; to provide guidance in the framing and
implementation of programmes and to provide information concerning them to all concerned,

b) To discover critical areas where training is to be given on a priority basis, and

c) To provide suitable opportunities to the employee for his own development.

The organisations based on their training objectives send their managers to various training programmes. The training Institutions while designing training programmes set out certain objectives which the training seeks to achieve. The sponsoring organisation has to shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that the training objectives match with the objectives of the Institution.

All the three SLPEs taken up for the study have articulated explicitly that there is a mushrooming growth of external training Institutions. They are being flooded with programme brochures which have very high sounding objectives. The remarks made by the Managers of three SLPEs regarding training Institutions is an indication of their not being able to appreciate the contribution and importance of the training Institutions. This is again the result of lack of congruency between the training objectives of the sponsoring organisation and the training objectives set by the training Institution.
In the course of the study, it was found that the Assam Institute of Management has been greatly involved in the training of Managers of the various SLPEs. The three selected SLPE's (STATFED, AEDC & APOL) have also relied heavily on Assam Institute of Management for training of its Managers.

A factor which enhances the learning process and its transfer is the congruency of training objectives between the trainee, his boss (representing the organisation) and the training institution. A variable which brings in this congruency is a pre-training discussion between the sponsoring organisation and the training institution about the sponsoring organisations objectives of training and the objective stated by the training Institution. A pre-training discussion between the trainee and his boss on similar lines is also desirable. The study of the three SLPEs reveals that since none of the three SLPEs had a clear training objective, so a meaningful interaction between them and the training Institutes was not possible. Many a times it was found that no effort was made to have a discussion with the training institutes. A difference could however, be seen when inhouse programmes were sponsored. Both STATFED & AEDC had sponsored inhouse training programmes. While AEDC had sponsored two inhouse programmes, it was found that the sponsoring organisations made detailed discussion with the training
Institutes. The discussion was made keeping in view the broad training objectives of the organisation. It must be mentioned in this context that the 20 inhouse programmes sponsored by STATFED was in a span of 2 years (1989-91) when a particular Managing Director had put a special emphasis on training.

APOL has not sponsored any inhouse training programmes, but from time to time the Managers are sponsored to attend various external training programmes. Except for the technical training programmes where the nomination is based on training objectives of the organisation and discussions were often held with the training Institutes in all other programmes, there hardly took place any discussion between the organisation and the training Institute.

It was found that none of the three selected SLPEs had a set pattern of discussing training objectives with training Institutes and with their nominees. Till such time that the organisations realise the benefits of such a procedure, it is desirable for the trainee and his boss to themselves take the initiative for discussing the objectives and results to be derived from a training programmes. This would be helpful because when there is a clarity of objectives, the trainee will gain more insight into the total training process and be able to derive maximum benefit, personally and professionally from the training programme.

Even if an organisation does not have clear
training objectives, it should have its own mechanism of reviewing and evaluating the training activities. Such reviews should be done periodically. The organisation should also evolve its own criteria of evaluation which would begin at the pre-training stage and finish with the follow-up. A basic element of evaluation could be the job improvement plan and preparation of a supportive climate which would help the transfer of learning and at the same time ensure that factors which hinder the transfer are minimised. For deriving maximum benefit from training, the organisation must periodically review systems like that of appraisal, communication and counselling so that all these do not prove to be a hindrance in the process of implementing changes but instead be facilitators so that the efficiency of the organisation is enhanced.

The need for having clear training objectives also arises if we look at the training activity from the manager’s point of view. Based on the study of the three SLPEs it can be concluded that there was often a perception gap in terms of what the managers think about their roles and the managements assumption of manager’s role. There is also a perception gap in terms of what manager’s think they should do and what they are actually doing, thus creating a variation in objectives.

Training requirements must be understood and started right at the entry of employees at various levels,
which will give them better exposure and understanding of the organisation, its goals and expectations. At the same time, it will provide the inputs in the right earnest, so that the workforce is ensured to be goal oriented from the very beginning.

Perception of training by management is also an indicator of how supportive a climate prevails in the organisation. If the management and the boss of the trainee do not think that management training serves any significant purpose, then obviously the trainee cannot possibly hope to transfer much of his training to the job.

When an organisation has a clear training objective, the desired internal organisational environment also automatically grows. A manager may have developed after training but he cannot show his improved worth or performance if the internal environment of the organisation is not congenial.

It was found that none of the three selected SLPEs - STATFED, AEDC and APOL had a separate training department and the training activities were carried out by the personnel department with meagre physical and financial resources. Further, when Personnel/Training Manager is sometimes held accountable for training results, he has no control over the means he could possibly use to ensure results. For instance,
he has no control in the incentive system to speed up learning or to compel the use of what had been imparted. Because of lack of organisational support, the changes which emanate from training department do not get implemented. Again, because of low importance accorded to the training function in the organisation, the training/personnel managers find it difficult to ensure the role of change agents.

Last but not the least, it was found that except for a brief spell at STATFED and for one or two inhouse courses at AEDC, none of the 3 organisions actively collaborated with training institutions in required areas like planning training objectives, participant’s objectives, academic support, research and studies of organisational realities and performance appraisal and feedback. Under the situation, trainees and training institutions have to move in darkness with trial and error approach. Hence desirable result cannot be expected.

Often the organisations are not serious in selecting officers for training and do not define in clear terms what qualities they want to develop in them. Many a time, it has been observed that they depute those officers who are most dispensable, old and reluctant employees having negative attitude towards learning and training.

Because of not having a clear training objective the training efforts undertaken by the organisations lacks
direction and there is a widely shared feeling that the results achieved are hardly commensurate with the time and resources spent. Attempts to define the objectives are marked by ambivalance and inconsistencies as to what is sought to be achieved.

Selection of Trainees (Analysis)

In selection of trainees for training programmes the first priority should be given to the trainee himself and his views and then to his boss. However, this aspect has not been imbibed by all the three organisations.

Although a systematic selection procedure is often chalked out on paper, it is limited to paper alone and not put into practice. Neither the trainee nor his boss are consulted on the training needs and the ultimate selection was done by the personnel department or by the heads of departments in the organisations arbitrarily.

There were also instances where there existed systematic selection procedures but the manager selected were often considered indispensable at work with the result that others who could be spared during that period were sent to the training.

One of the common methods of training needs
identification and selection of trainees, is based on notification and circulation of the training brochure (for internal as well as external training programmes) to various departments inviting nominations. The departmental heads, normally based on their own judgement or in many cases at the initiative of the executive themselves, make the nominations for different training and then, the training department based on budget allocation sends the nominations for training. In certain cases, if all the aspiring managers could not be accommodated, then a priority list was prepared and as soon as funds were available, the nominations were sent. In such cases, very little effort was made to link training with the needs of the particular individual, the department or the organisation.

The common procedure followed for nominating managers is as follows. A panel of managers is prepared on the following basis:

1. Seniority of the manager,
2. Previous exposure to training,
3. Likelihood of being promoted to take up higher responsibilities.

Nominations are made more or less in serial order from this panel, by the approval of the committee in charge of nomination. The list always has spare names to be considered
if one cannot go or refuses to go. Enough care is taken to see that the matching of the programme to the man and the vice versa is given top priority. But then, there are several hurdles coming in the way and the selected manager often do not/cannot go due to any of following reasons:

a) Person not ready to go,
b) Department not ready to relieve,
c) Nominated person does not report.

In such cases, the next man in the list is deputed. If not, the third and so on. However, a number of senior managers have reported that there is a lot of adhocism in the selection procedure and costlier the programme, the more arbitrary is the selection. Improper selection is the prime reason for this non-utility of training even when the courses are of functional nature.

For selection, the individuals choice is taken into consideration provided the manager is able to satisfy his boss regarding his training requirement. But this happens rarely, because the manager’s often feel delicate about their weaknesses, as airing them may be detrimental to their career. Moreover, even if they do air their deficiencies and opt for a training programme, the selection is again done based on their potential and not according to the deficiencies identified.

If the deficiencies or the weak points are not
recognised and alleviated, the entire exercise of training looses its meaning. It also means that when the individual despite the odds airs his deficiencies he should be given an opportunity to rectify, and should not be subjected to degradation and discouragement. Some senior managers of the three SLPEs mentioned that besides training need and merit identified, certain other factors also influence selection.

1. Personnel are sent for training programmes often as an incentive to perform better and as a relaxation from monotonous work.

2. Sometimes last minute requests for nominations are received from training organisations. In such cases there is no time and possibility to match the training need with the programme unless there is an individual awaiting nomination.

3. In some cases the nominated person is not in a position to attend the programmes and in his place a different manager is sent. This manager could be next in line or could be selected on adhoc basis. The reason could be sparability or the individual refusing to attend on account of personal reasons.

4. If a manager was close to his boss who matters in the organisation, he could be nominated for any course irrespective of his training need.

5. Another predominant reason observed was, when the top management in the organisation has a good relationship with
a particular training institution then the organisation was often forced to nominate personnel who were sparable without taking the process of training need identification into consideration. This aspect has been stressed by the some managers. In these cases, other factors supercede the very aim of training and the entire process of training need identification and subsequent training becomes a futile exercise. The motivation to learn is closely linked with the selection process, because if the organisation is not serious about selecting right persons for the right course, the question of motivation to learn and implementation of acquired knowledge and skill does not arise.

The study of the three SLPEs revealed the following selection process being followed for sponsoring managers to various training programmes.

1. General policy of the organisation to train its managers,
2. Sent by the company for higher responsibilities,
3. By virtue of seniority he/she needs to be trained,
4. Solve specific problems through training,
5. Initiative taken by the manager himself for improvement in specific areas,
6. Combination of company and participant initiative as preparation for improvement,
7. Programme objectives suit job needs most,
8. Sent for training in areas where he is weak and needs improvement,
9. Relationship with the training institutions.

It was found that the most preferred reason for selecting the nominees was the general policy of the organisation to train managers and accordingly it was his/her turn. The other important reasons were congruence of programme objectives with the job needs of the particular participant for improvement of the participant in areas of job performance where he feels not very strong and confident and preparation for higher responsibilities. Training a Manager as a prelude to promotion was found to occur in very few cases. Similarly seniority as a criterion for selecting the trainee found low priority amongst the responses.

Persons involved in Selection Process

It was found that the top management plays an important role in selection of managers for training programmes. The bosses reported that in number of cases the participants themselves took the initiative to attend training programmes. However, the general tendency is that the training department makes an exclusive decision of nominating managers for training.
The ideal situation is however, to leave the final decision to the participant himself along with the boss and Chief Executive with training department playing a supportive role. However, in all the three SLPEs it was found that the manager had very little say in his selection since selection is done by the training department in consultation with the top team.

Another point worth mentioning is that in most of the cases, the boss of the trainee had very little to do with selection. In fact, he features most only when the formal approval for the release of the manager to go for training is sought for. It was revealed that the reason why the boss was not given any prominence during selection was that if the proposed candidate of the boss was not selected, there were problems of dissatisfaction and frustration among the managers and their bosses.

Many a times selection was made in a haphazard manner with little use of formal appraisal system. The result was that instances could be found in which the managers who were sent for training were later found to be unfit for promotion. The expectation of these managers however started rising, when the expectation of the managers were not fulfilled their performance after training deteriorated. This not only indirectly affected the training process in terms of
transfer to the job, but also created a tremendous tension in
the boss-subordinate relationship. The functioning of the
department and the team spirit down the line were also
affected. This is an example of how faulty selection of
trainees can adversely affect the organisation.

The study of the three organisations revealed that
they have certain objectives and criteria in view while
selecting trainees for a particular course. Some of the
criteria which guide the selection of managers to be trained
are:

1. The content of the programme as given in the
   brochure by the training institution matching the job needs of
   the manager.

2. Training as preparation before promoting the
   manager to a higher post.

3. Overcoming the weaknesses of the managers which
   were identified through his performance appraisal.

4. Informal discussion between trainee, his boss and
   training department about training needs.

Organisations mostly tried to match the training
programmes with the job requirements of the trainee and that
of the organisation. Another criteria for selection used by
the organisations and reported by the trainees was the past
experience of the earlier participants with regard to
particular training institution and programme.

The three SLPEs did not follow any pre-determined criteria while selecting their executives for training. One major objective of any training activity is to avoid executive obsolescence and ensure that he is constantly trained for new developments in the organisations. None of the three SLPEs studied adopted any set criteria for selecting managers for conversion training. This shows that the organisations have not yet systematised approaches to optimise the advantages of training. Selection of participants by the organisation should be done after studying the course contents and objectives of the programmes. Managers from relevant fields should be selected. After studying the attitude of the persons, it should be ascertained that the course will be useful to the unit and to the participant at least for next one year. Persons who are likely to be transferred or job-rotated from that particular field should not be nominated. It is better to select persons who are interested in developing their skills rather than on seniority alone. Interested persons take the programme seriously and are enthusiastic in applying the inputs on the actual job.

Post training follow-up
In the three SLPEs studied it was found that there is hardly any formal follow-up or evaluation of training with regard to transfer of learning to the job, except at the end of training, when the trainees are asked to give their view about training.

It was found that the organisations did not make any deliberate effort to ensure that training resulted in learning. Very rarely there was any discussion between the trainee and his boss as to what was learnt and what could be transferred. In most cases, feedback about the training was sought by simply asking the manager how he liked the place and the course with no emphasis on any concrete action plan.

It was found that in situations in which a systematic job improvement plan was asked for by the organisation, discussed by the boss as well as the chief executive, it did result in positive benefits to the organisation. Another phenomenon noticed in the study was that, in organisations where there was no systematic effort for transfer of learning, there was a 'relapse' of the original ideas. For example, during the training the trainees did acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes and after training they made sincere efforts to transfer their learning to the job but due to lack of organisational support, they failed to implement any of the aspects. This either produced frustration with training or in many cases, frustration with the job and the organisation.
They felt that no systems and procedures learnt were practicable, with the result that they lost faith in training and change, and relapsed back to their original ideas with much greater conviction. If this happens in a large number of cases, then in due course, the organisation ceases to exist. A common thread that could be found in the three selected SLPEs was that a feeling existed in the personnel/training department that their responsibility is over by sponsoring an employee or few employees for training. But training is not a one shot affair. Mere attending one or few training programmes will not make a person a good manager. It takes considerable effort and time on the part of an individual to develop the characteristics and the organisation has to provide facilities and opportunities to maintain and improve those qualities for example, learning situation, advice on weakness and strength of an individual, guidance on method of behaviour modification, motivates, etc. But none of the three SLPEs provided these facilities. Consequently, qualities developed after training did not persist long in trainee personnel and they fade away in the absence of appropriate organisational climate. It was found that post-training follow-up often helped the individual trainees to transfer learning to the job. A number of trainees who could not bring in much changes after attending training programmes stated that there was a lack of conducive organisational climate for bringing in improvement and there was also no co-operation from the subordinates for implementing any
changes. A number of trainees reported that while the organisations were keen to make use of new skills and knowledge gained through training, at the same time there were many organisational constraints which prevented implementation of most of the skills acquired during training. Another organisational constraint which was perceived during the study was the indecisiveness of the trainees. In many cases it was found that though subordinates were identified to be non-cooperative, the manager himself did not take any concrete steps to improve this situation.

The overall analysis showed that often the trainee felt that he had derived some benefits out of training for his personal development, but when it came to transfer of training for improving the organisation, there were individual and organisational inhibitions because of various factors within the organisation and problems relating to his placement after training.

One of the important elements of training is its transfer to the job situation. The transfer of learning to the job could be made effective when the learning acquired during training is reinforced by a systematic follow-up of the trainee when he returns to the organisation.

In the case of STATFED, the follow-up aspect of training had a chequered course. In the initial stages when a
great thrust was put on training, each trainee after his return from training was expected to prepare a detailed report covering the following aspects:

1. What the manager had learnt at the course.
2. How the organisations of their co-participants were managed.
3. Suggestions for improvements in the functioning of STATFED, based on the learning derived from the training. Maximum coverage was given to this aspect.

The report was scrutinised by the immediate boss, the departmental head of the organisation, and the head of the organisation. This was followed by discussion among the three superiors. Any suggestions that were found to be useful and feasible were considered for implementation. This formal practice at the organisational level has been discontinued or changed but no definite reasons were indicated for the change. Some of the factors which were felt to be responsible were:

1. Change of the chief Executive led to lesser emphasis being given to training.
2. Lack of time on the part of the top management to have such an elaborate and time consuming system of follow-up.
3. The large number of managers being sent for training every year which has resulted in a feeling, among managers at all levels who have undergone training that they
are quite familiar with the course content and hence no major purpose could be served by an elaborate system of follow-up.

The current system of follow-up ranges from having almost no formal reporting or follow-up to a somewhat similar system as was followed earlier. Although there is hardly any involvement of the Chief Executive, some of the departmental heads insist on a written report which however has no prescribed format.

It was found that in all the three SLPEs, the training manager had a minor role in the follow-up. The manager, training/personnel normally sought the feedback but used the feedback for a different purpose. The feedback was used in familiarising himself and the next batch of managers to go for training in future courses.

Two major factors are necessary for real executive development

1. Urge for development on the part of the manager and
2. Superiors concern for helping subordinate manager to develop himself.

The superior can facilitate the managers urge for self development and also render support by creating an atmosphere conducive to learning in which the manager will feel encouraged to develop himself and try new ways of managing without fear of criticism that he did something
unusual or non-traditional.

Training can become effective only when the top Management have faith in it. They should themselves be convinced of the utility of training. They should take interest in sponsoring Managers for different courses. They should have firm belief that training is an investment in human resource development. Sponsoring of managers should not be considered as an impediment in the performance or routine duties due to their absence. They should on the other hand, believe that the manager/managers after receiving a particular training will be working with greater zeal, enthusiasm and efficiency. Thus, the time and money spent in training by them is not a loss but a gain and fruitful investment. Follow-up thus should be a built-in mechanism.

None of the three SLPEs had cared to get feedback from the trainees with respect to the feedback to the training programmes they attended. Arvid K. Sharma (9) opines the responsiveness of the training system depends, besides other things upon the thoroughness with which follow up is done. Sayles and Strauss so rightly observe, To be successful .... there must be a feedback or knowledge of results. (10) It can be possible if trainees are asked to submit a resume on the usefulness of the programme immediately after the training is over.
If training is to be used as instrument of change, the following questions inevitably arise: change from what, how and to what?

Failure to understand the role of a manager lies at the core of lack of clarity about objectives of training. To understand the role of the manager is therefore, the primary task of the SLPEs.

Examining the milieu in which the manager functions it is found to be constituted of a series of Chinese boxes, one within the other. The Governmental environment is one such box within which is another box of bureaucratic ethos, the Government box of the socio-economic and political-cultural environment of India. The manager himself is a product of this box which is not just outside him but also inside him at the very core of his personality. An understanding of all these prequisites for arriving at an answer to the question posed above is necessary.

However, well we learn a useful skill, acquisition in itself by no means guarantees action. Better experience abound and participants returning from training often find their new capabilities ignored, even resented. They look for support and find instead indifference or opposition. Doubts then assail them about the usefulness of training & enthusiasm wanes. They often accept their colleagues advise to 'forget
Having clear training objectives means training should commence with a set of organisational questions. Instead of asking what X or Y needs to learn in order to carry out the new activity, the first training question should be addressed to all involved in the projected change. What do they, given their different functions and different positions in the organisation have to do differently? What things, therefore, do they have to learn a new for which training is needed not only individually but also collectively? These questions concern those who collaborate directly on the job and also those who sanction new developments & provide new services and organizational support.

While determining Training Objectives, the organisation can prepare a brief document on the following aspects:

1. The opportunity that is provided to the participant to learn from the training.
2. Whether they expect this to result enduring learning.
3. How do they expect this learning to influence the way in which the participant subsequently works.
4. If they expect a change in work behaviour, do they also expect demonstratable benefit to the organisations? If so how?
5. What do they see as being the objectives of training as a whole & how does a trainee contribute to the achievement of this?

For positive impact of training, it is important that there be congruence between the parties involved in training.

When Post training follow up is undertaken, the following factors have to be kept in mind.

1) There has to be involvement of the top management in the transfer and follow up process to a great extent.

2) A review should be undertaken from time to time.

3) The performance of the participant should be appraised before and after training.

4) There should be informal discussions with the participant after the training.

5) The quality of decisions and the improvement in analytical and creative ability of the participant subsequent to training must be assessed.

Follow-up of the trainee after a gap of time would give a true picture of the efficiency of the training programme. The factors which help in transfer of training and
factors which hinder transfer of training should form an important part of the follow up.

If some hindering factors pertain to training then the organisation must bear in mind while sponsoring subsequent programmes. But if they relate to the organisational culture and climate the organisation should involve the top management so that they may in future play the role of facilitators in the transfer of training. One method of doing this may be by involving them in the training activity right from the start so that they then have a vested interest in training and the trained manager.

The organisational involvement in training can be increased by asking the boss of the trainee at the pre-training stage about the organisational requirements that need to be met through training the manager. After completion of the programme, the Chief Executive/top management can be asked whether the training contributed to organisational effectiveness. This will draw into the fold of training the boss and the top management because in nine cases out of ten, Chief Executive or the top management will have to refer back to the boss of the trainee about the changed job performance of the trainee. Once again at the follow-up stage asking the boss to consider whether the training programme brought about any demonstratable benefits would go a long way in promoting the idea that training must be made use of to promote
organisational effectiveness.

Based on post training behaviour of the participant and usefulness of the programmes, work organisations should periodically review the training objective and modify them.

Concluding Observation

The following concluding observations can be drawn based on the SLPEs of the analysis of the efforts of training and development.

1. The managers of the three SLPEs were sponsored for training to the three categories of institutes viz. institute sponsored by the Government of Assam - The Assam Institute of Management, the Central Government sponsored Training Institute in Guwahati like NISIET, and training Institutes outside the state.

2. Very few managers were sponsored for training with a specific objective of bringing about change in their behaviour and preparing them for shouldering greater responsibilities.

3. The three most important objectives with which the managers attended training programmes were:

   (a) to get relief from the daily monotonous work,

   (b) to gain general perspective on developments
organisational and external environment,
(c) to fulfil the formality of attending a training programme.

Thus, they did not attend training programmes with the specific purpose of improving their qualities and performance on the job. This, coupled with managements failure to sponsor managers for training programmes with specific objective of developing their knowledge, skills etc brings to light the basic lacuna in the management training and development policies and practices of the three selected SLPEs.

4) The trainees reaction towards the quality of training offered by the various institutes was positive. They however felt that the duration of the programmes was short.

5) The general feeling of the managers was that clear cut objectives, well defined programmes and policies were not formulated in the area of training and development.

6) The top management particularly of STATFED felt that in view of the large size of the organisation and the number of managers employed, it was impossible for them to keep track of the specific learning needs and performance problems of each individual manager and to provide career development opportunities best suited based on hi:
temperaments and potentials. They felt that non-cooperation by employees, their unions and associations, interference by outsiders in the day to day administration, political pressures in personnel matters, lack of adequate support from the government for improving the training function were some of the important factors which obstructed the development of proper perspective towards training and development.

7) Another common factor which was found in all the three SLPEs was that the top management had no commitment to promote better training to the managers.

Similarly, the senior managers had a mere casual approach in sponsoring the candidates for training. The fact remained that the SLPEs did not sponsor their managers for whom the training was actually meant. There was no interaction between the training institute and the sponsoring organisations to make the training more effective.

8) The resourcefulness of the managers were not properly understood by the top management. A number of lapses existed in respect to managerial training and development. There were no defined objectives, specific policies and procedures to ensure systematic development in SLPEs.
Reference:

5. ibid
6. ibid
7. ibid