

The Three-Legged Stool for Training Success

By Rebecca Morgan, CSP, CMC

The 16-session manager training program was phenomenally successful. Ninety percent of the attendees were offered promotions within a year of their graduation. Why was the program so successful? Because all of the legs on the Training Success 3-legged stool were strong.

The components of the Training Success 3-legged stool are:

- Learner's manager
- Learner
- Instructor/content provider

Most training puts the onus of success solely on the instructor. Occasionally a training will include participant accountability for the learning of information and having the ability to show proficiency in behavior. However almost never does any part of the responsibility for success reside with the learner's manager. But that component of the training is essential to success.



If one of the parties doesn't do their part, the stool is wobbly or collapses. Here are the responsibilities of each leg of the Training Success stool:

1) The learner's manager has to:

- Talk to the learner(s) before the training to determine areas of needed improvement and to ensure the identified training is the best way to acquire the needed skills and/or information.
- Be clear on how s/he expects the learner to perform differently as a result of the training.
- Co-create with the participant measures for determining if the learner successfully integrated new skills/information.
- Encourage learner to take charge of his/her learning by being active in the training and getting what s/he needs from the session(s).
- Release the learner for training sessions, ensure s/he attends, and arrange coverage for the learner's duties while in training.
- Talk with his/her learner(s) regularly to discuss adapting the new skills to their department.

- Coach the learner when needed.
- Give the learner positive feedback for observed behavior changes.
- Model effective behavior him/herself.
- Talks with the instructor regularly to get feedback on his/her learner.
- Support any reinforcement offered.

2) The learner has to:

- Talk to his/her manager before the training to determine areas of needed improvement and to ensure the identified training is the best way to acquire the needed skills and/or information.
- Be clear on what s/he wants from the training and actively makes sure s/he gets it.
- Be fully committed to strengthening or learning new skills.
- Attend the sessions and be fully involved in the discussions and processes.
- Actively seek real-life, job-specific application of the principles discussed/skills learned.
- Complete any pre-reading or homework.
- Accept coaching from the instructor and/or manager.
- Participate in any follow-on reinforcement offered.

3) The instructor/content provider has to:

- Provide stimulating, useful, clear content and processes.
- Prepare pre- and post-learning assessments.
- Be approachable and open to dissenting opinions.
- Provide an integrated approach to learning, including job aids and practice.
- Create useful tools and resource materials.
- Give learners needed coaching/feedback.
- Make modifications to the program/tools when appropriate.
- Offer the learners' managers suggestions for coaching the learner.
- Provide appropriate follow-on reinforcement.

As a result of all the legs of the Training Success stool working in tandem, a solid base is created for permanent behavior change. Without all three legs strong, training is often a waste of time and money. Ensure your success by having all parties committed to successful result of your training effort.

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