Putting Performance First
DEVELOPMENT PHASE

PERFORMANCE-BASED TRAINING BEST PRACTICES

- Invest time and resources to build high-performance training that: 1) is directed to task-based, observable skills; 2) includes rich activities to engage learners and improve performance (not just build skill, knowledge, attitude [S/K/A]); and 3) allows learners to sustain improved performance over time.

- Develop training with a systems view of performance in the organization by: 1) making learners aware of the systemic factors that will hinder or facilitate effective performance; and 2) integrating learning solutions with work processes.

- Conduct reviews with both exemplars and average performers and be willing to suggest changes to the design of your training to ensure content and practice are driving to desired performance

- Develop practice and evaluation strategies to: 1) improve performance, not blame or punish, by assuring learners the measures aren't being used to make judgments; and 2) use the data only to make changes to the training process or to plan for additional activities that will make a difference in the performance.

- Provide opportunities, before, during, and after the training event, where supervisors, peers, and subordinates can help trainees learn and apply the new learning/performance.

- Ensure training is piloted as designed (right audience, right amount of time, specified environment).

PERFORMANCE-BASED NON-TRAINING BEST PRACTICES

- Add mentoring programs, on-the-job coaching, job aids, etc. to just-in-time formal/informal training.

- Keep solutions simple, as non-disruptive as possible, communicative (allow a forum for people to vent resistance), adaptable, and just in time.

- Be creative in the evaluation review cycle for any non-training solutions being developed: 1) determine what individuals and groups are the best to help evaluate pieces and parts as you develop them; 2) decide who's best to participate in more systemic reviews during development; and 3) try to involve everyone who may be impacted by the change.

- Use training results to go back to stakeholders to suggest additional non-training enhancements.

- Use face time with stakeholders during the pilot to suggest additional non-training interventions.

- Use pilot results to revisit/validate the business case and performance gap; raise the flag if what you're developing isn't/won't narrow or eliminate the performance gap.

- When multiple solutions are needed, suggest creating a decision-making body to oversee development in order to keep the project on course, oversee follow-up efforts, select and direct all resources, manage the budget, revise timelines, etc.

- Consider adding an external consultant to the team — someone to advocate for the solutions and see them through to acceptance by decision makers while the internal consultant acts as the change agent and guides the project through the various channels and personnel.

- Quickly establish a place among the stakeholders — a performance specialist who is perceived as a part of the effort and the people involved with the project is much more likely to be accepted by the employees or performers, their managers, the top-level sponsor(s), and others who have influence on the project.