



# TOP 5

## Human Performance Mistakes

By Nurdan Tokoz



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SOLUTIONS FOR HUMAN PERFORMANCE

## MISTAKE

# 1

## ASSUMING ADDITIONAL TRAINING IS REQUIRED WITHOUT A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF UNDERLYING ISSUES.

When you assume training will solve the problem, without fully understanding the real issue – the root cause of the problem – how could it possibly work?

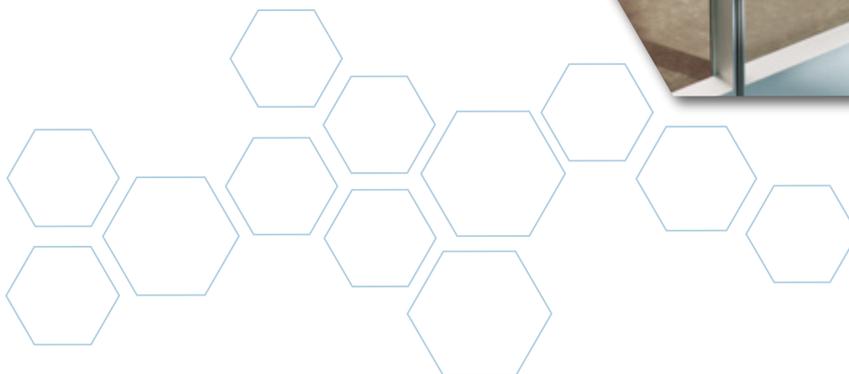
In some instances, training may be part of the solution to enhance human performance; however, the most effective solutions are created once your business goals are determined, and performance gaps are identified.

When audit reports indicated that error rates were above acceptable levels for tasks completed within one department at a leading telecommunications company, management requested additional training programs, as if the errors were happening because of a lack of skills and knowledge. The Learning & Development (L&D) resources were assigned to the project, and a new training program was developed based on the management decision.

Since the performance issue was not analyzed before developing training, the gap was not known; therefore, their solution had minimal probability of being the right choice.

After training was rolled out as mandatory, and employees completed it, issues were still present, and the error reports indicated the same problems. Naturally, the training was blamed, so further training was developed, creating a continuous cycle with no end in sight.

This type of “wants-based” solution may have some positive results; however, when a proper performance analysis is not completed, you cannot establish the link between the solution provided, the performance gaps, and your business goals.



## MISTAKE

# 2

## TREATING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TEAMS AS "ORDER TAKERS."

As L&D professionals develop training programs, they must focus on what people need to "do" instead of what they need to "know." Results-based learning programs come from the consideration of the desired outcomes. Behaviours, outcomes, business results, and organizational goals are related and lead to each other.

Does the following scenario sound familiar to your organization?



The manager of the sales team contacts the L&D manager and requests for an L&D resource to develop a training module for the sales team to fill a known performance gap. The sales manager has a slide deck consisting of 150 slides from the last two year's presentations. He requests that this slide deck be transferred to training to fill the performance gap for a group of employees on the team. The training manager assigns an L&D professional to the project, who take four months to design and develop the training. Training is launched as mandatory. After training, there is no improvement in performance. The gaps still exist.

In this scenario, which occurs in every industry, there is a known performance gap. Still, the L&D professional doesn't know the reason for the shortfall because she has not assessed if the content is enough to fill the performance gap. There is no explanation regarding why a select group of employees need to take the training.

A "needs-based" approach can be beneficial only if you know the reason for the performance gap and can determine a "sorting process" to decide on the target audience. As an example, include the employees with a documented performance gap to participate in the solution.



## MISTAKE

# 3

## ASSUMING "THE TRAINING IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH" OR "IT IS NOT WORKING."

When the performance outcomes required to reach an organization's business goals are not being met, companies start questioning the investments they make in training programs, conferences, etc. So much money, time, and resources are invested, and yet, the performance results are not where they should be.

Without identifying the underlying causes of consistently poor performance, organizations throw together training programs, which are blamed for being not good enough when the real problem is the lack of alignment to the strategic goals of the business.

Recently, the manager of the Client Service Centre for a local manufacturer contacted the L&D manager to put in a request to develop software training for the Client Service representatives in his department. The training was designed without completing any performance analysis. And after the training was completed, the issue was still present.

Naturally, the training program was the first to be blamed! Discussions continued for some time, accusing the training development resources of not being competent.

Later, further analysis clearly showed that the reason for ongoing errors was not because of lack of knowledge and skills in using the software, but was related to issues within the work environment. Small, low-cost adjustments solved the issue.

All resources used to develop and deploy training were wasted in this case, and the training program was blamed for no real reason.



## MISTAKE

# 4

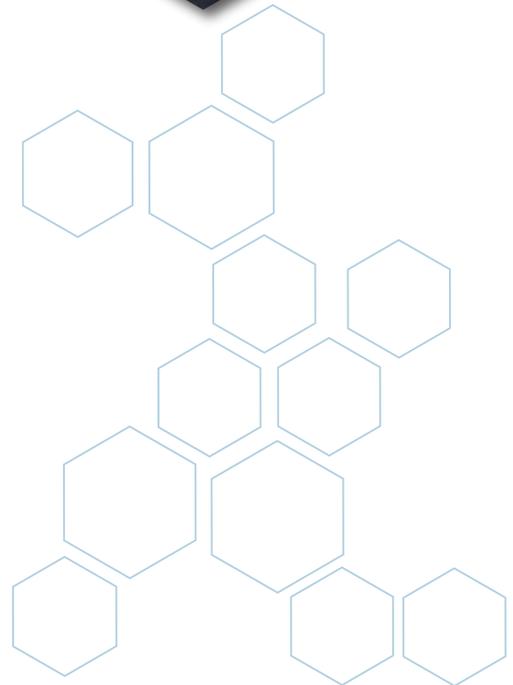
## FAILING TO IDENTIFY TRAINING NEEDS VS PERFORMANCE NEEDS.

When there's an issue with human performance in an organization, front-end analysis is critical. Organizations need to focus on the performance gaps, and the root causes of these gaps, instead of the training needs of employees.

A complete analysis of performance issues allows organizations to create impactful and sustainable solutions. As a result, organizations can prevent the possibility of wasting time, money, and resources on ineffective performance solutions.

Before developing any training solutions, Sharon, the training manager of an international logistics firm, set up a meeting with their Operations Manager to discuss the request she had received. Sharon asked questions to understand if the request was driven and included a real business need or goal. She wanted to clarify if the request was related to an actual performance need. Sharon asked the Operations Manager if he was willing to engage in analysis to identify the real problem and to find the right solution. Once the analysis was completed, the issue was identified, allowing management to find an impactful solution without wasting resources.

A result-based approach helps you identify the real cause of the performance issue and guides you to create the most effective solution



## MISTAKE

# 5

## CONFUSING ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS WITH PERFORMANCE GOALS.

If organizations want to be successful, they need to be clear about what they want to achieve. Each employee has a critical part in the whole system, like a vast “machine,” to run efficiently and continuously.

When you define your organizational goals, you talk about the things that the organization wants to do as a whole. Usually, you consider quality, customer satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness. Performance goals are the outcomes that employees need to produce to realize these organizational goals.

Your organizational goals and performance goals are interrelated. Employees must understand why they do what they do and how it contributes to your organization to achieve its goals. It starts with employees finding their purpose in their roles.

This begins at the moment of onboarding by explaining the purpose of each position. Instead of giving a list of tasks and requirements, explain why this role is essential for achieving the organizational goals. Clarify how the employee’s performance outcomes will affect the ultimate goal.

Employees must understand that their organization is like a vast machine. Every part, regardless of size, makes the machine work. If one small part is not functioning adequately, the machine will not work as efficiently, and then one day, it will break.

“ If organizations want to be successful, they need to be clear about what they want to achieve. ”



## About Nurdan Tokoz

Nurdan is a human performance and behaviour change expert.

After studying Industrial Engineering (B.Eng.) and Adult Education (B.Ed.), she worked for a number of large corporations as a Learning & Development (L&D) professional. Currently, Nurdan develops programs and systems to solve human performance issues within organizations. She's fascinated by the science of how our brains learn and the art of transforming information into action.

Her processes are grounded in Human Performance Improvement (HPI) methodology, industrial engineering principles, cognitive learning practices, instructional design experience, and innovative habit-building tools. This diverse foundation enables her to develop effective performance solutions and demonstrate their impact on day-to-day business results.

Nurdan's ultimate goal is to help leaders and teams build new habits to achieve desired performance outcomes, boosting their productivity and profitability.

She is a proud member of the International Society of Performance Improvement (ISPI), a Certified EQ-I 2.0 EQ 360 practitioner, a Certified Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) Developer and Facilitator, and a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers (CAPS).



**Are you searching for a proven methodology to improve human performance through behaviour change? Let's talk.**



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