

An Analysis of Methods and Forms of Business Education

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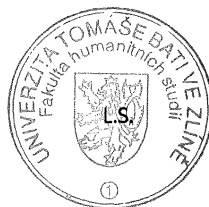
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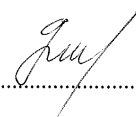
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ABSTRAKT

Tato práce analyzuje vzdělávací strategie používané při dalším rozvoji zaměstnanců. Zabývá se strategií vlastního poznání, kognitivní strategií, behaviorální strategií a strategií pro budování týmu. Dále analyzuje formy a způsoby podnikového vzdělávání jakými jsou metoda Coachingu, metoda Mentoringu, metoda Brainstormingu, hraní rolí a manažerskými hrami. Nezaměřuje se pouze na teoretický výklad, ale také na praktické použití těchto technik. Práce dochází k závěru, že strategický rozvoj lidských zdrojů tvoří podstatnou konkurenční výhodu, která může být v dnešních podmínkách klíčová.

Klíčová slova:

Vzdělávání zaměstnanců, vzdělávací strategie, kognitivní strategie, behaviorální strategie, teambuilding, coaching, mentoring, brainstorming, manažerské hry

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the learning strategies used in the further education of employees. It deals with the strategies of own knowledge, cognitive, behavioral and team building. There are also described forms and ways of company training methods such as coaching, mentoring, brainstorming, role playing and management games. The thesis does not focus only on the theoretical but also on practical application of these techniques. It concludes that the strategic human resources development constitutes a significant competitive advantage which may be crucial in today's conditions.

Keywords:

Employee training, educational strategies, cognitive strategy, behavioral strategy, team building, coaching, mentoring, brainstorming, managerial games

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INTRODUCTION

Despite all the advances in modern technology, human resources are still the greatest wealth of the company. The concept of human resources represents not only employees but especially their knowledge, experience and skills they use for the job performance.

Any employee entering the company is trained to be able to handle work in their fields. Competition between companies is still extensive and therefore today the first training is not enough. This is the reason why further education is very important. For the education to be really effective the company have to choose the right strategy and form of education. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of different educational strategies and other forms and methods of business education. The thesis is not a summary of all existing methods and forms of education, but focuses only on the selected ones. Beginning of the first chapter is dedicated to definitions which relate to education. Next part deals with the question why business education is important and which contributions it has for business. The last part of the chapter is focused on the objectives of business education. The second chapter follows up with educational strategies. Each strategy is described and explained separately.

The strategy of human own knowledge deals with the employee's creative thinking. It helps to use properly the acquired knowledge and information. Cognitive strategy helps the employee to remember as much information as quickly as possible. If workers have to learn one process which is repeated every day, we use behavioral strategy with which an employee acquires a skill as quickly as possible. The last but not least education strategy is team building which is used when individuals need to work together.

The third part focuses on the practical use of education methods in relation to previous strategies. The first method of education is coaching. This is one of the most important education methods where is the interaction between trainer and trainee. Trainer is a kind of mentor for trainee. Mentoring is a way of coaching but in this method the mentor is mostly a more experienced worker or senior staff who helps newcomers. Brainstorming is a method of team building where employees share their ideas. The role playing or managerial games deal with practicing of new skills and behavior in common situations. An important part of education is of course feedback which indicates if education was successful.

1 INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS EDUCATION

Learning can be defined as an activity that leads to lasting and effective change in the activity and behavior in order to obtain information, knowledge, skills and habits. People has a constant need to better understand the world around them and learning is one way how to interact with changing surroundings.¹

1.1 Definitions

Learning is a process of change which involves new knowledge. Learning can be organized or spontaneous – every time when a person explores something new it is learning. The greatest attention is focused on organized learning because it is represented by education. It is safe to say that the most important things in life are learned by spontaneous learning (speech, walking, make a relationship). Also in business many things are learned by spontaneous learning thus there is no need to apply organized education only, especially in practical activities.

Development is a process to achieve a change by learning. Development includes an intent which is an important part of bounded and unbounded development programs.

Education is a way of learning. Education is organized and bounded – it has a start and finish and mostly is a systematic way of learning.¹

Business education is a set of targeted and planned activities which are focused on gaining working qualifications and on learning desired working dealing with the staff of the organization. The areas include orientation training, enhancing skills, retraining and the professional rehabilitation.²

¹Hroník, František. *Rozvoj a vzdělávání pracovníků*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2007

²Dvořáková, Zuzana. *Management lidských zdrojů*. Praha : C.H. Beck, 2007

1.2 Importance and contribution of business education

Technical and economic globalization brings with it the globalization of the labor market and increasing competition. Therefore, companies are still developing new technologies, which require not only the ability to learn new skills, knowledge, concepts, but also the ability to be flexible in their skills. Increment of international and multinational companies needs to formulate new attitudes and values to focus on new markets and be able to act effectively with people. Competitiveness is the company's ability to succeed in the markets and keep the edge over their competitors. Based on the facts above is no doubt that one of the key sources of economic development and competitiveness is still human capital. Human capital is primarily knowledge, skills, experience, technology and relationships with customers giving companies a competitive edge in the market. Investment to education and staff development should therefore be a priority and not just an addition or benefit. Systematic training will lead to a return of the investment in the form of improved productivity, flexibility and ability to innovate.

Contributions of business education:³

- Improved quality of working life
- Increased productivity
- Improved customer service
- Increased worker satisfaction
- Improved image of the organization
- Improved staff development as individuals and collective
- Increased readiness to change⁴

³Mužík, Jaroslav. *Profesní vzdělávání dospělých*. Praha: Codex Bohemia, 1999

⁴Koubek, Josef. *Řízení lidských zdrojů*. Praha: Management Press, 2007

1.3 Objectives of business education

The main objective of business education is to prepare employees to increase their performance which, as I mentioned earlier, leads to competitiveness and prosperity of the company and to meeting the objectives of corporate strategy. Another aim of business education is not or should not be a mere development or change in eligibility but also bring about the changes in thinking, feeling and behavior of workers.

Objectives should be:

- specific
- measurable
- activating
- realistic
- timed⁵

Another aim is to develop intellectual capital and the improvement and promotion of individual and team learning through the creation of a learning culture, the environment in which employees are encouraged to participate in training and development and where knowledge is systematically managed.

A Well-prepared educational system has strategic importance for the company. If it is properly applied and used there is improvement of business processes and efficient utilization of human resources that are crucial for a successful organization. Education also contributes to the emergence and consolidation of appropriate organizational culture which then affects the content and level of education in the organization.⁶

⁵ Barták, Jan. *Vzdělávání ve firmě*. Praha : Alfa Publishing, 2007

⁶Armstrong, Michael. *Personální management*. Praha : Grada, 1999

2 EDUCATION STRATEGY

What is needed: a skilled worker, that is charge of nearly every company. Trainers as well as supervisors or managers are often called upon to teach skills. Some of these skills involve psychical movements and are what psychologists call psychomotor skills. Other skills involve the ability to make routine calculations or follow procedures. The skills which require mental effort are called cognitive skills. Sometimes psychomotor and cognitive skills are combined. In any case, the following definition applies: “A skill involves a patterned set of operations requiring routine through not necessarily easy physical activity, mental activity or both.”

2.1 Behavioral strategy

2.1.1 Origins of behavioral strategy

“Next to Sigmund Freud, Burrhus Frederic Skinner is perhaps the world’s most famous psychologist. Behaviorism became completely identified with B. F. Skinner and before his death he was its foremost spokesperson. Skinner did not invent behaviorism, nor did he discovered it. However, he described it so thoroughly, as one of the ways that people learn, that we can call it a theory.”⁷

2.1.2 Setting goals

When the Behavioral strategy is used for teaching skills, it is necessary to get specific about learning outcomes. Outcomes of the Behavioral strategy are usually called objectives. Where do objectives come from?

⁷Davis, James. *Effective training strategies: a comprehensive guide to maximizing learning in organizations*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998

They are derived from the competencies needed to do a given job. Behavioral Strategy training cannot begin until the trainer written down an adequate list of behavioral objectives. Objectives need to be stated as behavior that can be observed, described and measured. Behavioral objectives by themselves can do nothing if the rest of the Behavioral Strategy is not used. But without strict goals, you probably will not even get started.⁸

Behavioral objectives have been formally defined as “relatively specific statements of learning outcomes expressed from the learner’s point of view and telling what the learner is to do at the end of instruction.” It should be noticed that the emphasis in the definition is not on what the trainer does, but on what the trainee is able to do when the objectives are achieved and learning has been completed. The classic specifications for formulating behavioral objectives were developed by Robert F. Mager whose name is now well known in training. To help teachers write objectives that were precise and specific, Mager developed two lists of verbs, one vague and one specific:⁹

Words open to many interpretations

To know
 To understand
 To really understand
 To appreciate
 To fully appreciate
 To grasp the significance of
 To enjoy
 To believe
 To have faith in

Words open to few interpretations

To write
 To recite
 To identify
 To differentiate
 To solve
 To construct
 To list
 To compare
 To contrast

⁸Davis, James. *Managing your own learning*. San Francisco, CA Berkeley, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2000.

⁹Mager, Robert F. *Preparing Instructional Objectives*. Belmont, California: Pitman Management and Training, 1984

Note that the words in the right column describe behavior. The Behavioral objectives are expressed in very specific language. A well-written behavioral objective should contain a statement of terminal behavior (what the trainee will be doing when the objective has been achieved), a statement of the conditions under which the behavior will be expected to occur, and a statement of criteria (the standards of acceptable performance). This is how a behavioral objective might be written.

For trainers using the Behavioral Strategy, well-written behavioral objectives are beneficial in planning instruction and essential in designing and evaluating instruction. For trainees, they are useful as a guide to what to learn and how to study.

2.1.3 Measuring Present Performance Level

When the objectives are clear, the trainer needs to find out if the a trainee can already perform the skill. One of the advantages of the Behavioral Strategy is that it usually is easy to establish present performance level simply by asking the trainee to perform the skill. If trainee can do it perfectly, the training is successfully finished and trainee can be sent on his way. The chances are, however, that he will give a less than perfect performance. In some cases trainee will not be able to do it at all and will need to start from the beginning. But where is the beginning? If the person to be trained can not learn the first step needed to achieve the objective and has little succes with the initial stages of training, there must be learned some necessary skills which will help trainee in first stages of training.

2.1.4 Performing task analysis

It is important to specify the objectives of instruction, but an objectives are only the first step of the whole process. An objective is also part of the final stage because the whole process is finished by achieving the determined goals. The objective may be to change the wheel, but the steps involved in actually performing the skill are something different. Changing a car wheel so that it will screw off, take down, put on new wheel and screw involves a multitude of tasks and subtasks. Every trainee who is learning a new skill must advance in small steps toward the objective. The process used to break a skill into its parts is called task analysis.

For some skills there are several ways of reaching the objective. The learner takes the lead, and the approximations that the learner presents are reinforced. In teaching a new employee how to get to the new work it does not matter which road will employee go.

The route is unimportant if both of them takes the same time and they will lead to the goal. The tasks involved in attaining such objectives are called variable sequence tasks. However, sometimes the route is important, and in these cases the objective can not be reached unless the steps are followed in the exact order. In cooking, for example, recipes often must be followed step by step (sift the dry ingredients together before adding the liquid). These tasks are called fixed sequence tasks.

Task analysis involves four steps:

1. Define the skill as a behavioral objective
2. List all the component parts of the objective (the tasks and subtasks)
3. Arrange the tasks in sequential order and identify the prerequisites
4. Test the routine for correct order and any omissions

The key to task analysis is in gathering up all of the tasks and subtasks and getting them in the right order. The tasks can be collected in several ways: by talking with subject matter experts who know how to perform the skill, by watching people who are proficient at the skill perform it, by consulting manuals and books that describe the skill, and by logically analyzing the steps needed to perform the tasks leading to the objective. The trainer may or may not be an expert in performing the skill, and likewise, an expert may be able to perform the skill automatically without being able to describe the tasks that go into it.¹⁰

2.1.5 Using Feedback

After the behavioral objectives have been determined, a baseline has been established, and the skill has been analyzed into its tasks, it is time to have the trainees try the skill. The first stages of Behavioral strategies deals with theoretical explanation what is trainee suppose to do and how he should do it but the main point of this training is action. When trainee know all essential information he has to try figure out the actual task by himself.

¹⁰Davis, James. *Effective training strategies: a comprehensive guide to maximizing learning in organizations*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998

That is how learning occurs in the Behavioral Strategy: The trainee tries something and the trainer provides feedback. This is the point in the training where the coaching comes in. Only certain efforts bring positive consequences. It is at that crucial moment, when a specific action gets linked with a particular consequence that learning occurs. The process of linking behavior to consequences is called reinforcement. In training, where people are involved in making their first awkward efforts to learn a skill, we simply call it feedback. Feedback can be divided into two basic classes: rewards and punishments. Reward is a positive form of feedback and behavior which is awarded by reward should be repeated because it is signal that trainee is performing well. Reward must be satisfying enough to trainee otherwise it will be useless. What works as a reward for someone does not work as a reward for others. Punishment is a negative form of feedback and trainee should avoid behavior which is “rewarded” by some kind of punishment. But how do we know what people find rewarding? It varies and behaviorists know that. The process of feedback does not depend on the intrinsic properties of the reward or punishment itself. In fact, a reinforcer probably has no intrinsic properties. Probably the most important feedback is internal reward. It comes from the trainee’s good feeling that he performs skill well. Internal reward would be nothing if trainer would not tell trainee that he give correct performance. This is called knowledge results. Sometimes trainee will get feedback from the equipment, process or product he made but if trainee provides services, some external feedback is needed. For a consequence to work as a positive reinforcer, it must be satisfying to that particular individual. It is not accidental, therefore, that behaviorists define feedback in terms of the behavior it produces. If the behavior is repeated (learned) the feedback that brought about the repetition of the behavior can be regarded as reinforcing.

There are four types of feedback: two simple methods to initiate, speed up or maintain desired behavior – positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement, and two simple methods to slow down or stop undesirable behavior – extinction and punishment.

Negative reinforcement is often confused with punishment but the differences between the two will become clear as they are further defined.

2.1.6 Positive Reinforcement

This method of feedback is used as a reward for tasks to be learned. Depending on the age or personality type of the trainee, positive reinforcers are likely to be things such as:

- praise, attention and recognition
- confirmation of right answers
- positive comments on a test or assignment
- free time for social interaction
- points, stars, trophies, certificates or awards
- various types of food
- promotions or pay increases

Positive reinforcers are anything what brings good feel to trainee or generate satisfaction. The best positive reinforcement comes naturally from the task itself, when the trainee gets things right, finds out how something works, or successfully performs a skill. Positive reinforcement may take the form of a grandmother's incentive: If you do this, then... The trainer's role in using positive reinforcement is to provide incentive for the trainee to do each task and to reward correctly performed approximations of the objective.

2.1.7 Negative Reinforcement

This method of feedback involves setting aversive conditions that an individual will work hard to avoid. It has the same effect as punishment because trainee feels unpleasant, but it is unlike punishment because it is never applied. Negative reinforcement is not based on the action but on the possibility that it come true. Like positive reinforcement, it can be used, or it can occur naturally. Typical types of aversive conditions are those things trainees will work hard to avoid, such as:

- doing things wrong
- having to repeat the task
- becoming unhappy with poor performance
- working longer at the task
- failing a test or checkpoint
- critical remarks on papers or assignments
- reprimand or embarrassment
- not getting the job, getting a demotion or pay cut, or losing one's job

Although negative reinforcement is unpleasant, it is the possibility of avoiding it that controls the behavior. Hard work in a training program can be motivated by the threat of negative consequences. The problem with threats, of course, is that they are negative and sometimes they must be carried out, at which point they turn into punishment, with all its problems.

2.1.8 Extinction

A third method of feedback is the process of withholding reinforcement selectively. Extinction is a somewhat outdated term and trainers today are more likely to say that the behavior is simply being ignored. Behavior is never punished or rewarded, but is passed over with the hope that it will slow down or go away. Sometimes the trainer ignores certain tokens of trainee's inappropriate behavior. Trainer hopes that trainee will figure out what behavior is helpful for him and what is not. Not all behaviors need to be provided with consequences. Any of the things normally used as rewards or punishments can be withheld. Extinction functions as the absence of positive reinforcement.

2.1.9 Punishment

A final method of feedback is the direct application of an unpleasant stimulus. Most people need no further definition of punishment. All the forms of aversive feedback listed above under negative reinforcement become punishments when applied. The basic research on punishment shows that it works, if by work one means that it will stop the behaviors with which it is associated. A behavior that is punished is not likely to be repeated. In certain situations a sharp reprimand or warning may be used in training, especially when matters of safety, basic rights, or human dignity are involved. This kind of feedback may occasionally be used where something must be stopped, but in most training the goal is not stopping behavior but getting it started in the right direction and continuing it. The research is clear, punishment is good way for stopping behavior but not for establishing it. Positive reinforcement, in generous quantities is needed to establish new patterns of behavior, such as learning new skills. With the exception, which poses a special problem, the four types of feedback can be mixed and used generously. The effects of punishment are not easily contained. Punishment has a way of generalizing and escalating, and it produces a emotional response in the learner. Although the trainer may

have meant to provide a carefully targeted punishment to stop a specific behavior, the trainee will often associate other things with that punishment. A trainee who is punished can learn quickly to dislike the trainer, the workshop, the topic, and the entire organization, because each has become associated with the punishment.

Immediate feedback is what makes learning take place because it reinforces the connection between the task (effort) and the feedback (reward). Without appropriate, well-timed feedback, the trainee just stumbles along, never sure whether anything is right or wrong. When the person who is learning how to change a car wheel finally gets it right, the wheel is deployed into place and fits. The feedback would be much better if the trainer (or coworker) is there to say, “Hey, nice job, all right, you got it.” And at the end of the course though it may seem a little awkward, maybe even a bit embarrassing for some, most trainees like to get that certificate, that moment of personal recognition, those few words of praise for learning the sum total of all the tasks that make up the skill. Feedback is important all along the way as the learner works through each task and subtask in the task analysis.¹¹

¹¹Davis, James. *Managing your own learning*. San Francisco, CA Berkeley, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2000.

2.2 Cognitive Strategy

2.2.1 Origins of Cognitive Strategy

“Cognitive psychology has no B. F. Skinner, no single figure who can be said to be its foremost spokesperson. The study of mental processes has its roots in the work of Willhelm Wundt, William James, F. L. Bartlett, and the European movement known as Gestalt psychology, but from the turn of the century until the end of World War II, the behaviorists dominated psychology, insisting that human consciousness was a “black box” and that behavior (both animal and human) was the only appropriate subject of scientific psychology. An area that had been beyond the proper domain of study for psychologists (human consciousness) now became the focal point for an outpouring of scientific investigation and theory building. Although some psychologists continued to study communication processes in animals, such as the fascinating work on apes and sign language, the focus of the research was on human information processing.”¹²

2.2.2 The information processing model

When we picture the typical training classroom: a trainer speaking in a strong voice and using overheads or showing slides, the participants sitting in rows and taking notes, trying to process what is being shown and said. When the participants will be leaving they surely will saying”...that was boring or I do not know what the learner was talking about...”

What is known about this kind of learning? The processes we use for communication through presentations have been investigated extensively by cognitive psychologists, scholars who study the mental activity of attending to, processing and remembering information. After nearly thirty years of research, they have reached agreement of the outlines of a basic information processing model. According to these models, information comes in through any of the five senses and impinges on a sensory register.

¹²Spence, Janet T. *The psychology of learning and motivation (Volume 2)*. New York: Academic Pres 1968

Filters are activated and let pass or screen out what a person will pay attention to based on interest. The main features of the information are analyzed, abstracted and encoded. They are held in short-term memory for a few seconds while a decision is made about what to do – respond directly, think about them, integrate them with new information, or store them in long-term memory. Perhaps the new information requires a search for old information held in long-term memory. Although the process is enormously complex, there appears to be general agreement about the functions called attention, processing, short-term memory and long-term memory. These are not places in the brain, of course but rather sets of interrelated processes that go on in the mind to facilitate the symbolic manipulation of information.¹³

Information – Processing Model:

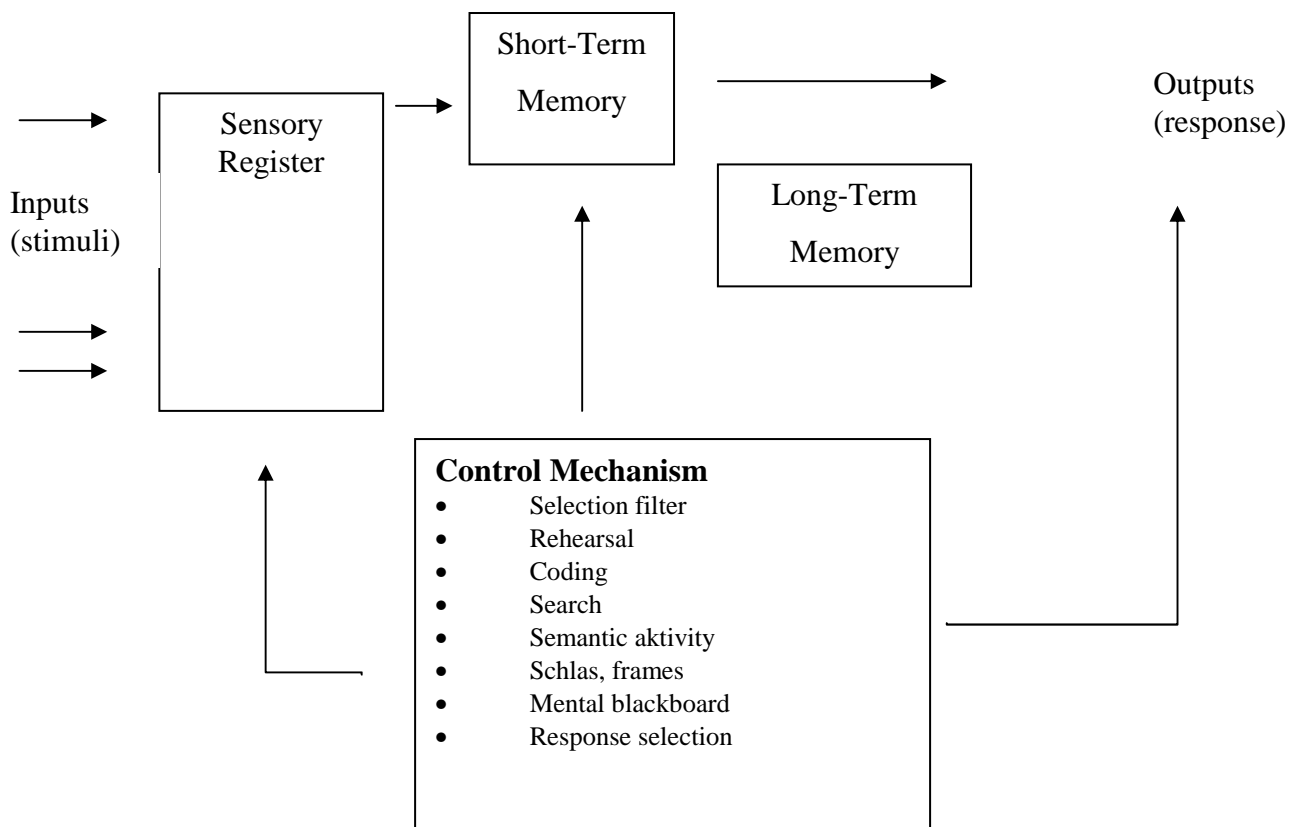


Figure 1. Information – Processing Model

2.2.3 Attention Mechanism

First a presenter must get the attention of the participant. The bad news is that our capacity for attention is limited, perhaps far more limited than intuition would suggest or multimedia oriented adolescents would admit. The good news is that when it is necessary to attend closely to something, we have a rather remarkable capacity for focusing on what we want and need to see or hear. Apparently when attention is focused on something, it is focused there almost exclusively. Notice the word almost. More recent studies suggest that attention is not so much like a switch that is on or off but is instead like a filter that selectively lets through the important information while screening out most (but not all) of the rest. Additional dichotic listening experiments confirmed this view, subjects heard at least some things (like their own name) in the unattended ear or would cross channels to follow an interesting story. But in general attention tends to be highly focused.

The rules for presenters:

- 1) Whatever it takes, get their attention
- 2) Tell participants what to focus attention on
- 3) Do not overload the system
- 4) Slow down and regain attention when necessary
- 5) Do not try to compete with distraction

Attention is a limited resource and effective presenters work to create sustainable learning environments. If attention is never gained or breaks off, all else is lost.

2.2.4 Information Processing

Assuming that the presenter has captured and focused the attention of the participants, what can be done to help them comprehend, what is being said and shown to them? Once information has begun to come in through senses, usually sight and hearing in a presentation, how is it processed? A traditional common sense view of perception is that a person simply sees or hears what is out there. Philosophers have struggled for centuries with this problem – the relationship of the mind to the real world. Cognitive psychologists have joined those in this debate who emphasize the importance of what the mind does in information processing.

What does the presenter need to do to increase the likelihood that information will be processed as intended?

- 1) Recognize that interpretation will always occur
- 2) Help participants discover the overall patterns in the information being presented
- 3) Present information in context
- 4) Help participants with meaning making
- 5) Build strong bridges with from prior knowledge to new information
- 6) Devise ways to ensure that participants are actively involved¹⁴

2.2.5 Memory

Most presenters would like participants to remember what they said. But is difficult for listeners to identify what is important to remember and how to remember accepted information. Retaining information over long periods of time involves memory.

After many years of research, cognitive psychologists have made a distinction between short-term memory and long-term memory.

Short-term memory does not last very long and it does not hold very much. It is used to keep information temporarily in mind in order to act on it.

Long-term memory, on the other hand, is what most people mean when they refer to memory and it is this kind of memory that is usually the concern of trainers and participants. Long term memory keeps all information and ideas in mind for weeks, months and years.¹⁵

¹³Davis, James. *Effective training strategies: a comprehensive guide to maximizing learning in organizations*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998

¹⁴Davis, James. *Managing your own learning*. San Francisco, CA Berkeley, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2000.

¹⁵Plhánková, Alena. *Učebnice obecné psychologie*. Praha: Academia, 2005

2.3 Own knowledge strategy

Companies need employees who have ability to think clearly and creatively. Intellectual work requires an intelligent worker who can ask and answer a lot of questions. If the organization do not want to stuck in the one point then it need these creative thinkers.

These employees need to have three types of thinking:

Critical thinking– focuses on justification or on the reasons to support conclusion. The emphasis in the critical thinking is at the creation of argument or criticizing arguments of others.

Creative thinking – generate a lot of ideas by using unusual ways. It requires a flexibility and courage to break down the boundaries. Usually invent new product or service.

Dialogical thinking – requires ability to evaluate conclusion from the different points of view. Evaluator need to enter empathetically into opposing arguments and viewpoints and recognizing its strength and weaknesses.

2.4 Strategy for team development (team building)

The most organizations are not the main working unit individuals but it is the team and the outcome depends on teamwork. An important tool which helps individuals many years to better collaborate in order to achieve important results is team building. There is need to have the teams to meet the challenges that organizations face. Teambuilding challenge is how to make teams work together. Teams cannot only be created they must be built. For this reason is teambuilding so important as education strategy. The concept of teambuilding in the sixties of the twentieth century became the basis for management. It was originally designed to improve team building interpersonal relationships and social interaction. Today it deals with both aspects of teambuilding exercise: how teams perform their work and how team members collaborate. In the broadest sense is a team building is tool for ensuring a harmonious, productive and efficient cooperation of individuals and maximizing implementation of task and objective. This training can be a single event or series of events that take place over a longer period of time. In any case, we consider this as continual process.¹⁶

The first step is the creation of teambuilding team. For complex projects, the team has to be educated during the implementation of each step of the project. Employees selected for the team may not be used cooperate but brings to the team habits and behavior of their original departments. Creating a cohesive team should begin by teambuilding because it helps to members agree on:

- Team contract
- The mission, goals and vision of team success
- Roles and responsibilities of team members
- Working approach and the agreement on mutual accountability
- Project phases and key points
- Education and resource plans¹⁷

Participation in teambuilding, soon after the set up the team, help solve all these points

¹⁶Payne, Vivette. *The team-building workshop: a trainer's guide*. New York: Amacom, 2001

¹⁷Mackin, Deborah. *The team building tool kit : tips, tactics, and rules for effective workplace teams*. New York: American Management Association, 1994.

Teambuilding process follow these steps:

a) obtain a commitment

Decision to participate in teambuilding begins with contract or agreement. It is important to decide if the course is carried out by an external trainer or manager. When the teambuilding is lead by managers, the managers gain a new perspective to strengthen their competence to manage and build up their responsibility for performance and team effectiveness. But leading by managers also has its disadvantages.

Managers need to be fully engaged in teambuilding. It is important for them to contribute their ideas which help make decisions and solve problems. The course lead by external trainer helps to avoid the dual role of company manager and prevents efforts to control the situation. If the course is lead by corporation manager it is hard for the team to be open and objective when talking about the issues. Members are afraid that the manager may take their comments personally. Often team trivializes their concerns for fear of offending their boss. The opportunity to talk about their views directly is only way how to step forward to improve performance.

b) defining goals

The first step is to determine the objectives of the evaluation. The objectives will be different depending on the needs to solve the problems that threaten their performance, to meet the strategic challenges or to prepare for change.

If team building is designed to deal with work problems and problems in interpersonal relations, data collection is focused on finding what works and what does not. If team building is designed to help the team with strategic issues and changes then data collection focuses on the position for future success.

c) gathering information from the team members

Companies used to collect data through interviews or questionnaires. It is important to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each technique. The most commonly used is the interview. It provides a rich source of information and is the most flexible and adaptable method of data collection.

The basic rules for teambuilding interviews:

- Always speak only one
- Speak as yourself - I use
- respect different points of view and different opinions
- Ensure that the discussion is involving all
- Stay on topic and do not digress
- express your views openly and honestly
- speak to the point and avoid the lengthy stories and examples
- Wait when the others speak and do not interrupt them

d) implementation of results

Successful team building brings the agreements, decisions and other actions. The success of the course depends on early and thorough implementation of these activities.

Summary of leadership - is useful for external trainers as well as for the course participants. It is a short overview of the main points of the course.

Team Feedback - Summary of the course participants the basic document for the team's performance.

The mission, agreements - includes everything that the team during the course created. Include a statement about the mission and agreement on liability.

Action plans - the main mechanism on monitoring the team development

e) evaluate the effect of teambuilding

Evaluation is the final step in the process of teambuilding. It is important because the trainers and the team for some time explore its effectiveness. Immediate evaluation at the end of the meeting will provide feedback on the quality of seminars and compliance or failure of all stated objectives and whether the participants consider lessons useful. For the quarter to half year evaluation focuses on degree to which teambuilding actually help improve team performance. Evaluation with an interval rather provides an opportunity to look at progress made and determine how it can help the following courses to further performance improvement. Evaluation must be made by supervisor, team leader or team.¹⁸

In some situations it may happen that the signs of readiness and training are strong but teambuilding is not the right solution.

- Team members do not have the skills required for their work
- The team does not have resources it needs
- Team work is not appreciated or reflected in the performance management system
- Performance problems of individuals affect the team
- The team has problems to attract and retain members
- Team members feel a glass ceiling (the lack of opportunities for career growth and development)¹⁹

¹⁸Payne, Vivette. *The team-building workshop: a trainer's guide*. New York: Amacom, 2001

¹⁹Kolajová, Lenka . *Týmová spolupráce : jak efektivně vést tým pro dosažení nejlepších výsledku*. Praha: Grada, 2006.

3 METHODS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

3.1 Coaching

Coaching is the method originally used in sports but in these times it is an interactive process which is used to carry out with employees performance problems and develop their capabilities. The process is based on collaboration between managers/supervisors and employees using three basic components: technical help, personal support and individual challenge. These three factors are held together by emotional connection between participants. This connection is important because coaching is person to person experience.

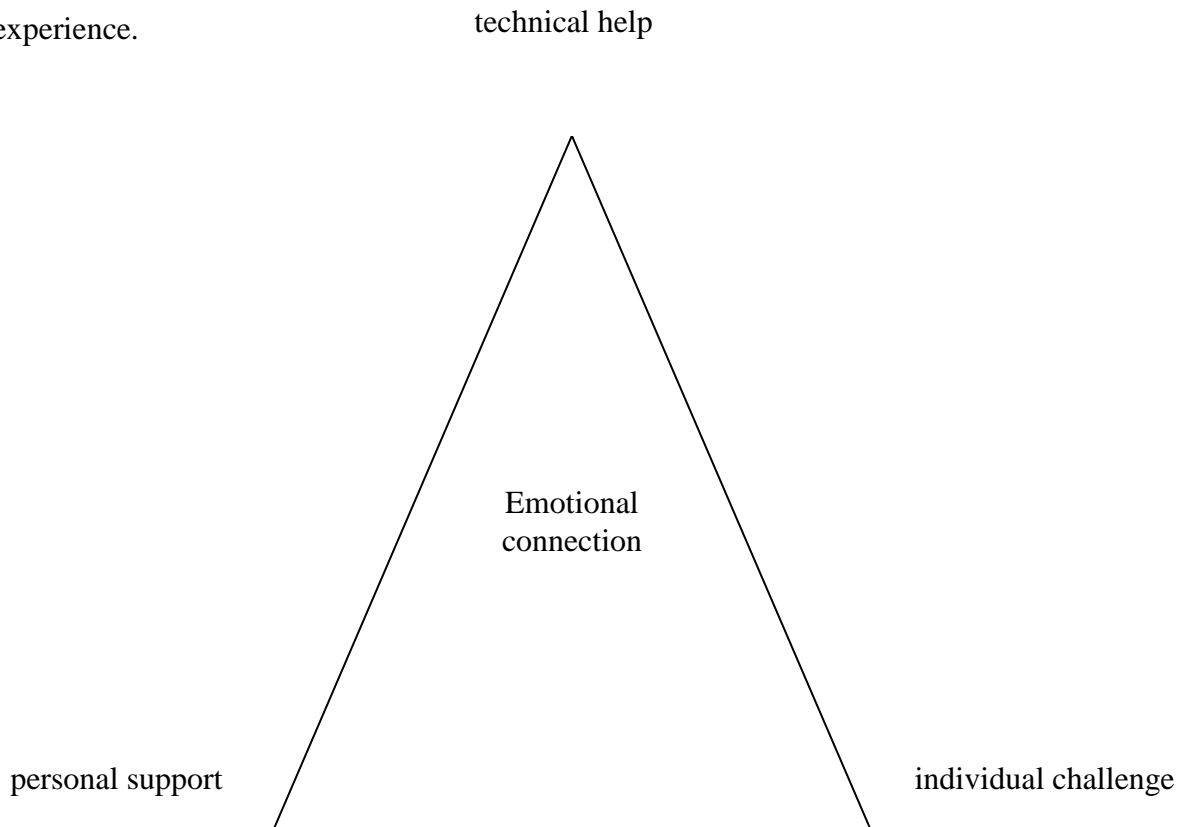


Figure 2. Factors of Coaching

3.1.1 Benefits

Companies underrate benefits of coaching because they do not see the future potential of this method. These companies will never use the full potential of their employees and managers. This training makes jobs easier and enhance participant's career by:

Overcoming performance problems: some employee does not manage to do all tasks which manager assign to him, other employee has bad time management so he has to finish his work at home, another has no idea how to improve the company performance – all these problems can be solved by coaching.

Developing employees skills: more skilled workers can make a routine of their usual working tasks - these tasks will take less time. Managers can use this saved time and delegate more responsibility to workers which will save time to managers who can think about future development and motivation of employees.

Increasing productivity: through increased effectiveness people will work quicker and smarter and unit's performance level will increase.

Creating promotable subordinate: coaching improves managerial and interpersonal skills of managers and improves employees performance. More skilled staff members have better chance for promotion.

Improving retention: further education builds trust between employer and employee. People are more loyal and motivated when employer spends time and money to help them improve their skills. Company reduces cost for replacement.

Fostering a positive work culture: good coaching produces better relationships between colleagues. It also satisfies and motivates staff members to reach future goals.²⁰

²⁰Cook, Marshall. *Effective coaching*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1999

The process of coaching is accomplished through a three-steps of observation, discussion and active coaching.

1) Preparation – The first step in effective coaching is observation. A coach has to understand the situation, has to have information about employee, about his skills and behavior. Observation will help to offer relevant, informed, timely advices and will answer if coaching is appropriate and helps to employee. Observation needs to be formal (during business meeting) and also informal (during break time) only then observer can learn what person is not doing well. Another part of observation have to deal with finding a performance gap and skill deficiency.

A performance gap is difference between employees current performance and what employer requires from him. For example accountant does not manage to finish his paper work on time. Other departments rely on his data and analysis finds the gap between his performance and what is expected from him.

A skill deficiency is difference between employees current performance and capabilities needed to take on another job position. For example accountant has opportunity to be promoted as Key account manager but he has not the skills for this position. Coach looks for the gaps between current employee position and what he need to manage for promotion.

Both gaps could be corrected through coaching.

Final stage of observation is recognition if coaching will improve all problems.

Coachee who denies his problems or blame it on others cannot be helped .

2) Discussion – this is intermediate step between observation and active coaching. In this part is time to discuss what coach observed in preparation stage. Result of first stage should deal with observation about actual behavior instead of personal motives. Reason for dealing with behaviors is that behavior can be documented with high level of certainty and evaluator can stay objective. Discussion about behavior should begin with compliment to break the ice and relax the coachee. Next continue with explaining why is behavior of coachee problem and how it influences the goals and work performance.

The most productive communication between people takes place through dialogue otherwise person could feel that he or she is under personal attack.

In discussion are open-ended and close question.

Close questions ends with yes or no answer and they don't lead to further discussion.

For example: "Are you satisfied with your job?"
 "Are you fulfilling your career goals?"
 "Can you schedule your working time?"

Open-ended questions leads to further discussion about participants ideas and generate participation.

For example: "What are the major problems of...?"
 "What is your idea about...?"
 "Why are you not happy with...?"

Inherent part of discussion is listening the other participant of talk. Coach must be active listener who will tell coachee his opinions but also will show respect by giving attention during coachee talk.

Active listener pay attention to: maintaining eye contact
 taking necessary notes
 avoiding distraction
 smiling at appropriate moments

3) Active coaching is consist of agreement on goals, setting up an action plan and giving feedback.

The First step of active coaching is defining goals of the whole process. Agreement is important because manager have to know where he has to lead the coachee and coachee has to know what is his progress and how far is the objective. Participants have to inquire different perspectives, present proposals, check for understanding, check for agreement and if one of them don't agree, they have to go through whole process again.

The next step of the active coaching is to develop an action plan. An action plan contains:

- a statement of goals
- specific goals
- a timetable
- measure of success
- the coach's role

An Action plan don't need to be written by coach. An Action Plan can be written by coachee who will be more responsible for goals and will be more committed to achieve them.

When an action plan is written then the process of coaching can begin. The Coach tells coachee what to do, how to do it or shows how to do things more effectively. If it is possible he lets coachee to figure things out by themselves because it is the most effective learning style.²¹

Coaching is always finished by giving and receiving feedback. Feedback evaluates the success of coaching and it can be positive or negative.

Positive feedback can be simply compliment on good work or further identification of particular actions. Negative feedback can be simple criticism which is the judgement of faults or in the contrast can bring details for discussion and improvement.

How to give a feedback:

- focus on improving performance
- keep the focus of feedback on future
- provide timely feedback
- focus on behavior, not attitudes or personality
- avoid generalization
- be sincere
- be realistic²²

²¹Luecke, Richard. *Coaching and mentoring: how to develop top talent and achieve stronger performance*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2004

²²Blanchard, Nick P. *Effective training: systems, strategies, and practices*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2010.

3.2 Mentoring

“Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person.”²³

A mentor is mostly more experienced worker and often in higher position in company.

The mentor is one who is willing to assist others in developing their career.

A mentee is someone less experienced who need guidance in his career development.

3.2.1 Benefits of mentoring

Mentee:

- improved performance and productivity
- career opportunity and advancement
- improved knowledge and skills
- greater confidence and well – being

Mentor:

- improved performance
- greater satisfaction, loyalty and self-awareness
- new knowledge and skills
- leadership development

Business:

- staff retention and improved communication
- improved morale, motivation and relationships
- improved business learning²⁴

²³Gordon, F. Shea. *Mentoring: how to develop successful mentor behaviors*. Menlo Park, California: Crisp Publications, 2001.

²⁴Megginson, David. *Mentoring in action: a practical guide*. London: Kogan Page, 2006.

3.2.2 Mentoring cost

One of disadvantage of mentoring is that it is not cost-free. Costs of mentoring are time and effort of manager which could have been spent more useful way: improving customer service, budget control, planning and oversight operations and so forth. Many companies nevertheless consider mentoring as cost because it is part of their company values.²⁵

The process of mentoring includes three stages exploration, new understanding and action planning. The model can be used to reflect upon what mentoring involves, schedule mentoring meeting, to review mentoring process and enhance shared understanding.

1) Exploration – in the first stage mentor take a lead in creating a relationship with his mentee and developing atmosphere for exploration. This part should not be rushed because insufficient exploration leads to faulty understanding in second stage. If the mentor or mentee are stuck in endless exploration with no progress, it is time to talk about their relationship and if it is useful to continue with mentoring.

2) New understanding – the second stage is turning point in mentoring. It is part when mentor share experiences, tell stories, demonstrate skills, establish priorities, give constructive feedback, support and mentee accept new information.

If the mentor is supportive and sensitive then mentee is receptive and able to learn. Patient mentoring, give mentee clarification what he has learned and implications of new developmental needs, goals and aspirations. Timescale of this stage depends on experience and complexity of the issue and quality of discussion between mentor and mentee.

²⁵Luecke, Richard. *Coaching and mentoring: how to develop top talent and achieve stronger performance*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2004.

3) Action planning – final stage of the mentoring process. The mentor encourage mentee to a new, creative ways of thinking, help to make decision and solve problems, monitor progress and evaluate outcomes. The mentor give advice and direction to the mentee and he follow plans through own solution. Every progressive step should be celebrated for mentee's better feeling. If the action plan is to work really well a longer-term view (weeks, months or year) is necessary.²⁶

3.2.3 Feedback

The process of mentoring is finished, as in the coaching, by giving a feedback. Mentor express his opinions and ideas based on his experiences. Feedback should be consist of facts, advices, support and offer additional help.

²⁶Alred, Geof. *The mentoring pocketbook*. Alresford: Management Pocketbooks, 1998.

3.3 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is fairly unstructured group process for collecting information about a variety of topics. Brainstorming often begins by posing a situation or describing a problem that requires a solution. Participants are asked to think about how to deal with a situation or how to solve the problem. Members of the group have to write all ideas which are generated without premature evaluation. Once all ideas are written, the group goes through the ideas and discuss about their usefulness and combine similar ideas or solutions. Participants should encourage as many ideas as possible.

Rules for effective brainstorming session:

- do not allow criticism of ideas until all ideas have been generated
- encourage quantity of ideas rather than being concerned initially with the quality of ideas
- verbalize ideas as soon and as often as they occur
- combine ideas and build on them²⁷

Advantages of the brainstorming

- fast and easy way to analyze tasks or problems
- group produce better judgment than individual
- identifies major possibilities that results in better training
- can identify creative solution to problems and ways to perform tasks

²⁷Osborn, Alex. *Applied imagination; principles and procedures of creative problem-solving*. New York: Scribner, 1963.

Disadvantages:

- Results are qualitative and based on perception
- Potential to conflicts
- Disruption of participants work flow

One of the most used methods in the brainstorming is a method of free association. This method is based on letting all ideas come out of the mind. The most important thing to do is to let all thoughts go and not justify them. Participants just have to write everything down on paper without any line or sequence. There are three exercises which can be used for free creative thinking:²⁸

- 1) Participant choose a product and develop creative strategy for this product. Then he will write, for at least ten minutes, everything what is on his mind. The grammar or spelling is not important because it is only about ideas. When participant finish this task he will look at all words and try to find out how it can help him look differently at the product. How it can improve his strategy or try to find some connections between his first ideas and his free thinking.
- 2) Participant pick a product and develop creative strategy again. Then he ask himself a hundred questions about product and answer them. Then he pick the ten best question and ask ten questions about these ten questions. Finally he choose the two of them and try to apply them for his product and strategy.
- 3) Start will be the same again (with product and strategy). Participant choose a five words from the dictionary and come up with the three ideas relating to the product and strategy for each. This will help participant to access the area of his mind he may not normally use to solve the problems and this is the key point of brainstorming. Come up with new ideas.²⁹

²⁸Jonassen, David. *Task analysis methods for instructional design*. Mahwah, N.J: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1999.

²⁹Cory, Timothy. *Brainstorming: Techniques for New Ideas*. New York: iUniverse, 2003.

3.4 Management games

This form of business education has become increasingly popular as a means of entertaining managers, training device for employees and aid in transferring knowledge.

Games to promote knowledge – the traditional way how to promote knowledge is by direct instruction – lecture. Advantages of lectures are broadcasting to sizeable audience but lecture can bore audience.

Compared with lectures games would put forward contrary arguments such as the following:

- games can have distinguishable subject knowledge actually built into them
- the students learn by experience rather than by hearsay
- opportunity for emphasize learning points as the game progresses
- difference in students motivation
- participants in the game are actively involved
- discussion between participants

Disadvantages of games:

- require a longer time to cover the same amount of information as lecture
- less programmed than a lecture so there is no guarantee that all the points will be given with emphasis

Games to help with decision-making

Discussion games – players receive a description problem (real or imaginary) and they must decide what should be done about it. The problem can be solved clearly without any other options or it can have several credible solutions. Supervisor listen all players solution and tell them his expert opinion.

In-tray exercises – players receive problems representing the contents of “in” basket on office-holder’s desk one morning. The task is to decide what will office-holder do with each item. , record the chosen action and state the order in which one will make a

decisions. Game is difficult because it is not enough to take right action on one matter if by attending to it some other time-critical item is neglected.

Ranking exercises – players set the list of resources, ideas, people or activities in rank order from the most important to the least important. The best known ranking is Desert island survival when players rank items in order of importance for their survival. There is a supervisor who compares answers chosen by players.

Games to increase group effectiveness

Four-letter words – players have to make a four-letter word from the letters which they receive. This exercise needs good communication between players so in that way it is a communication exercise. Once players cooperate and have written down words it becomes a problem-solving exercise or decision-making exercise.

Perception – this game can be called a logic puzzle. One of the members who understands the method is chosen to explain the method to those members who do not know anything. Selected member has to be ensured that other members will be able to communicate the method further. The main benefit of this game is improvement of communicative skills.

3.5 Role-playing

Role-playing is a powerful method which is used when spoken words are not enough because participants have to empathize to the role of their customer, supplier or employee.

Advantages:

- introduces situation dramatically
- opportunity to appreciate another point of view
- opportunity to practice a skill
- allows exploration of solutions

Disadvantages:

- not appropriate for large groups
- some students could be too self-conscious³⁰

³⁰Elgood, Chris. *Using management games*. Alresford: Gower, 1996.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to provide an overview of different educational strategies and other forms and methods of business education. This paper can be used as a guideline for those who are interested in further education of adults.

Business education is a learning journey which helps participants to be able to handle all tasks within their jobs. Although every new employee is trained to manage their work, due to increasing competition, the first training is not enough. Development of new technologies requires people able to learn new skills and flexible in their skills. Globalization of markets requires the language skills and multicultural approach in international trade relations.

Educational plan, which is a part of educational process, is important for effective education of employees. This plan consists of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of educational activities. The educational plan sets the goals which should be reached. When the goals are determined, the appropriate strategy can be selected.

Every strategy is focused on different area of staff development. For qualitative training, the behavioral strategy is used because employee will control the required skill. For quantitative training, the cognitive strategy is used because employee will get a lot of information as soon as possible. Own knowledge strategy is based on critical, creative and dialogical thinking. This strategy is used mostly by advertising workers or advisors who need to think about new ways how to do ordinary things. There are also methods which support the positive acceptance of new members to the working team. Teambuilding methods support coherence and creativity and they are mostly realized by some outdoor training.

Educational strategies are completed by different forms of educational methods as coaching, mentoring, brainstorming or role playing.

As a problem in the planning and implementation of training activities can be the constant dilemma which strategy or method is the right one. There is no guarantee that the chosen strategy or method will help the employee gain required skills or knowledge, but there is no doubt that the education strategy can show to human resource professional direction and the process of elimination will lead to an optimal conclusion.

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