

Training and Development Programs across Lubricant Industry in India: A Study of B2B Front Line Managers

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Abstract

Lubricant sector these days find it difficult to stay competitive in recent global economy. Importance of employee development program is growing for the Lubricant sector, those pursuing to receive an advantage among competitors. Employees are esteemed resource of the organization and success or failure of the lubricant sector mainly rely on the performance of employees. Therefore, lubricant sector is financing large amount on employee training and development programs. Furthermore, in training program it is supportive for companies to emphasis on knowledge, expertise and ability of employees. The purpose of this paper is to present an analytical study established on the factors of training and development programs in lubricant sector. This paper will inspect the factors of training and development program for B2B FLM's across lubricant sector of India. Primary data has been collected to achieve the objectives of the study. A well structured questionnaire containing 19 statements has been used for the purpose of the study. The respondents have been asked to rate on a five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Descriptive and Exploratory factor analysis have been used to analyze the data. Diagrams and tables have been used to analyze the data. Factor analysis resulted in six factors which explained the training and development needs of B2B FLM's of public, private & multi-national companies which were considered to be significant by the respondents. As per the results overall work development as an important factor followed by

career development, interval between, well planned trainings, overall training and organization development.

Keywords: B2B-Business to Business; FLM's- Front Line Managers; PSU's- Public Sector Undertakings; MNC's-Multi-National Companies

1. Introduction

Lubricant Industry

Lubricants are used to reduce friction and wear & tear in specific and also serve some general functions like cooling & flushing. Lubricants are used in almost all major applications like-Engines, Compressors, Turbines, Hydraulic Systems and Gear boxes etc. There are about 5000-10000 formulations which take care of almost 90% lubricant applications. Lubricants Selling is mainly divided into 2 Major groups: - Automotive Sales and Industrial Sales. Automotive Sales which is also called Bazaar Trade is taken care by B2C (Business to Consumer) professionals and Industrial Sales which includes sales of industrial lubricants and specialties like greases, metalworking fluids & Solid lubricants, is taken care by B2B (Business to Business) professionals.

India is the third largest lubricant market globally in volume terms behind the US and China. Lubricant Industry is changing its dynamics very soon and there is a major structural change which has already

begun from volume growth to value growth with sustainable profits and major Share of Business which is not possible without quality Front Line Managers

The lubricants industry in India is dominated by national oil companies (PSU's) namely IOC, BPCL and HPCL that account for almost half of market share. Rest of the market comprises of MNC's like Shell, Exxon Mobil, Total, Valvoline and numerous smaller and local private players.

Training and Development

Training is a process via which a person enhances and develops his efficiency, capacity and effectiveness at work by improving and updating his knowledge and understanding the skills relevant to perform his or her job. It also helps a person cultivate desired behavior and attitude towards the work and people. Unless training is provided, the jobs and lives of employees in organizations are at stake. It gives people an awareness of the rules & procedures to guide their behavior. It is an application of knowledge to improve the performance on the Current job or to prepare one for an intended job. Organization & individual for their survival & attainment of mutual goals should develop & progress simultaneously; this can be done mainly through training technique because training is the most important technique & it is a value addition to the organization for the development of the employee. The employee been selected, placed & introduced in an organization should be provided with training facilities in order to adjust & make them suitable for the Job, as no organization can get a candidate who exactly matches with the job & organizational requirements.

The trained employees are the valuable assets to any organization. Trainings are given when there is a difference between the job requirements & employees present specifications. Thus employee training is the most important sub-system, specialized & one of the fundamental operative functions of Leading. Organizational efficiency, productivity, progress & development, also organization viability, stability & growth to greater extent depend on training. If the required training is not provided it leads to the performance failure of the employees. Training enhances the Competence, Commitment, and Creativity & Contribution to the organization.

2. Review of Literature

Training and development factors and effectiveness is an important issue for research and analysis these days for various sectors. Though major studies have been carried out in service sector like healthcare industry, textile, electronics and hi-technology products but very limited have been carried out in lubricant sector which calls for the need of this study. **Honeycut, Jr., Ford and Rao (1995) in "Sales training: Executives' Research Needs"** through this study stated that academicians were able to understand sales practitioners view point and problems and were able to effectively reduce the industry/academic relevancy gap via useful researches. This study contribution was that it attempted to provide a clearer picture of the potential marketplace of sales management academicians. This study was of help to academicians to support sales training practitioners in their everyday myriad problems. Descriptive study -Mail survey- Questionnaire method was employed as a study design in this study. Here author used Descriptive Research design where-in Cross Sectional survey was conducted. Respondents were members of NSSTE-National Society of Sales Training Executives from industrial goods, consumer goods and service industry. Survey was done via 4-pager questionnaire & rating of 34 subareas of sales training by members. Here in, it was discussed about the sales trainings & effectiveness, relevance & improvements and also about the usefulness of the researches/publications carried out in sales training for sales trainers and practitioners. **Shepherd and Ridnour (1995) in "The Training of Sales Managers: An Exploratory Study of Sales Management Training Practices"** presented the results of the empirical study carried on NSSTE members which focused on the current practices used in the sales training of Sales managers across American businesses. The study focused on both the approaches used to train sales managers and the content of the training. Churchill, Ford, Hartley and Walker (1986) pointed out, training was one of the most important ingredients leading to success in the personal selling position. A mail questionnaire was developed in consensus with sales managers and sales trainers and was floated to all NSSTE 114 members out of which 93 complete responses were received with an 82% response rate. The questionnaire floated included sales management training approaches, instructors, methodologies, locations and content wherein respondents were asked for rating on a 7-pointer scale for usage level and against perception of effectiveness. Exploratory study was carried out via questionnaire method to decide upon the best research design. This paper

hinted upon the important topics of competitive analysis, quota setting, forecasting & developing a strategic business plan and less focus on sales management trainings. Scope of study was more focus on sales management training, choice of sales trainers, more inclusion of senior sales managers for training new sales managers (expert system approach detailed by Rubash, Sullivan and Herzog, 1987) and more focus on those organizations which gave more value and have commitment to trainings and understand that sales managers were crucial which can affect the bottom line. **Attia, Honeycutt Jr., and Leach (2005)** in “A Three Stage Model for Assessing and Improving Sales Force Training and Development” extended the growing body in the area of research of sales training evaluation for the sales managers by proposing a 3-stage model: 1) training needs for sales persons, 2) training impact on trainees, 3) training impact on the firm. This study provided the insights to sales managers and academicians with a simplified but yet comprehensive model—a sales assessment framework—for sales training evaluations, wherein sales managers were intervened and were aligned with the trainings according to company's strategic focus, were able to calculate the cost and improved upon the training actually required for front line sales managers. **Anderson, Mehta & Strong (1997)** in “An Empirical Investigation of Sales Management Training Programs for Sales Managers” explained in this study that newly selected sales managers normally have problems making a successful transition from personal selling to sales management. Yet, sales management training remains one of the most neglected areas in the personal selling and sales management literature. Findings from these studies revealed that most sales managers received little or no formal training for their sales management roles, and that the training provided to them had many weaknesses. This empirical investigation attempted to shed light on the current status of sales management training from the perspectives of sales managers.

Need of the study

Though most of the studies have been carried out in service sectors, textile, electronics, healthcare and other hi-technology products sectors but almost none were able to track for lubricants sector across India. So that's why we thought of doing the same on Lubricants sector which is actually governing the whole world economies. In this study we will be focusing on the factors affecting the training & developmental needs of B2B frontline sales managers in Lubricant Industry spread across the

Lubricant sector of India. Hence in this paper we have examined the factors affecting the training needs of public, private & multi-national companies. The present study is exploratory research by the means of primary data analysis; an attempt has been made to identify the factors affecting the training and development across lubricant sector with the help of well structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on 5-point likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and the respondents were selected by applying Multi-stage random sampling technique. In this pilot survey due to time constraints, convenience sampling was used to collect the data from the respondents

3. Research Methodology

Primary data has been collected from lubricant companies from complete India to achieve the objectives of the study. The study covered present period and respondents from B2B functional group of various lubricant companies from public, private and multi-national spread across India. Multi-stage random sampling technique is applied in this study. In first stage lubricant companies are identified and in second stage sample size via convenience sampling. A total of 120 questionnaires have been distributed to 120 Front line manager (5 companies from all 3 blocks—Public, Private & MNC's are identified for the study with 4 block offices (North-East-West-South) across India with 2 FLM's in each of the 4-regions, so 40 respondents from each block identified under study.) Out of 120 identified actual respondents were 97 which were considered for the analysis, which represents 80.84% response rate.

3.1 Tools of analysis

Exploratory factor analysis and descriptive research design have been used to analyze the data. Exploratory factor analysis is used to reduce data and identify the relationship between the derived variable and respondent. Appropriateness of the data to apply factor analysis has been checked with the help of following measures (Kaur, 2010)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy: KMO measures the sampling adequacy. This measure varies between 0 and 1 and values closer to 1 are better. The recommended value is 0.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996; and Kaiser, 1974)

Bartlett's test of sphericity (Bartlett, 1954): It is a test to examine the hypothesis that the variables are uncorrelated in the population.

Communalities: It is the amount of variance which one variable shares with all other variables.

Eigen value: It is the total variance explained by each factor.

Factor Loadings: It is the simple correlation between the variables and factors.

Development of Research Instrument:

Based on the above literature review and discussion with the experts in the area of Business to Business of lubricant sector, many details were appended and edited. The final of 19 items were selected for survey and these items were to be rated on a five point likert scale with “strongly disagree” as 5 and “strongly agree” as 1 by the respondents. Initial scale comprised of 19 Items. Exploratory factor analysis was used on this well structured questionnaire. All the factors having loading more than 0.5 were considered good and in the present concern the loading ranged from -0.413 to 0.890. Items with factor loadings <0.5 were removed. The six factors so generated have Eigen values ranging from 1.192 to 5.317. Questionnaire made comprised of 2 parts. Part A comprising of 19 statements related to the effectiveness elements and factors of training and development followed by 5 multiple choice questions on training programmes and methods and Part B containing demographic profile of the respondents.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The sources of data are primary. The data collected from B2B Front line managers (employees) survey constitute primary source. The data collected from the sources are scrutinized, edited and tabulated. **SPSS 16.0V** was used to conduct the data analysis primarily based on the statistical tools.

Statistical tools used are: Frequency test and Correlation test and Statistical package used is: SPSS Software. Since much research has not been carried out in the field of lubricants sector B2B Sales force training and development, for this purpose we design our own scale which has a combination of Multiple choice and 5-pointer likert scale and the validity and reliability of the scales is to be checked using Cronbach’s Alpha technique. This tool is the measure of internal consistency and tells reliability of the questionnaire. Additionally, factor analysis is used to analyze the factors effecting training programmes.

Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Cronbach's Alpha	.816	19

Source: Primary data

Table 1 Scale Reliability Analysis (Factors affecting Training and Development)

Statements	Communalities		Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Mean	Std. Dev.
	Initial	Extraction				
Competent Faculty	1.000	.560	.491	.802	1.680	0.551
Resource Used	1.000	.761	.426	.806	1.825	0.479
Information gained	1.000	.608	.289	.813	1.897	0.306
Evaluated After Training	1.000	.803	.347	.810	2.206	0.558
Comfortable training environment	1.000	.534	.023	.823	2.083	0.449
Interval between	1.000	.837	.119	.822	2.041	0.594
Well planned	1.000	.790	.325	.811	1.897	0.549
Overall Training	1.000	.815	.500	.806	1.938	0.348
Importance to the personal	1.000	.789	.631	.793	2.072	0.633
Develop my Career	1.000	.793	.591	.794	2.309	0.795
Organization development	1.000	.864	.152	.822	2.062	0.674
New Skill	1.000	.783	.643	.793	2.165	0.607
Self	1.	.865	.582	.802	1.	0.

Development	00				80	39
Technical Skills	1.000	.779	.281	.813	2.010	0.489
Work better with job satisfaction	1.000	.808	.620	.794	2.227	0.621
Improves job performance	1.000	.696	.325	.811	1.928	0.505
Offered minimize accident	1.000	.688	.252	.824	2.381	0.940
Improve working condition	1.000	.747	.533	.798	2.165	0.731
Work development	1.000	.826	.555	.798	2.103	0.621

Source: Primary data

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.569
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.245E3
	Df	171
	Sig.	.000

Source: Primary data

Factor Analysis

Principal component analysis was conducted as a means of data reduction, to see if the face validity of the items held (Pallant, 2001). Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was accessed. The correlation matrix revealed many coefficients of .3 and above as shown in **Table 2**.

The Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.569 exceeding the recommended value of 0.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996; and Kaiser, 1974) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. PCA revealed the presence of six components with Eigen values exceeding 1, explaining 75.493 percent of the variance. The variance explained by each factor is shown in **Table- 3**. The values of communalities using principal component analysis ranged from 0.534 to 0.865 (**Table 1**). Here, it is pertinent to mention that communalities ≥ 0.5 is sufficient for the explanation of constructs (Hair et al., 2009). All these values show factor analysis has extracted good quantity of variance in the items. Hence, all the requirements of reliability, validity and unidimensionality are met.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson's Correlation Coefficients (Pearson's r) is a method of calculating the relationship between variables. Correlation analysis was used to measure the degree of relationship between the 19 main independent variables of the factors affecting the training needs of public, private & multi-national companies. The main objective to conduct correlation matrix was to measure whether the nineteen main variables were independent from each other or not. As a rule of thumb, if a correlation coefficient value of r indicates 0 to .2, there is weak relationship between the variables. If r values of .3 to .6, generally considered moderate and .7 to 1 is strong (Dancey and Reidy, 2007).

As per to the scale used if all the 19 items get a rating of 5 each, the total score would be 95. The mean score of the respondents was 38.79 (Table 3). The correlation matrix was computed as shown in table 2. The mean correlation was .198 and it varies from -0.242 to 0.756 with a range .999, There was a strong correlation to go ahead with factor analysis.

Extraction of Factors

In order to identify the underlying dimensions of the factors affecting the training needs of public, private & multi-national companies, exploratory factor analysis was employed. The respondents were asked to rate nineteen variables, on a five point likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All the factors having loading more than 0.5 were considered good and in the present concern the loading ranged from -0.413 to 0.890. Items with factor loadings < 0.5 were removed. The six factors so generated have Eigen values ranging from 1.192 to 5.317.

Table 2 Correlation Matrix of Factors of Training and Development Variables

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S 10	S 11	S 12	S 13	S 14	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	
S1	1.000																			
S2	0.259	1.000																		
S3	0.174	0.089	1.000																	
S4	0.285	-0.019	0.248	1.000																
S5	-0.145	0.068	-0.013	-0.235	1.000															
S6	0.136	0.539	0.196	-0.089	0.065	1.000														
S7	0.269	0.168	-0.126	-0.236	0.246	-0.083	1.000													
S8	0.276	0.184	0.135	0.174	0.233	0.164	0.239	1.000												
S9	0.485	0.076	0.308	0.636	0.125	-0.008	0.231	0.351	1.000											
S10	0.490	0.171	0.133	0.418	-0.131	-0.049	0.193	0.145	0.576	1.000										
S11	-0.002	0.518	-0.019	-0.200	0.052	0.072	0.130	0.016	-0.181	0.353	1.000									
S12	0.315	0.244	0.317	0.606	-0.165	-0.048	0.301	0.246	0.673	0.433	-0.102	1.000								
S13	0.471	0.309	-0.167	0.277	-0.200	0.166	0.287	0.437	0.510	0.718	0.200	0.393	1.000							
S14	0.090	-0.081	-0.062	-0.084	0.233	0.034	0.314	0.615	0.132	0.018	-0.160	0.170	0.171	1.000						
S15	0.367	0.100	0.344	0.495	0.082	0.059	0.405	0.258	0.673	0.384	-0.183	0.729	0.265	0.335	1.000					
S16	0.141	0.507	0.154	-0.242	0.210	0.392	0.273	0.152	-0.049	0.004	0.258	0.175	0.033	0.340	0.119	1.000				
S17	0.077	0.150	0.247	0.166	0.073	-0.028	-0.024	0.359	0.163	0.105	0.077	0.199	0.062	0.172	0.171	0.102	1.000			
S18	0.417	0.381	0.030	0.018	-0.201	0.128	0.328	0.286	0.176	0.538	0.486	0.267	0.612	0.286	0.192	0.399	0.135	1.000		
S19	0.189	0.061	0.386	0.660	0.044	-0.181	0.062	0.223	0.644	0.483	-0.040	0.756	0.209	0.168	0.642	0.057	0.235	0.146	1.000	

Inter-item correlation: Mean= .198, Minimum= -.242, Maximum= .756, Range=.999, Max/ Min=-3.121, Variance= .050, N=19

Table3 :(Rotated Varimax Results– Factor Analysis of Training & Development of FLM’s)

Variable s	Factors					
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Work develop ment	0.879					
New Skill	0.837					
Work better with job satisfacti on	0.796					
Importan ce to the personal	0.785					
Evaluate d After Training	0.738			-0.413		
Informati on gained	0.566					
Self Develop ment		0.890				
Develop my Career	0.465	0.652				
Improve working condition		0.646				0.472
Compete nt Faculty		0.623				
Interval between			0.886			
Resource Used			0.707			0.454
Improves job performa nce			0.640	0.426		
Well planned				0.836		
Comforta ble training environm ent		-0.415		0.533		
Overall Training					0.819	
Technica l Skills				0.474	0.701	

Offered minimize accident					0.669	
Organiza tion develop ment						0.886
Eigen Values	5.317	2.872	2.048	1.702	1.213	1.192
% Variance	27.986	15.14	10.779	8.957	6.384	6.274
Cumulat ive% Variance	27.986	43.1	53.879	62.836	69.219	75.493
Cronbach’s Alpha = .816, Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy= .569, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity (Approx Chi-Square = 1.245E3, df = 171, Sig = .000, Mean = 38.79						

Source: Primary data

Overall Work Development (F1): The factor alone has explained 27.98% of the total variance in the factor analysis solution and has been labeled as “Overall Work Development”. It includes seven variables; i.e. work development, new skill, work better with job satisfaction, importance to the personal, evaluated after training, information gained and develop my career. The results of this factor indicated that overall work development is the important factor affecting the training needs of B2B Sales force of public, private and multi-national lubricant companies across all blocks/zones of the country. Here in B2B FLM’s feel that training help developing their overall work, skills, career via information they gained. The finding shows that when FLM’s are evaluated after training and importance is given to their personal work growth profile they work better with full job satisfaction. The factor loading ranges from .465 to .879. It covers 5.317 of the Eigen values.

Career Development (F2): Five variables are loaded on the second factor. This factor is labeled as “Career Development” as based on variables i.e. self development, develop my career, improve working condition, competent faculty and comfortable training environment. The factor loading ranges from -0.415 to 0.890. This category’s result demonstrates that the respondents feel with training their self development happens. They felt that with trainings their working conditions improve which in turn help in developing their career too. The respondents felt that competent faculty is important variable affecting the training needs of FLM’s but negative coefficient of comfortable training environment indicates that it doesn’t play important role in their career

development. It covers 2.872 of the Eigen values. It has explained the 15.114% of the total variance of the factor analysis solution.

Interval between (F3): Factor three established with three variables. It has been classified as “*Interval Between*”. It includes the variables i.e. Interval between trainings, resources used in training and improves job performance. The result of this factor shows that many of the respondents felt that interval between the training and the resources used in trainings are the important variables affecting the training needs of FLM’s. They indicated that above variables helped in improving the job performance. It covers 2.048 of the Eigen values. The factor loading ranges from .640 to .886. This factor explains 10.779% of the total variation in the factor analysis.

Well planned Training (F4): The fourth factor might be labeled “*Well Planned Training*”. It includes five variables i.e. Evaluated after training, improves job performance, well planned, comfortable training environment and technical skills. The result of this factor highlights that well planned training with comfortable training environment and focusing on technical skills improves the job performance. Negative coefficient of “evaluated after training” suggests that this variable does not important role in well planned training affecting the training needs of FLM’s. The factor loading ranges from -0.413 to 0.836. It covers 1.702 of the Eigen values. It has explained 8.957% of the variance for factor analysis solution.

Overall Training (F5): The fifth factor explains three variables namely: overall training, technical skills and offered minimize accident. It has been labeled as “*Overall Training*”. The factor loading ranges from .669 to .819. It explains only 6.384% of the total variation in the factor analysis. It is revealed that Overall training played an important role in affecting the training needs of FLM’s. They feel that technical skills are quite important part of the training requirements and they should in turn help those offering minimum accidents in the field. It covers 1.213 of the Eigen values.

Organization Development (F6): Factor sixth “*Organization development*” is developed from the three variables i.e. improve working condition, resource used and organization development. The result indicates that the respondents feel that with trainings their work condition improves which in turn help the organization to develop and grow. They felt the resources used in trainings are the fair variables which affects the training needs of FLM’s. So to keep the organization on the development path, trainings are very much crucial and important, which should become the essential part of the company’s culture. This factor has explained 6.274% of the total variation in the factor analysis. It covers 1.192 of the

Eigen values. Organization development variable has highest loading in this factor. The loading ranges from .454 to .886.

Conclusion and Implications

The finding of the study highlighted that the majority of respondents feel that overall work development is a very important factor affecting the training needs of B2B FLMs’s of public, private and multi-national lubricant companies across all blocks/zones of the country. They feel that trainings greatly help in their self development, work development and finally organizational development. Trainings help them in acquiring varied new skills and technical skills. FLM’s felt comfortable with the well planned trainings, interval between the trainings and finally with the overall training. B2B FLM’s felt that with the trainings when importance is given to their personal growth and they are evaluated after the trainings, they work better with full job satisfaction. Even they felt that with trainings and the resources used in those help enhancing their technical skills too.

The respondents felt that trainings successfully help developing their career, improving their working conditions and improving their job performance. With competent faculty used in comfortable training environment help them gaining information and offered them minimizing the accidents in the field. Respondents felt that evaluation after training and comfortable training environment are not so important variables in gauging the training needs of FLM’s across lubricant sector in various blocks of the country.

This study examined the factors affecting the training needs of B2B FLM’s of public, private & multi-national companies. This paper found that overall work development, career development, interval between, well planned trainings, overall training and organization development were the important six factors which were extracted from the study, but just two factors overall work development and career development explained 43% of the total variation in the complete factor analysis. Overall work development factor had the highest rating score. The result revealed that respondents have high trust on Trainings. They thought trainings help in their overall work and career development. They felt evaluation after training and comfortable training environment are not so important variables in gauging the training needs of FLM’s across lubricant sector in various blocks of the country. Finally it is important and worthwhile to mention that with overall well planned trainings having sufficient interval between, help organization to develop at a faster pace.

In this study we take the fact of observation that training leads to important benefits for individuals

and organizations. The existing analysis of literature and survey proposes that these benefits vary from individual and organizational performance. In our study we also involved the discussion, how to increase the benefits of training. These features include giving attention to the training design, delivery, providing more educational material in terms of notes and requirement of more competent faculty. After completing the study on this topic we strongly believe that it is very beneficial for the lubricants sector to develop the employee development programs.

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