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**HARMONIZATION OF TRAINING CONTENT AND
TRAINER QUALIFICATION**

Developing Train-the-Trainer Workshop for Continental Corporation

Master's Thesis in
Public Management

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TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	3
LIST OF TABLES	3
ABSTRACT	5
1. INTRODUCTION	7
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	10
2.1. Key terms and concepts	10
2.2. Training process: theoretical discussions and Continental model	18
2.3. Main steps in the Training process	24
2.3.1. Training needs analysis	24
2.3.2. Training design	28
2.3.3. Training planning	31
2.3.4. Training delivery	32
2.3.5. Training evaluation	35
2.3.6. Update of training records	39
2. 3.7. Training adaption	39
2.4. Considerations in design of a Train-the-Trainer Workshop	40
3. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	46
3.1. Research methods	46
3.2. Empirical object	50
4. DEVELOPING TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOP: TOWARDS TRAINER EDUCATION OPTIMIZATION AT CONTINENTAL	53
4.1. “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop: Concept design	53
4.2. Content of the “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop	60
4.2.1. Introduction to the Workshop, agenda, objectives	61

4.2.2. Key concepts and steps in the Training Process	64
4.2.3. Training needs analysis	67
4.2.4. Training design	71
4.2.5. Training development	76
4.2.6. Training delivery	79
4.2.7. Training evaluation	85
4.2.8. Update of training records	87
4.2.9. Training adaption	89
5. CONCLUSIONS	92
5.1. The main findings	92
5.2. Suggestions for further research	94
REFERENCES	96
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX 1. Presentation to be shown at the “Train-the-Trainer Workshop”	101

LIST OF FIGURES	Page
Figure 1. Learning levels (Shekhar, R. 2005: 4)	16
Figure 2. Training Solutions Effectiveness Matrix (Shekhar, R. 2005: 6)	17
Figure 3. A general systems model of the Training and Development Process (Goldstein, I. L., & J. K. Ford 2002: 24)	19
Figure 4. Continental Training Process concept description (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 4)	22
Figure 5-1. Continental Training Core Process steps in detail (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 5)	23
Figure 5-2. Continental Training Core Process steps in detail cont (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 4)	23
Figure 6. Continental Competency Model (Continental Competency Model and BIG SIX Capabilities. Standard Presentation, 2013: 2)	65

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Training Solutions Compare-Contrast Matrix (Shekhar, R., 2005: 8)	30
Table 2. Continental “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop: Program Overview	53
Table 3. Participant Agenda for “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop	57

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ABSTRACT:

The main purpose of this study was to optimize trainer education by elaborating a “Train the Trainer” Workshop that will help to produce a cadre of qualified internal trainers in the organization. Further basic concepts were considered in the theoretical chapter of this thesis in order to assure fundamental foundation for the empirical part: organizational Training, the Scope of Training, Development, Learning and Learning principles, Training Process, Train-the-Trainer. As the theoretical frame competency based approach to trainer education was chosen. Remarkably, findings from both private and public sector research, especially on such central topic as “Training Process”, were examined, critically analyzed and incorporated into our “Train the Trainer” Workshop.

In the empirical part the concept and content of “Train the Trainer” Workshop developed by the author of this paper is presented. This Workshop could be itself considered as the main empirical finding within the limits of this thesis. The second most critical empirical finding is that building the structure of our Workshop based on Training Process steps model helps to bring in clear logical structure, which is one of the crucial learning principles. There is also another effect: being taught the Training Process based on their company’s specific model, future trainers are automatically inspired to be consistent with internal requirements for the Training Process established in the organization. The third finding is that we discovered the ways to incorporate competency based approach in our Workshop (in detail discussed in the paragraph “The main findings”). We suggest that all of these findings could be applicable not only to the “Train the Trainer” Workshop for Continental, but also to other organizations, namely all kinds of organizations (private, public, NGOs etc.).

In the final part of our thesis next steps for the “Train the Trainer” Workshop and their meaning for the organization as well as directions for further research are suggested.

KEYWORDS: Train-the-Trainer; trainer qualification, trainer education; training process; organizational training.

1. INTRODUCTION

As Noe states in his monograph “Employee training and development”, “*Technological advances, changes in the work force or government regulations, globalization, and new competitors are among the many factors that require companies to change*” (Noe 2008: 16). All these changes influenced significantly education system overall and training and development in organizational context in particular. Many scholars agree that the importance of training and development as strategic tools for organizational excellence increases in the rapidly changing environment. For example scientist Joan Pynes claims that “*Change has become an inevitable part of organizational life... Organizations use training and development to improve the skills of employees and develop their capacity to cope with the constantly changing demands of the work environment*” (Pynes 2009: 309). Or as Brown puts it, “*the effective development of people within organizations is purported to be a powerful tool to respond to complex and turbulent environments and achieve superior organizational outcomes*” (Brown 2004: 305).

“*With the prosperity of countries and firms resting squarely on the position they occupy in the international division of labour, lifelong learning has emerged as the silver bullet whereby workforces succeed in coping with the challenges of a globally interlinked economy*” (Subramanian and Zimmermann 2013: 326). According to Quintino et. al. “*lifelong learning is the key factor for the development of individuals in a knowledge-based society*” (Quintino, Fernandes and Miranda 2011: 503). In his work Perry (2010) stated that training and development is a topic to which the highest amount of publications is dedicated in such scientific journals as “Human Resource Management”, “Review of Public Personnel Administration”, and “International Journal of Human Resource Management”. However, the author considers this topic (with a lot of unanswered questions) to be “*one of the five most points on the strategic agenda for HRM research*” (Perry 2010: 34). One of the unanswered questions in this field could be designated as the quality of professional education and even more specifically – trainer qualification, which is the research area that the current thesis could contribute to.

Quintino et. al. also emphasize the importance of the quality aspect in professional education: *“In the light of the rapid expansion of knowledge, it is increasingly evident that there is a need for high-quality professional education and training in order to ensure that individuals are up-to-date with recent advances in their professional activities”* (Quintino et. al. 2011: 503). Not surprisingly, nowadays organizations strive to establish effective knowledge transfer via a real-world-oriented self-learning system using internal trainers. However, in the organizational reality even best functional experts in most of the cases lack Trainer competencies, and this gap correspondingly hinders the process and quality of internal knowledge transfer. In other words, there is discrepancy between the quality of their professional knowledge/skills and their ability to transfer it to their less experienced colleagues. This statement sounds suitable to designate the **research problem** current paper will address.

It should be mentioned here that the concrete **empirical object** of this research is represented by a single corporation called “Continental”, which is a private multinational company with headquarter in Hannover. Moreover, it should be added that Hannover’s headquarter is also the place, where our research was conducted. Detailed description of the empirical object would be provided in the third Chapter of this paper – “Outline of the study”.

The following **research questions** were set for our thesis:

1. What is the training process and what are the possible ways to optimize internal trainer education?
2. How could Continental Training process model be incorporated into a Train-the-Trainer Workshop concept?

The main **purpose** of this study therefore is to optimize trainer education by elaborating a “Train the Trainer” Workshop that will help to produce a cadre of qualified trainers in the organization and therefore enhance internal knowledge transfer. Remarkably, findings from both private and public sector research, especially on such central to the current thesis topic as Training Process, were examined, critically analyzed in the theoretical part and incorporated into our “Train the Trainer” Workshop, which will be presented in the empirical part of this paper.

Theoretical framework chosen as a guideline to reach the purpose in view is competency based approach to trainer education, according to which every individual competency is a conjunction of knowledge, experience and capabilities. Having this approach as the background, we are aimed at designing our “Train the Trainer” Workshop in the empirical part of the thesis considering the following three elements: introduce relevant and logically structured informational blocks to our trainees in order to enhance their *knowledge*; use every possibility to assign our trainees practical exercises in order to provide them more *experiences*; emphasize effective trainer characteristics and behaviours that lead to success to cultivate in them essential *capabilities*. In more detail we will discuss this topic later on in the fourth chapter.

The **value** of this paper is both theoretical and practical, because to achieve the main purpose several **steps** need to be undertaken, such as:

- Review currently available scope of literature on organizational training and Train-the-Trainer method in particular;
- Define key concepts and investigate in detail on the Training Process, its essential elements and steps;
- Design the concept of a “Train the Trainer” Workshop;
- Develop content and prepare a presentation for this “Train the Trainer” Workshop.

In the following paragraphs further **basic concepts** will be discussed: organizational Training, the Scope of Training, Development, Learning and Learning principles, Training Process, Train-the-Trainer.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Key terms and concepts

Let us start with examination of the most essential concepts, which will be referred to in this paper, clustered by topics, and some difficulties and inconsistencies within the field of study that scientists and practitioners might have encountered.

Training and training process

We would like to start with the definition of Training itself. And before diving deep into the ocean of fundamental scientific debates, let us provide here the definition of Training that was adopted at Continental: “**Training** is target-oriented and methodically aligned learning activities to sustainably broaden knowledge and skills”.

Its **purpose**, in the work environment, is to enable an individual to acquire aptitudes in order that he/she can perform adequately a given job and realize his/her potential.

Another definition of the Training **purpose** was proposed by a researcher Judith Brown: “*The purpose of training is to support the achievement of organizational goals by increasing the necessary skills of its employees*” (Brown 2002: 570).

Both of these two definitions of Training purpose could be perceived as contradictory as they emphasize two different interests: individual in the first case and organizational in the second definition. However, we would more likely be inclined to perceive them as complementary as it is the combination of both that gives us a round picture.

After a review of “Training” definitions available in the literature, several of them appear to be of interest and will be regarded here. One of the definitions of Training, a generic one, was articulated by Singh Y.P. (1999), in his “Training of Trainers Manual”. Talking about the **Training Process** he argues that “*traditionally the process refers to the transfer of knowledge from trainer to the trainee*” (Singh 1999: 21). This broad perspective could serve us as a “basis”, which however requires more builds on and descriptors, therefore let us consider some other more specific definitions.

Noe in his monograph “Employee training and development” refers to the concept of **training** as “*a planned effort of a company to facilitate employees’ learning of job-related competencies*” and adds that “*these competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance*” (Noe 2008: 5).

In his whitepaper on training solutions in corporative context Shekhar, R. (2005: 4) indicates that **Training** is “*the most viable means to ensure effective assimilation of information and efficient application of the assimilated information by the conceptual, operational, and functional aspects of businesses*”.

Another example interesting to consider was suggested by Cascio, W. F. and Aguinis, H.. Talking about training and development, they define both activities as “*planned programs of organizational improvement undertaken to bring about a relatively permanent change in employee knowledge, skills, attitudes, or social behaviour*” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 345). And the term **training** is referred further on as “*activities directed toward the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for which there is an immediate or near-term application (eg., introduction of a new process).*” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 345). By saying “*immediate or near-term application*” authors separate the term “training” from the term “development”, for which “*there may be no immediate use*”.

Before we proceed with examination of other relevant concepts, we would like to summarize all the essential features of training regarded in the definitions above. This is not so easy because the definitions are quite diverse and different aspects are emphasized in each of them. However, more or less in most of the explanations certain key characteristics were emphasized, three of them could be distinguished in the first place:

1. Positive change targeted (“target-oriented”, “increasing necessary skills”, “support achievement of organizational goals”, “planned programs of organizational improvement”, “sustainably broaden”, “permanent change”);
2. KSAOs centered (“sustainably broaden knowledge and skills”, “increasing necessary skills”, “transfer of knowledge”, “assimilation of information” and “employee knowledge, skills, attitudes, or social behaviour”);

3. Retention and application of acquired KSAOs (“permanent change”, “sustainably broaden”, “perform adequately a given job” and “immediate or near-term application”).

As we suppose, all of these three aspects are important to consider when defining such an activity as “Training”. Hence, the definitions that reflect all of these dimensions could be considered more complete, but of course other factors as the scope of KSAOS (scope of Training) incorporated should also be taken into account.

Scope of training

At this point it would make sense to turn to the topic of the Scope of Training. It would be explained in more detail later within this paper, but it is obvious that Training is not the remedy from all difficulties and gaps in the organization. Therefore it is important to define the area where Training as a solution could be effective.

A collective of russian authors headed by Bazarov, T. J. (2009) defined the following areas where organizational training could be reasonably applicable:

1. Fulfillment of the missing knowledge;
2. Correction of deficiencies employees make while accomplishing their job responsibilities;
3. Brining ability to perform in a crisis situation to an automatic mode;
4. Polishing professional skills in discharge of functions critical for the organization (Bazarov 2009: 300).

As we can see, different dimensions/KSAOS are mentioned in this list, like knowledge and skills for example. We have just had an overview of the most crucial term for current research – “Training” in the previous section and all the same KSAOS were mentioned in the definitions, however, no common frame was available. Therefore more clarity is needed on how all these aspects relate to each other and to the Scope of Training.

For this clarity we would now turn to the other concept significant in this context, which is Competency. At Continental Competency is conceived as an integrative concept comprising: knowledge, experience and capabilities. But we will turn to the description

of Continental Competency Model and examine it in detail in the empirical Chapter, at this point it would be logical to consider how competence is defined within the fundamental science, where however not much consistency could be discovered.

There is a general definition existing proposed by Cheetham and Chivers (2005: 54): *“Competence is an effective overall performance within an occupation, which may range from the basic level of proficiency through to the highest levels of excellence”*.

Another conceptualization of Competency broad enough as well was adopted in the article of Jantti and Greenhalgh (2012: 423) from Lombardo and Eichinger (2009): *“Competencies describe the measurable characteristics of a person that are related to success at work”*.

Additionally to these broad conceptualizations of Competencies as “performance” or overall “measurable characteristics”, DDI researchers for example claim that *“Competencies describe the behaviour required to be successful in a job or role”* (Cosentino, C., S. Erker and M. Tefft 2009: 2).

Though in their general definition remark *“within an occupation”* was present, Cheetham and Chivers (2005: 77) went further and provided a more specific definition of *“professional competency”*. According to them, *“professional competence is the possession of the range of attributes necessary for effective performance within a profession, and the ability to marshal these consistently to produce the desired overall results”*.

As it has been just noticed, the term in focus appears to be differently conceptualized in the definitions above. Cheetham and Chivers refer to it as to *“overall performance”* *“possession of the range of attributes...and the ability to...”*. Lombardo and Eichinger suggest that it is *“characteristics of a person”*. And DDI researchers are saying that competencies *“describe the behaviour...”*. Though there is no direct contradiction, this inconsistency could be indicated as a field that requires more precise research focused on looking synergies within fundamental literature on “competency”.

However, there is also an important common feature in all of these definitions: such descriptors as *“related to success at work”* and *“effective overall performance”*,

“*necessary for effective performance*” or “*required to be successful in a job or role*” take place. Thus we may conclude that possession of certain competencies is regarded as necessary for one’s effectiveness or success at work.

According to the Job/Role Competency Practices Survey Report (Cook and Bernthal 1998: 7), “*91 percent of organizations reported improved processes for selecting and designing training programs when they designed training and development processes around competencies*“. Moreover, results of the same survey show that when competencies are the foundation of HR processes, “*91 percent of organizations report their training and development systems are more effective*” (Cook and Bernthal 1998: 8).

At this point it could be mentioned that a concrete example of such a successful practice is Continental Competency Model (see Figure 6.) and its implementation as the basis for other HR processes worldwide within the organization. But as it has already been mentioned, we will examine it in detail in the fourth, empirical Chapter.

Learning and Development

There are two other terms that are usually going hand-in-hand with Training, they are Learning and Development. We would like to review last two terms briefly in order to reach understanding on the scope of each.

Development is very closely connected to Training obviously. Temporal difference mentioned in the definitions above is not the single criteria that could help to distinguish specific meaning of these two concepts. To separate these two concepts, it has to be first of all admitted that training is only one specific activity that could be arranged for purposes of development, there other developmental methods existing.

For example a framework of Nadler and Nadler (1989) presented by Heilmann, P. and J. Heilmann (2012: 6) in their paper is of particular interest in this context:

*“Nadler and Nadler (1989) have defined three human resource development areas. According to them, **training** results in learning that is focused on the present job of the learner. **Education** is learning focused on a future job for the*

*learner. **Development** is learning that is not focused or referenced to any particular job.”*

At this point a turn to the term “learning”, another term that is closely related to current discussion and that has been already mentioned several times, could be done. It would be no surprise that training is generally perceived as learning. And again the same remark as noted above for “development” could be suitable here: training is just one single option out of the whole scope of learning methods. The notion of learning organization could be of use when looking for a definition of the term “learning” in professional context. The concept “learning organization” was created by Senge at the end of 20th century. Within this theory learning is perceived not as obtaining or storing theoretical knowledge, but rather as mastering one’s skills to apply these knowledge in real life experiences (Senge 2004). This absolutely correlates to the conclusions we came up with in the context of Training concept definitions overview. To sum up we could propose a general and simple definition of **learning in organizational context**: learning is acquisition, retention and application of knowledge, skills and abilities that help employees to accomplish their duties successfully and in that way contribute to the achievement of organizational goals.

Learning principles

As it could have been noticed, in the definitions of the terms above such words like “skills” or “knowledge” are met frequently. As Training is the focus of this paper, it is necessary to take a closer look on how these terms relate to each other and which Training methods are the most adequate to develop each of them. In this paragraph the focus will be generally on learning principles per se and Training Solution Effectiveness would be in more detail concerned in one of the paragraphs of the next chapter – “Training Process”.

Training solution has to be selected based on training needs. And these needs are arising from three main Learning Levels (based on Learning Domains that were originally

developed by Bloom in 1956 and later on reviewed by his successors). And the three Learning Levels are: Knowledge, Skill, Capability (see Figure 1.).

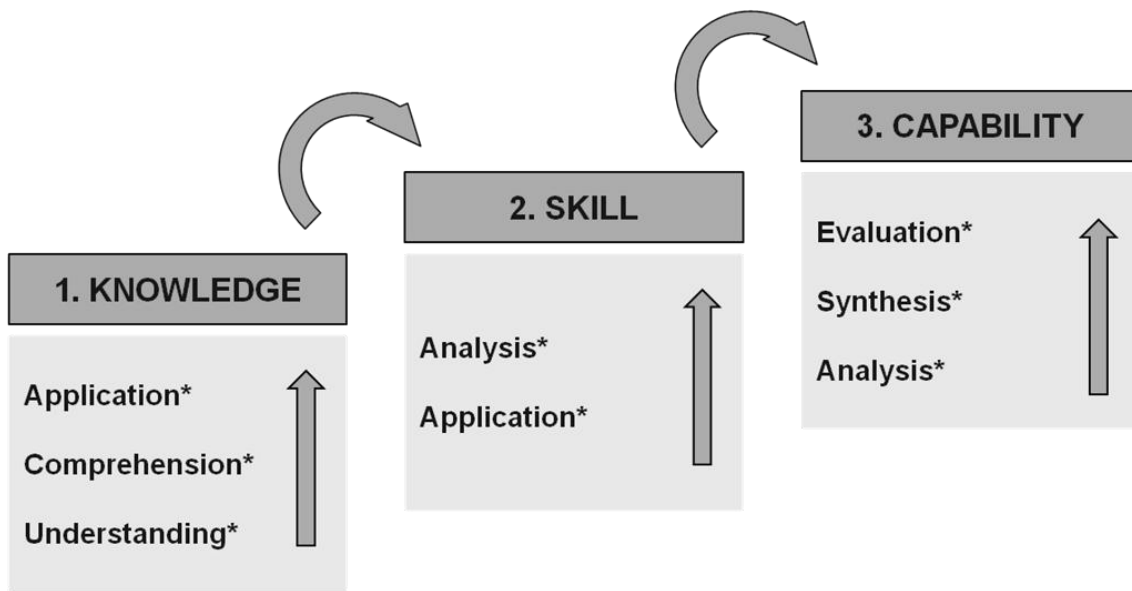


Figure 1. Learning levels. Shekhar, R. 2005: 4.

The principle of this model is like this: it runs from the lower levels of learning, that require lower input and efforts from learner, to the higher levels of learning, that require more mental efforts.

Considering the focus of current paper let us review another model (see Figure 2.). It deals with Training Solutions Effectiveness that would be in depth discussed in the next chapter as has been said. Here it worth mentioning as it provides an inter-link between Learning Levels discussed above and Training Methods suitable for satisfying learning needs on each level.

Training Solutions Effectiveness Matrix

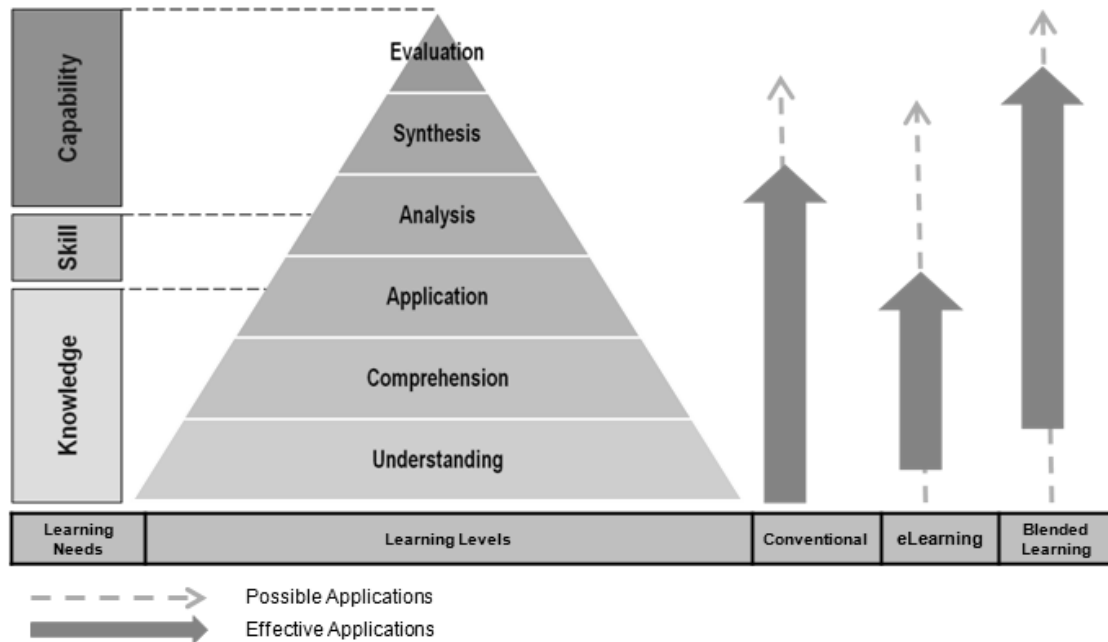


Figure 2. Training Solutions Effectiveness Matrix. Adopted from Shekhar, R. 2005: 6.

This matrix allows corresponding of Learning Needs and Learning Levels with three main clusters of Training Solutions. And the main benefit of this matrix is that it explicitly shows which Training Solution is appropriate to implement in order to meet each Training Need, and which solution covers each Learning Level. The principle of this model, as of the previous one, is obviously hierarchical as well. The orange arrows indicating “Possible Applications” show that each of the Training methods could be applied to provide learning on almost every Learning Level. However, it should be considered that possible does not mean effective. Taking into account the fact that the amount of efforts and resources needed to implement the one or the other solution differs a lot. Moreover, it is natural for organizations to aspire for cost-efficiency of Training. Therefore it might be more appropriate for organizations to do their planning based on “Effective Application” of Training Solutions indicated with the green arrow on the matrix above.

As the author of the matrix states “*training needs based on this classification define the quality of effort and resources that will be required to complete the process of learning*” (Shekhar 2005: 4). In this sense the matrix could serve as a toll supporting HR managers in the process of Training Solution selection.

2.2. Training process: theoretical discussions and Continental model

According to Aguinis, H., & K. Kraiger (2009), being organized and conducted properly, training lead to sustained changes that can benefit individuals, teams, organizations and even society. Sounds impressive, doesn't it? The question is how to plan and implement a training program so that it results in positive transformations?

Having defined the concept of Training in the previous chapter, let us proceed here with examination of the main steps in the Training Process and consideration of measures and elements required to go through these steps successfully.

There are numerous models existing in the literature trying to explain the process of Training by splitting it into smaller stages. Some of them are more detailed and explicit, the others are less, but let us take a look at several examples and make the best of it by analyzing and selecting the most appropriate foundation for the practical part of this research paper.

For instance Cascio, W. F. & H. Aguinis (2011) also acknowledge the great potential that Training has “*as an instrument for change*”. At the same time they notice that in order to realize that potential “*it is important to resist the temptation to emphasize technology and techniques; instead, define first what is to be learned and what the substantive content of training and development should be*” (Cascio & Aguinis 2011: 346). As a guideline for Training Program development the authors refer to a model proposed by Goldstein and Ford (2002), which could be of interest for us and which is depicted on the Figure 3 below.

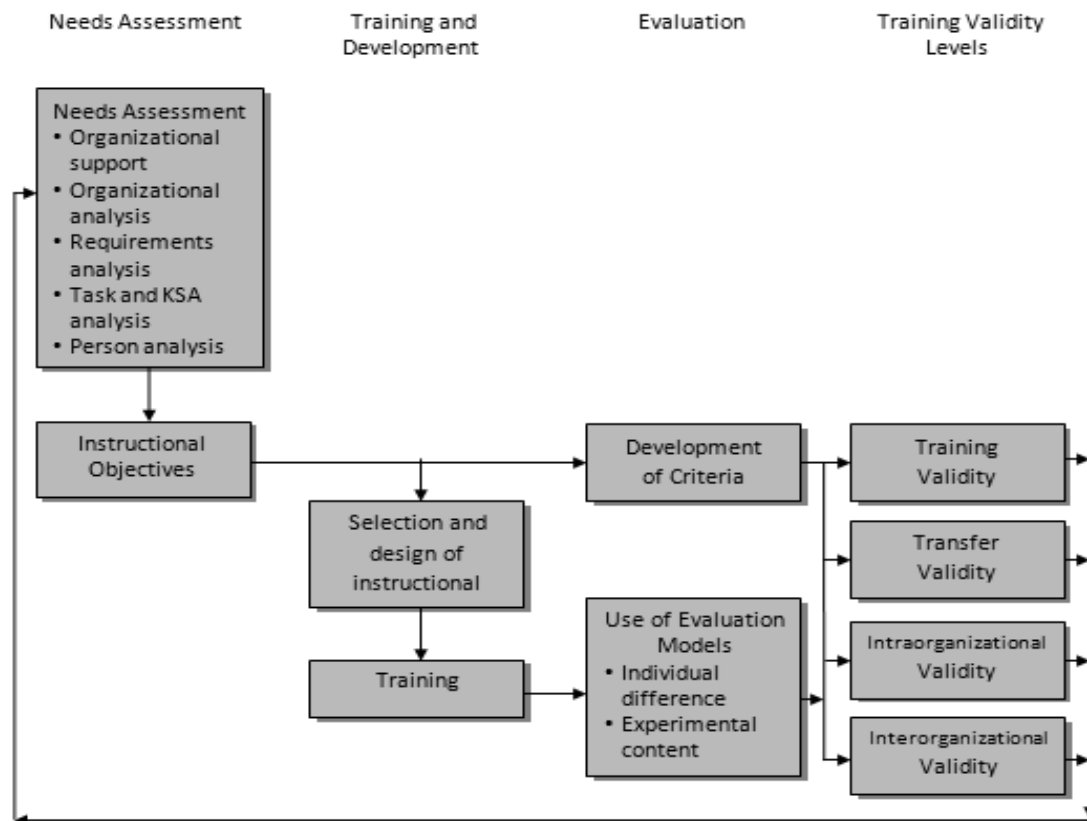


Figure 3. A general systems model of the Training and Development Process. Adopted from “Training in Organizations: Needs Assessment, Development and Evaluation” by Goldstein, I. L. & J. K. Ford 2002: 24.

As it could be concluded by observing the picture above, the authors divide the process of Training Program development into three major phases. The first phase is a needs assessment (or planning) phase, which is the basis for all future activities. The second phase is a training and development (or implementation) phase, which is defined by the authors as *“a delicate process that requires a blend of learning principles and media selection, based on the tasks that the trainee is eventually expected to perform”* (Goldstein and Ford 2002: 28). And finally the third phase is an evaluation phase, for which specific criteria and measures are to be developed up front. All of these phases (even split in more detailed steps) will be discussed in detail later on in this paragraph.

In our view, this model has both, weaknesses and strengths. The good sides are: it is logical and well structured; the needs assessment phase and evaluation phase are described in a relatively explicit manner. But there is also a downside in this model – the implementation phase, which is as important as the first and last one, is represented at the scheme poorly and incomprehensibly.

Now let us take a look at another model, proposed by Cascio and Aguinis. They offer a five-step process model, helping to determine what is to be learned and what should be the training content like. The steps these researchers suggest are the following:

1. Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the training and development system, including its interaction with other organizational systems;
2. Determine Training needs and specify Training objectives clearly and unambiguously;
3. Create an optimal environment for Training, decomposing the learning task into its structural components;
4. Determine an optimum sequencing of the components;
5. Consider alternative ways of learning (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 343).

Instead of rushing straight away to the next model let us now analyze the first two a bit and answer the question: how do these abovementioned models correspond to each other? The answer is evident: five steps of the last model by Cascio and Aguinis (2011: 343) as we can see cover only the first, planning phase of the first model by Goldstein and Ford.

The following model describing the Training Process that we would like to present here, as we consider it relevant for the empirical part of our paper, is coming from the public sector. This model was proposed by Joan Pynes (2009) in his monograph “Human resources management for public and nonprofit organizations: A strategic approach”. According to him, training is a five-step process, which incorporates the following fundamental steps:

1. Needs Assessment;
2. Developing Training Objectives;
3. Developing the Curriculum;
4. Delivering Training;
5. Evaluating Training.

It should also be noticed here that Pynes (2009) in his work pays attention to such specific topics as: training methodologies and techniques when he is talking about the third step – “*Developing the Curriculum*”; and within the framework of the fourth step “*Delivering Training*” he discusses the learning styles as well. The importance of these specific issues raises when it comes closer to the real-world implementation of a Training program. In the following paragraph within our detailed discussion of each Training Process step, we will return to these specific topics.

At this point we would like to mention that this model developed by Joan Pynes is perceived as capturing the most feasible Training Process steps and doing so in a meaningful scope. Further on, though this model is taken from a paper on public management, the Process of Training itself seems to be quite universal (it is only some specific details like training techniques or delivery strategies that might differ for private and public organizations). By the way this model is very close to the Continental Training Process concept, which we will examine next and which is taken as the basis for the empirical part of current thesis paper.

So finally, we would like to present another model, which covers all the Training process phases and does it in detail. This is Training Process concept that has been developed and implemented at Continental.

Continental Training Process concept

This concept was created by Continental’s HR specialists for purposes of convenience and standardization, for internal use. It is based on review of some theoretical frameworks as a background, combined with Continental’s HR professionals experience and adapted to Continental specific needs. Below on the Figure 4 there is a general scheme of the Training Process adapted at Continental.

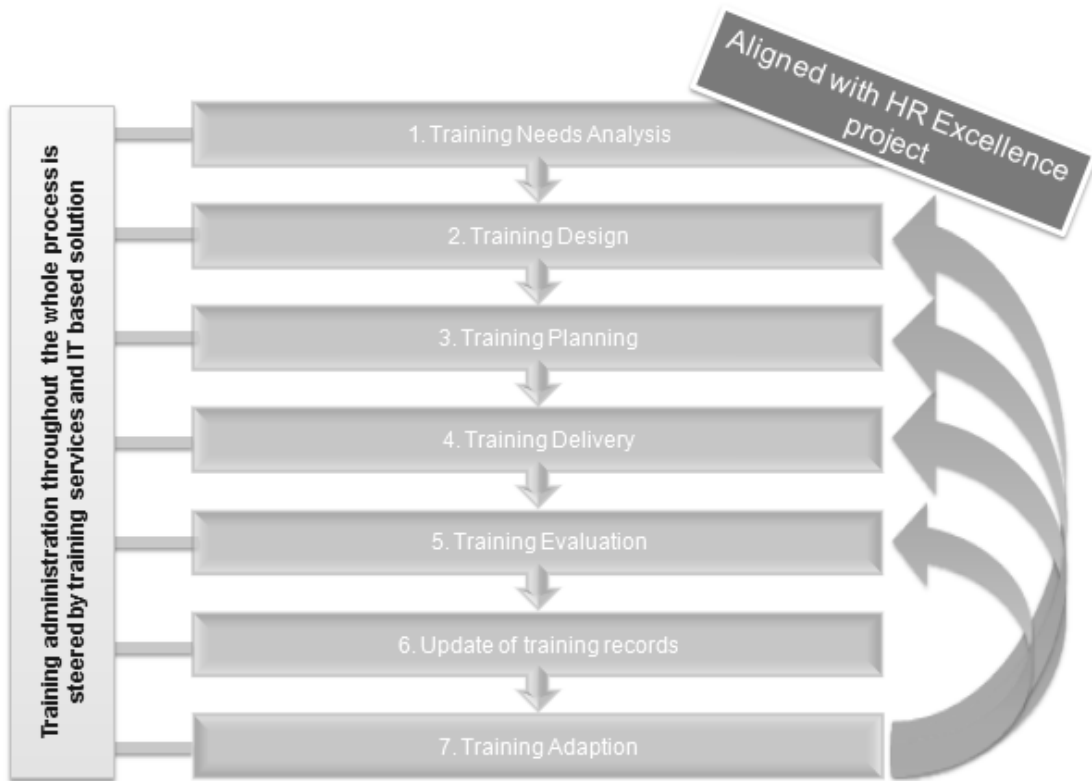


Figure 4. Continental Training Process concept description (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 4).

As we can see from this model, all of the steps are perceived not as discrete, but as systematically connected and the model implies that every concrete Training Program is supposed to be continuously improved. It also should be mentioned that this concept is aligned to other company's practices, for example "HR Excellence project", and through this to other Continental's systems and to business strategy. Hence, this model is the one that will be taken as a basis for structuring this chapter and also the empirical part of current paper. Prior to going deep into explanations on each of the steps listed, we would like to provide here a more detailed description of the steps, elements, resources and people involved in each of them in order to give an insight in the logics of the Continental Training Process concept (See Figure 5-1 and Figure 5-2).

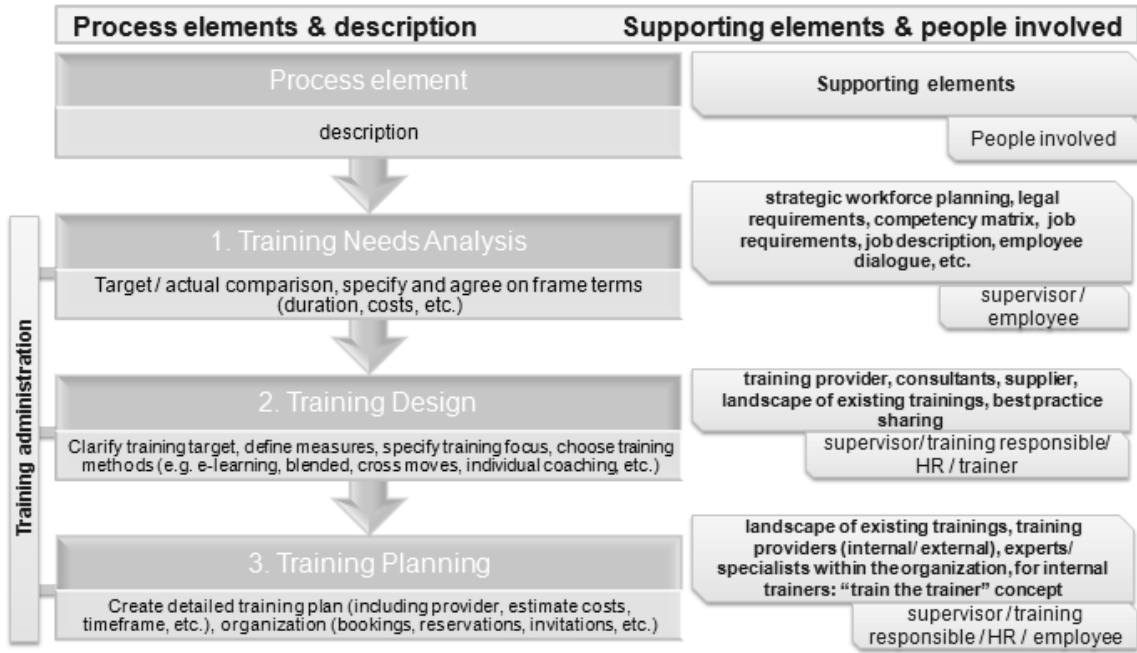


Figure 5-1. Continental Training Core Process steps in detail (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 5).

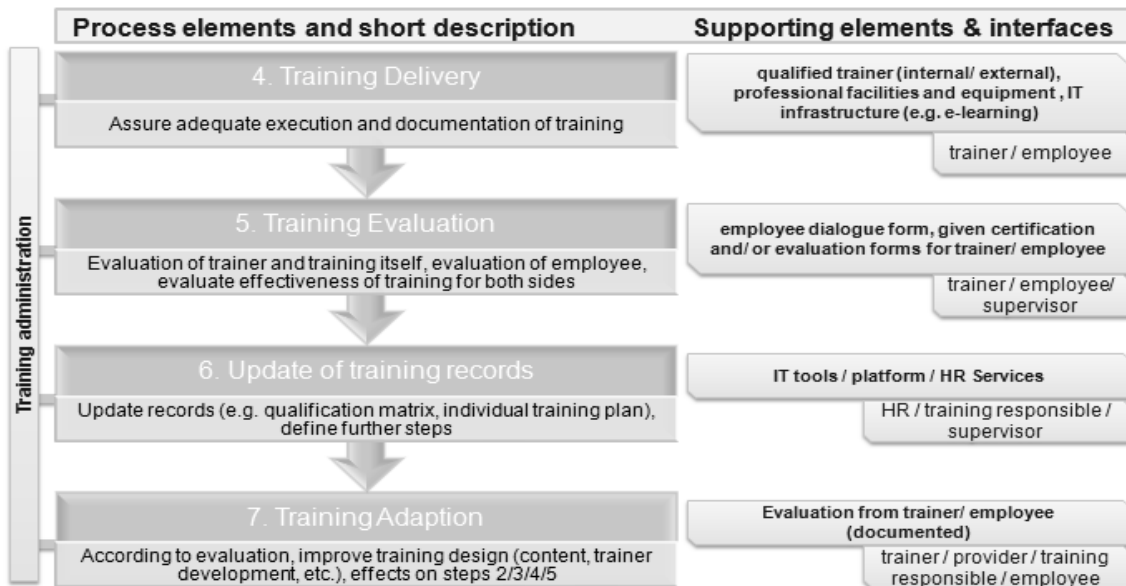


Figure 5-2. Continental Training Core Process steps in detail cont (Continental Training Process Excellence. Second draft, 2014: 6).

2.3. Main steps in the Training process

In this chapter we will discuss each of these Training Process steps in detail, considering both: scholars' point of view as well as Continental experience in this field.

2. 3.1. Training needs analysis

The first step in the overall Training Process is Training needs analysis. As Singh puts it, *“This is perhaps the very foundation on which the whole structure of training is to be designed, as it is always the user need based training which attracts wholehearted interest and involvement of the trainees and delivers the expected benefits”* (Singh 1999: 30). And this essential and crucial step will be the very concern of current paragraph.

Let us start from explanation of Training needs analysis as a part of Continental model and the content it is filled with in the company. From the perspective of Continental's policies, identification of Training needs is supposed to be done according to the job competence requirements as defined in the position description or other documentation e.g. skill matrix. These requirements should be checked against the actual competencies of the employee in order to identify the gaps.

The result of Training needs analysis should include the clarification and agreement on training measures including frame terms, boundary conditions (duration, costs, etc.) of the measures. This is important in order to be able to design the training, but this is already the subject of the next step.

We would like to make here one further remark about requalification. The requalification process (renewal/adaptation of qualification - considering internal policies & legal requirements) starts also at this process step.

With regards to the question of responsibilities, actions on this stage have to be carried out mainly by HR, with active participation of employees and superiors.

Supporting elements, how they are called in the model, or sources, foundations for identification of Training needs could be the following: strategic workforce planning, legal requirements (for mandatory Trainings), competency matrices, job requirements, job descriptions, at Continental also employee dialogue results, etc.

With regards to Training administration of this part, it is recommended that the training measures agreed have to be documented, preferably in a standard IT-based solution.

This first step to undergo when intending to create a successful Training Program, i.e. **identification of Training needs**, was of interest to a wide range of researchers. It is argued to be an essential and inevitable component that has a strategic role for the whole Training Process. For example, Judith Brown (2002) stated:

“Often, organizations will develop and implement training without first conducting a needs analysis. These organizations run the risk of overdoing training, doing too little training, or missing the point completely.” (Brown 2002: 569.)

Therefore Training needs analysis must take place first, before the Training Program is designed and its content is defined.

Prior to going further to the benefits of Training needs assessment, let us consider what is meant under this concept and what its overall purpose is. As Gusdorf puts it, *“a training needs assessment is conducted to identify the gaps between the employees’ actual performance and desired performance”*. She also notes that *“careful analysis of performance gaps determines what training needs to be done or if there is a need for training at all”*. And one more relevant thought of her: *“In some cases, the performance gaps are not related to training deficiencies and other interventions may be needed”* (Gusdorf 2009: 5). This point is crucial for the whole Training process (i.e. decision to initiate the process at all or not) and will be referred to once again, later in this chapter.

However the definition by Gusdorf should rather be elaborated on and supplemented with more multifaceted understanding of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process, as there are more approaches existing to the TNA. For example the scholar Van Wart in

his article “Organizational investment in employee development” presents three levels at which training and development needs could be analyzed, they are: organizational, department and individual levels (Van Wart 2005: 276). For the first level – organizational needs analysis in his previous research he has even defined and described seven strategies/ways in which it could be held:

- Ethics assessments;
- Mission, values, vision, and planning statement reviews;
- Customer and citizen assessments;
- Employee assessments;
- Performance assessments;
- Benchmarking; and
- Quality assessments (Van Wart 1995).

When it comes to the second level – department needs analysis, Van Wart mentions that numerous approaches could be meaningful for this kind of analysis, depending on “*the wide range of organizational capabilities and the wide range of department needs*” (Van Wart 2005: 277). He describes in depth only two from the wide range of possibilities, which are: performance gap approach (which Gusdorf refers to in her definition) and comprehensive approach, “*which takes the systems view of the task of training*” (Van Wart 2005: 280).

And with regards to the third level – individual needs analysis, the author remarks that the assessment methods vary a lot as across organizations so and within organizations themselves: “*Some organizations have highly formalized systems, and others have very informal systems...*” etc. (Van Wart 2005: 281).

Another definition was suggested by Brown and based on the reasons mentioned above this definition could be considered more general and therefore more suitable within the limits of our paper. According to him, **Training needs assessment** is “*an ongoing process of gathering data to determine what training needs exist so that training can be developed to help organization accomplish its objectives*” (Brown 2002: 569).

The same author – Brown (2002: 569-570) lists four main reasons why needs analysis must be done before training programs are developed:

1. To identify specific problem areas in the organization;

2. To obtain management support;
3. To develop data for evaluating the effectiveness of the training program;
4. To determine the costs and benefits of training.

A little bit clarification might be needed regarding the last point of this list about the cost-benefit analysis of a Training Program. Training is “*not the “cure all” for organizational problems*” and HR professional should be cognizant of it. Only if the organization “*can expect to gain more benefit from the training than it invested in its cost*” training could be considered as an appropriate solution (Brown 2002: 570).

Talking about the topic of Training needs analysis it is impossible to leave the levels or types of analysis uncovered. As this area is not our primary focus and due to restricted capacity of the current research paper, we will provide just a brief overview of the classifications, not going deep into details.

Not surprisingly, there is a scope of classifications existing on the topic discussed. In the basis, traditional classification of Training needs analysis three levels of needs analysis are distinguished, they are: organizational, task and individual (Brown 2002: 572). We would like to note here that these levels by Brown correlate very well with the three levels distinguished by Van Wart, that we mentioned previously. The only difference is within the second level: Brown called it “*task analysis*” and Van Wart called it “*department analysis*”, which from our point of view could have more similarities than differences.

Additionally to the traditional types/levels of Training needs analysis (organizational, task and person or individual analysis), in recent years scholars and practitioners alike have suggested that needs analysis should also take into account the state of demographic climate/aspect in the organization (Latham 1988; Goldstein and Ford 2002; Cascio and Aguinis 2011). The purpose of demographic analysis is to define specific training needs that are actual/inherent to a certain demographic group, for example older employees, leaders at different levels or employees with disabilities.

To sum up this paragraph and highlight the exceptional significance of the first step once again, let us provide a citation by Cascio and Aguinis (2011: 353). They claim:

“As a result of needs assessment, it should be possible to determine what workers do, what behaviours are essential to do what they do effectively, what type of learning is necessary to acquire those behaviours, and what type of instructional content is most likely to accomplish that type of learning. This kind of information should guide all future choices about training methods and evaluation strategies.”

2.3.2. Training design

Only when Training needs are identified (in other words – *what* employees should be taught), there is reliable foundation/ resources available for the next step.

According to Arthur et. al., *“A product of the needs assessment is the specification of the training objectives that, in turn, identifies or specifies the skills and tasks to be trained”* (Arthur et. al. 2003: 236). This short expression explicitly shows the logical chain of how the Training elements are interconnected and the importance of adequate sequencing of these elements.

As Cascio and Aguinis put it, *“Once we define what trainees should learn and what the substantive content of training and development should be, the critical question then becomes “How should we teach the content and who should do it?”*. And then the researchers emphasize the importance of adequate prioritizing of steps in Training design:

“The literature on training and development techniques is massive. However...firms view hardware, software, and techniques as more important than outcomes. They view (mistakenly) the identification of what trainees should learn as secondary to the choice of technique.” (Cascio & Aguinis 2011: 368.)

Based on theory and Continental’s practices this phase – Training design, consists of the following essential components: defining the training target, focus and depth of the training, learning methods, duration and timing, cost estimation.

In this process step, the Training target must be clarified in order to define the right measurement of Training effectiveness, once the Training have taken place. The

meaning of defining the target for the whole Training process is emphasized by Gusdorf:

“If training is to add value to the organization, effective learning objectives must reflect the organization’s strategic focus. Training goals give us direction for training content and establish the parameters for how to assess accomplishments. They become the overarching roadmap for the training project.” (Gusdorf 2009: 10.)

One more remark meaningful in the context of Training target discussion could be done here, it regards the quality of the target: *“The development of training objectives should be a collaborative process incorporating input from management, supervisors, workers, and trainers to ensure that the objectives are reasonable and realistic”* (Pynes 2009: 313).

The definition of the training focus and depth will be the basis for choosing the most efficient and effective learning methods (e.g. e-learning, blended learning, cross moves, individual coaching, classroom training, involvement in product (machine, tire, concepts...) development phases, etc.). Cascio and Aguinis also provide an advice on selection of Training technique/method in order to enhance its effectiveness:

“A training method can be effective only if it is used appropriately. Appropriate use, in this context, means rigid adherence to a two-step sequence: first, define what trainees are to learn, and only then choose a particular method that best fits these requirements.” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 371.)

In case the answer to the target, focus and depth identified is definitely Training, not any other organizational measure, it is necessary to go deeper in this direction and select a concrete method/solution with which the Training will be delivered. This is also a crucial decision for the success of the whole Training Program, hence, it should be regarded with special attention and cognizant of effective Training solutions application (match between Learning needs and Training solutions, that was mentioned in the first Chapter of this paper, see Figure 2.). The table below could be of help with regards to this issue (see Table 1.).

Table 1. Training Solutions Compare-Contrast Matrix. Adopted from “Selecting the Right Training Delivery Mechanism” by Shekhar, R. 2005: 8.

		Functional Aspects			Operational Aspects		
		Mode of Information Assimilation	Learning Transfer	Learner Tracking	Development Effort Expenditure*	Implementation Effort Expenditure*	Implementation Scalability
Conventional Training	Instructor-led	Fast-paced	Moderate	Low	Moderate	High	Moderate
	Paper-based	Self-paced	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
eLearning	Web-based	Self-paced	High	High	High	Moderate	High
	Rapid	Self-paced	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High
Blended Learning	Combination	Either	High	Situational	Situational	Situational	Situational
	Convergence	Fast-paced	High	High	Moderate	High	High

* Effort expenditure includes time, efforts and resources that will be required

In the empirical part of this research paper we will be elaborating the design of a Train-the-Trainer workshop for Continental functional experts, aimed at teaching them soft skills in order to enable them train younger specialists effectively. Let us notice that we exclude Blended Convergence Training as it is very demanding in terms of Development and Implementation Effort Expenditure, that comprises time, efforts and resources required (see Table 1.). In our case we consider Conventional Instructor-led Training to be the most appropriate solution. Three basic considerations underpin our choice. First of all, high degree of hands-on experiences, practical exercises and simulations is needed to develop Trainer competencies. Second, there is a need within the organization for quick knowledge transfer. Third, most of the functional experts, who are the target group in our case, are located in one place, the Headquarter in Hannover.

With regards to Development and Implementation Effort Expenditure and overall Training effectiveness for the organization, the following data highlights the significance of this topic. It goes in line with organizations' and in recent years scholars' alike believe that training as a solution has to be efficient and ensure a high return-on-investment (ROI), which consists of the following elements:

- Effort Expenditure effectiveness
- Low development turn-around-time
- Cost-effectiveness (Shekhar 2005: 4)

Going further with explanation of the second phase – Training design, it should be mentioned that a wide range of parties is involved in this stage, they are of course training manager, HR and trainer, but also superiors and employees of course provide their inputs.

Training provider, consultants, supplier, landscape of existing trainings, best practices (ex. from other identical Training Programs made by other Business Units), etc. – all these sources could be referred to as supporting elements to fulfil this step as effectively as possible.

The agreed training design has to be documented for the planning phase (see next step), preferably in a standard IT-based solution.

2.3.3. Training planning

The following phase – Training planning – consists of many detailed administrative steps, such as: choosing training provider/trainer, cost approval, fixing the schedule (who, when, where), sending out invitations, booking venue and all needed material and equipment for training delivery (computer, flip chart, beamer, handouts, machine availability etc.), specify and document detailed training content. As Gusdorf puts it,

“A great deal of preparation takes place long before the actual training begins. Trainers must plan for the location of training, the room layout, audience needs, handouts and presentation media, and myriad other details that must all be arranged in advance.” (Gusdorf 2009: 18.)

The detailed training plan must be created and agreed in this process step. As Chang puts it,

“The training plan is the launch pad for the design and implementation of training programs. A training plan is a practical document which takes into account identified training needs...” (Chang 2007: 62.)

This plan should preferably be available in a standard IT-based solution. The Training Agenda should also be created in cooperation with the trainer and sent out to all participants in advance, as Pynes (2009: 321) notes: *“Murray recommends providing an agenda with training objectives so that participants will know where the training is headed and what methods and techniques will be used”*.

Training planning requires the most active actions from the side of training responsible, who does all the administration around and has a role of a mediator among all other parties. It is his/her concern to assure on this stage that everything runs smoothly when the Training is being delivered. Other parties involved in this step include HR managers, superiors, employees, trainers and training providers of course.

In terms of other elements that could support the training responsible, the following resources to be mentioned: Training landscape of the company, list of training providers (internal/external) and contact list of experts/specialists within the organization. And for internal trainers a Trainer Handbook or Guideline as well as “Train-the-Trainer” Concept would be of help.

2.3.4. Training delivery

And finally the Training delivery or implementation phase comes. The main essence of this step consists of adequate execution and documentation of training. This phase in the Training Process is “the moment of truth”, in which all the activities for preparation of the Training appear to be completed adequately or not.

Among the elements necessary to support implementation of this phase are: qualified trainer (whether internal or external), professional facilities and equipment and IT infrastructure if needed (e.g. e-learning)

What concerns the roles and responsibilities at this stage, there are only two parties involved, which are the trainer and employees. And the whole process of learning is based on the interaction between these two parties, how this interaction goes on is very important for the success of the Training Program.

However, the responsibilities of the parties differ. The Trainer must ensure that training measures are being carried out according to the agreed training plan. The employee is actively participating and is responsible for the learning success and giving direct feedback in case of deviation.

In this context the following considerations by Cascio and Aguinis are of interest:

“The answer to the question “Why do employees learn?” is that they invest effort and time in the learning opportunity. Regardless of the instructional features embedded in a program, it will work only through deliberate cognitive processing by the learner. Accordingly, computer-based training should be designed to promote active learning by trainees.” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 355.)

They even list characteristics of trainees who demonstrate such an active position: *“Trainees demonstrating active learning are motivated, mastery-oriented, and mindful”*.

While delivering the training program it is essential for the trainer to be aware of the basic training principles and of course to incorporate and actively use them throughout the training session. From the variety of propositions existing in the scientific literature we chose the findings of Van Wart for examination within the limits of this thesis. Based on the major learning theories (behaviorism, social learning theory, cognitive learning theory, and adult learning theory) he developed seven training principles. The *“seven fundamental training principles”* by Van Wart are the following:

- Foster participant goal setting;
- Increase the similarity of training to the work environment;
- Use underlying principles;
- Increase the organization of the material;
- Actively involve the learner;

- Give feedback;
- Use a variety of techniques and stimuli (Van Wart 2005: 284).

Relying on this list of principles could help to increase trainees' involvement, the meaningfulness of training in their perception, training transfer correspondingly, and hence training effectiveness overall. One point to mention here: these principles should obviously be incorporated into the training program at the very initial stage of training design and should be adhered to throughout the whole training process, till the training evaluation stage. Moreover, considering these basic training principles when designing the training program, could also help to increase the transfer of training back to work (which we will discuss in more detail in the "Training evaluation" section).

One more aspect to be considered within the context of Training delivery is definitely the target group in common and individual qualities of each participant in particular, or in other words – the personality aspect. For example Pynes emphasizes one of the common features of any target group that an organizational training could deal with: *"One of the most common training errors is not to recognize that the participants are adults with life and work experiences"* (Pynes 2009: 322). The author further on makes a note about the importance of such aspect of trainees' individuality as learning styles: *"It is up to the trainers to create a climate in which individual learning styles are recognized and considered in the delivery of the content"*.

Talking about administration of this Training phase, there are several actions to be named: attendance approve, handout of training material, ensure that all equipment is working properly and organize all the activities of trainees (including managing effectively the timing of exercises, coffee breaks, lunch etc.).

When the Training is complete, there is also one administrative action to be undertaken, this regards documenting that training session took place according to the plan. Preferably it is to be done in a standard IT-based solution. And one more measure, if applicable, handout of certificates.

2.3.5. Training evaluation

As Noe puts it, *“Today, training is being evaluated not on the basis of the number of programs offered and training activity in the company but on how training addresses business needs in learning, behaviour change and performance improvement”* (Noe 2008: 6). In this paragraph we will refer to the latest scientific research and Continental’s practices in this area.

Training evaluation or measuring of Training outcomes is the following logical step after a training round has taken place. Thoroughly thought through evaluation, covering multiple criteria is the only way organizations can ensure that the Training Program is effective. Evaluation criteria and experimental design should be chosen up front, at the very first stage of the Training Process – Training needs analysis, as we have already mentioned in the paragraph devoted to that step. The significance of this Training Process step couldn’t be overestimated:

“Evaluation improves training programs by providing feedback to the trainers, participants, and managers, and it assesses employee skill levels. Evaluations can be used to measure changes in knowledge, levels of skills, attitudes and behavior, and levels of effectiveness at both the individual and agency levels.” (Pynes 2009: 322.)

Breakdown of roles and responsibilities within this phase is so that most of the responsibility to arrange and control the process has the trainer. Employees are in charge of filling in all the forms, tests or questionnaires required. And sometimes superiors are also involved in this process, most likely in order to assess how the skills acquired in training are being applied back on the job in other words “training transfer” (the essence of this concept will be explained further on in this paragraph).

Training outcomes could be reflected not only in special evaluation forms for trainer/employee, but also in some other supporting elements, such as employee dialogue form or given certification.

Cascio and Aguinis highlight the complexity of Training effectiveness of Training outcomes: *“Evaluation of a training program implies a dichotomous outcome (i.e.,*

either a program has value or it does not)...in practice, matters are rarely so simple, for outcomes are usually a matter of degree” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 371). They further on are reasoning about the essence of the term Training evaluation:

“At the most basic level, the task of evaluation is counting – counting new customers, counting interactions, counting dollars, counting hours, and so forth. The most difficult tasks of evaluation are deciding what things to count and developing routine methods for counting them.” (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372.)

These authors also provide a list (based on Campbell’s et al. research in 1970) of essential elements to be counted in measuring of Training outcomes. First of all, they advice to use *“multiple criteria”* when measuring the Training outcomes, arguing that it would help the researcher in *“more adequately reflecting the multiple contributions of managers to the organization’s goals”* (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372).

Further on, the authors claim that in order to ensure the validity of results of a training intervention (*“to enable the causal arrow to be pointed at the training program”*), thorough experimental control throughout all the training steps is needed. They also emphasize the importance of studying not only *“the criteria themselves”*, but also *“the relationship between internal and external criteria”*, which is even more important according to the authors (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372).

And the last two points on the list of essential elements to be counted in measuring of Training outcomes by Cascio and Aguinis are: *“A thorough, logical analysis of the process and content of the training”* and *“Some effort to deal with the “systems” aspect of training impact – that is, how training effects are altered by interaction with other organizational subsystems”* (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372).

In this context the authors note that in order to develop a thorough method of evaluating Training outcomes, trainers should consider all the aspects listed above so that the evaluation method reflects as much of them as possible.

One remark could be done here regarding the first element from the list above – Training evaluation criteria – about the role of it in the Training Process. According to Arthur et. al., *“the choice of evaluation criteria (i.e., the dependent measure used to operationalize the effectiveness of training) is a primary decision that must be made when evaluating the effectiveness of training”* (Arthur et. al. 2003: 235). This is

important to be considered by trainers up front, however within the limits of our paper we won't proceed here with classifications of evaluation criteria available in the literature.

Transfer of Training

Now let us consider previously mentioned concept of "Training transfer", that has not been uncovered so far. As Gusdorf puts it, "*The importance of training transfer cannot be overemphasized; organizations spend billions of dollars each year on training, yet only a fraction of that investment results in improved performance, particularly if training transfer is not supported by the employer*" (Gusdorf 2009: 15).

Basically organizations can consider "*what value they obtain from their training investments...by the extent to which trainees transfer what they have learned back into their workplace*" (McCracken, M., T. C. Brown and P. O'Kane 2012: 303). The following definition of this term could be considered sufficient within the limits of current paper: "***Transfer of Training*** is the extent to which the material, skills, or procedures learned in training are taken back to the job and used by the employee in some regular fashion" (Levy 2010: 206).

Moreover Leimbach in his research on learning transfer distinguished the following three groups of *reasons for learning transfer*: learner readiness, learning transfer design and organizational alignment (Leimbach 2010). Only if all of these factors are considered in the organization, then learning/training transfer could successfully occur. In line with these findings Noe notes that "*transfer of training is also influenced by training design*" (Noe 2008: 187).

Levy also discerns positive and negative transfer. He states that "*positive transfer is the organization's goal*" and that it happens if "*what is learned in the training program will improve performance back on the job*" (Levy 2010: 206). What about the other kind – negative transfer – it happens when "*performance declines as a result of training*".

Obviously positive transfer couldn't be coming out of nowhere; it appears to be the outcome of the Training if certain factors are considered during the planning stage. What conditions should be maintained to achieve such an outcome?

For example Goldstein, I. L., and J. K. Ford (2002) provide several recommendations aimed at maximizing the transfer of Training, namely positive transfer of course. The authors start with clarifications why is similarity between situations that are offered to play out, analyze and discuss during the training from one hand and situations from participants' daily working life from the other hand, is important. They also claim that sufficient amount of "*active practice*" matters a lot to successful training transfer. Then the authors remark that in order to anchor the certain behaviour, participants should be given an opportunity to make this practice not in only one, but in different close to the real life situations, moreover they recommend that "*Trainers need to provide on-the-job maintenance programs that are focused on helping employees to continue their learned behaviours*". Within the discussion of aims helping to maximize the transfer of Training Goldstein and Ford also pay a lot of attention to the topics of interaction and agreement of actions related to the training between all the stakeholders on all of the training process steps, ex.: "*The trainers, trainees and manager should work together throughout this entire process*" or "*Expectations for the trainers, trainees and manager should be made clear up front*" (Goldstein and Ford 2002).

As we can see, there is a lot to consider when intending to obtain positive transfer as the result of the Training. However, taking into consideration the claim that without such transfer the whole activity is just a waste of intensive time, money and people investments...the conclusion for organizations and HR managers could be that this effort worth it.

Moreover there are studies on barriers that hinder the transfer of training. As Lu, D and A. Betts conclude after literature review, when it concerns barriers to training transfer "*most frequently mentioned are around insufficient time and resources*" (Lu, D. and A. Betts 2011: 118). In addition "*the lack of support from line manager*" was identified as a barrier in some studies. Or the other way around, as Noe puts it, "*...trainee motivation to learn as well as manager support for training are key issues for insuring learning and the application of training to the job*" (Noe 2008: 186).

2.3.6. Update of training records

At Continental special attention is paid to the topic of measures to be undertaken once the Training evaluation data has been analyzed and conclusions made, in other words making use of the efforts spent for evaluation. One of the relevant measures concerns updating of records (e.g. qualification matrix, individual training plan) and defining further steps for the company and for individual employees.

Roles and responsibilities within this phase are distributed among HR managers, training responsible and supervisors.

And such elements as IT tools, platforms or HR Services could support them in implementing these changes in qualification matrix, individual training plan, etc.

As it was recommended for all previous stages of the Training process, Training records should preferably be available in a standard IT-based solution.

2. 3.7. Training adaption

Based on documented evaluation from employee/trainer (they appear to be supporting elements in this case), training design (content, delivery, etc.) has to be improved for future rounds, of course only in case corresponding elements of the Training program appear to be inconsistent. Accordingly, results and data from the “Training evaluation” step should affect Training Process steps 2-4, they are “Training Design”, “Training Planning” and “Training Delivery”. Moreover, if some inconsistencies within the evaluation process or the data received from it were discovered, then the Training Process step 5, “Training Evaluation” itself, has to be adapted.

As Cascio and Aguinis put it, *“the real payoff from program-evaluation data is when the data lead to organizational decisions that are strategically important”* (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 378).

The scope of parties involved into this Training process step is quite broad, the following parties take on roles and responsibilities: trainer, training provider, training responsible, HR and probably employees as well.

Improvements and adaptations that have been decided on and have finally taken place should preferably be documented in a standard IT-based solution.

2.4. Considerations in design of a Train-the-Trainer Workshop

In this section we will be investigating on the specific factors to be considered in a training for trainers, in other words our focus would be the objectives, principles and other significant elements of trainer education.

First of all we would like to obtain a proper understanding of the concept itself. For this, as has been done with previously considered within this paper terms, we will present some definitions and discuss their applicability for the purposes of our research.

So, what is meant by “Train-the-trainer” or “Training of Trainers”? Saying it simply, *“in a TTT model, trainers disseminate information and skills to professionals who in turn disseminate the information or skills to their colleagues”* (Thorning et. al. 2013: 537).

Another definition was proposed by Jones et al., according to them *“train-the-trainer approach as an efficient and proven method of disseminating information to a large audience through the development of core experts in various geographic locations to serve as trainers”* (Jones et al. 2012: 283).

And the last definition to be regarded within the limits of current paper was suggested by Singh in his “Training of Trainers Manual”. As Singh puts it,

“Training of trainers is a form of training imparted to an individual with view to preparing him/her for his/her future role as a trainer. This is a process which

aims to develop his/her capabilities and capacities of imparting training to others as a skilled professional” (Singh 1999: 26).

And then the author adds:

“Besides, ToT also aims to help organisations to build their own cadre of trainers. Thus ToT has a dual role to play: the individual growth and the organisational growth.” (Singh 1999: 26.)

Let us now summarize the commonalities and differences of the aspects that three definitions above consider to be essential to the Train-the-trainer approach. We will start with the common features, which could be classified into three main groups:

1. The activity is directed towards reproduction of “cadre of trainers”, internal trainers for organizations (“to serve as trainers”, “role as a trainer”);
2. Educating large groups of employees is foreseen as a mission (“disseminate...to their colleagues”, “disseminating...to a large audience” and “imparting training to others...”);
3. Significance of professionalism of “future” trainers is emphasized (they are called “professionals”, “core experts” and “skilled professionals”).

From this analysis it could be inferred that there is much agreement on the content of the “Train-the-trainer” concept among the authors quoted. However, if we look deeper and scrutinize these definitions in more detail, at least one point of disagreement could be noticed. The major difference that we have found out refers to the subject matter to be disseminated to the trainers during their education program. In the first definition it is designated as *“information and skills”*, in the second – purely as *“information”*. And the third author claims that the objective of a Train-the-trainer program is to develop in the future trainers *“capabilities and capacities of imparting training to others”*. Additionally, Singh believes that the primary focus of a Train-the-trainer program is *“not so much on “transfer of information or expertise” as on “sharing of ideas and experiences”* (Singh 1999: 27). Such conceptualization could have been derived from the participative approach and it is considered to be the most progressive in our subjective view. Moreover, this perspective would be adopted as a basis for the development of Train-the-trainer Workshop in the practical part of current research paper.

Our next step would be to consider the objectives of a Train-the-trainer program. Here we would introduce the specific aims of Train-the-trainer, or Training of trainers (ToT) as Singh regards it. He starts with more global reasons like *“To use training as a tool of social change”* or *“To promote the activity of training as an integral element of people’s organization”* (Singh 1999: 27). However, further on he comes to more concrete, down-to-earth arguments, such as *“To prepare the participants as trainers for field level training activities”*, *“To develop necessary skills in designing and organizing training programs”* and *“To provide an understanding of the principles and practices of the training process”*. And at the end he also designates some objectives of a Train-the-trainer program, related to skills development, they are *“To sharpen communication skills of the trainer”* and *“To build up the trainer’s skills regarding the organizational management aspect of the training programme”* (Singh 1999: 27).

As we could see, both individual and organizational aspects appear to be mentioned in this broad and detailed list of Train-the-trainer program objectives.

It should be considered that not only objectives of a Train-the-trainer program, but also the target group or the trainees participating in such training is also specific. With regards to this topic Singh provides his opinion:

“ToT puts a lot of emphasis on trainees. It is neither possible nor desirable for any trainer to know everything about all of them. What is relevant is to know what concerns the training programme.” (Singh 1999: 28.)

We would agree with this reasoning of the researcher, that it is important to know in advance some characteristics of the target group in order to tailor the content, focus and methods to the specific needs of the trainees. What characteristics appear to be most essential for developing a Train-the-trainer program? For example, if the professionals have already had experience of leading trainings and how intensive it was? If they have previously received any relevant education or attended special trainings/seminars/courses in effective trainership? Did the specialists come of their own volition or under constraint? To what extent are the experiences and characteristics of the participants are similar or heterogeneous? The answers to all of these questions could help the trainer of Train-the-trainer workshop in constructing a more effective program and probably also avoiding some mistakes.

However it could happen that there was no possibility to gather the answers on the questions listed above from every participant in advance. In this case, taking into account that the backgrounds of participants could vary a lot leading to difficulties during the training, it is recommended to start the session with the procedure of defining the subject matter, analysis of professional identity of participants and their job related roles, elaboration on their ideas about targets of trainings they will lead in the future. Along with this procedure participants formulate targets for their own group to reach at the end of Train-the-Trainer session, they share experiences and the trainer could realize that the differences among them could be a powerful resource providing challenges, learning opportunities and insights in the current session (Krol and Michailova 2002: 18).

In a Train-the-Trainer session, during the discussion of main activities of a trainer/essential steps in the training process, it would be beneficial to emphasize that a trainer, who would like to execute his/her tasks professionally, should take part in the process of training needs analysis in collaboration with HR specialists (Krol and Michailova 2002: 16). Such activity would contribute to the strategic workforce development in the organization and of course to developing training plans for concrete functions for the nearest future.

One of the key professional skills of any trainer is ability to define whether it is possible to reach the goal that has been set up for the training or not. This essential, fundamental and practically important skill should be explicitly disclosed and exercised during the Train-the-Trainer session. From the very beginning, future trainers should be cognizant of the needs that training as a solution can handle and where it will not lead to the desired changes. It is the mission of the trainer leading Train-the-Trainer session to prevent future trainers from addressing unrealistic goals, as there is a risk to pay for it with own reputation and health (Churkina and Zhadko 2006).

Another professional skill of a trainer, that is regarded as one of the most important as well, is ability to choose a suitable training approach/method. Developing his idea of a Train-the-Trainer program as a participative approach based initiative Singh claims:

“The use of proper training approach is a prerequisite condition of the effectiveness of conducting a training program. The selection and use of such

approaches/methods becomes all the more crucial as the participatory nature of the activity demands that the training should be not only educative, but equally stimulating.” (Singh 1999: 29.)

Hence, it could be concluded that not only theoretical recommendations that are of help when choosing a training method (or for any other procedure) should be presented at the Train-the-Trainer workshop, but also possibility to discuss, share experiences and enough chances to get practical (via role plays, simulations, other interventions) exercise should be provided for “future” trainers. A further recommendation by Singh could be useful to consider for those starting their activities as trainers: *“Use of a single most effective approach or combination of approaches promotes greater interaction between the trainer and the trainee and, hence, creates a productive learning experience”* (Singh 1999: 29).

According to Singh, in the selection of suitable training approach/approaches certain basic assumptions have to underpin the choice and he provides a list of such assumptions. Here we will briefly summarize and list the most essential factors to be considered when selecting a training approach, which are: variety of backgrounds of the participants affecting their learning; active learning principle (learning by doing); *“no single approach is effective enough to ensure the maximum impact in terms of learning experience”*; *“effective use of a particular approach depends on the intelligence and skill of the trainer”* (Singh 1999: 30).

Further on all the rest of methodological foundations and basic principles for developing a Training Program are to be presented, discussed and practiced if possible. The following topics could be a part of the agenda: essential components of training process, learning principles, training styles and strategies, training methods, etc.. During this stage participants could reflect on their own style, success or failures (if they have already had training experience) and of course from time to time they would have questions, comments or possibly even objections. The mission of the trainer in a Train-the-Trainer session is to help trainees broaden their understanding of the Training Process and make clear that there are no best or ultimate solutions fitting to each Training (ex. regarding methods), that it is always a matter of different contexts.

As a solution for the final stage of Train-the-Trainer session we would present the idea that Krol and Michailova (2002) have adopted as a result of their extensive experience of leading Train-the-Trainer workshops. At the end of each course they assigned their trainees divided into subgroups to elaborate and present their own specific Training Program (in their functional area), starting from training needs analysis to evaluation, including all the detailed steps and exercises they would challenge their colleagues with.

We would like to conclude this chapter with the citation from Singh's monograph:

“Remember, the job of a trainer in ToT is not only to build a potential cadre of trainers for preparing functionaries for different development activities, but also to inspire, encourage and enthuse them to be the facilitators of a self-sustaining growth process through participatory approach.” (Singh 1999: 9.)

We believe that these words could make a meaningful slogan for all professionals intending to develop a Train-the-Trainer program.

3. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

3.1. Research methods

The **data collecting methods** employed in our research in order to achieve the purpose of this paper could be designated as qualitative. First of all, let us remember that traditionally all scientific research methods are divided into “quantitative” and “qualitative”. And as with any other dichotomy, there are supporters and critics of each of these two data collecting approaches in scientific research. However, it should be mentioned that they are not contradictory but complementary, and might be employed not only singly, depending on the research problem, purpose and research questions, but also together in one research. Discussing this dichotomy in the “Handbook of research methods in public administration” the authors underline: *“It is also important to note the qualitative–quantitative dichotomy in research methods is not very accurate: what is not quantitative is not necessarily qualitative and vice versa...”* (Vache, Yang and Spice 2008: 142).

Taking into consideration that there is no agreement among scientists on the characteristics, exact scope and definition of “qualitative research methods”, we would attempt to briefly describe here the essence of qualitative research and even suggest one of the definitions, which sounds applicable in the specific context of our research.

So first of all, let us start with the definition of qualitative research methods, which we consider suitable for the specific context of our research, this definition is considered “minimalist” by the authors: *“...an in-depth, case-oriented study of small number of cases, an aim of a detailed knowledge of specific cases, trying to uncover how things happen, and a primary goal of “making the facts understandable,” placing less emphasis on deriving inferences...”* (Vache, Yang and Spice 2008: 142). And further on the same authors describe the development, progress in scientific thought with regards to the subject in view: *“qualitative research has increasingly become more interpretive and geared more toward understanding than explaining, with more frequent contestation and fragmentation of the research programs and methodologies...”* (Vache et al. 2008: 146).

After that we would like to continue with essential characteristics of qualitative approaches that Margaret Stout lists in her article with the reference to Luton and his book “Qualitative Research Approaches for Public Administration” (2010):

1. well suited to conceptual and normative questions;
2. appropriate for pragmatic research;
3. intended to find lived meaning in local contexts;
4. effective in exploration, description, interpretation, and explanation (Stout 2013: 19).

This list is obviously not the only one existing in the scientific literature, however we would not go deeper with this discussion within the limits of current paper as for our purposes this list could be considered quite exhaustive. Especially the first two points are meaningful since our research is pragmatic and the results of our conceptual investigations and the primary finding itself – “Train-the-Trainer Workshop” is meant to have practical application in the company.

Talking about the scope of qualitative research methods, it should be mentioned that there is also no consistency like with the characteristics, which means that different authors argue for different research strategies to be in the list. Let us provide here just one definition of the scope of qualitative research methods, which is “working” or suitable within the limits of current research: “...*the term suggests any combination of the following: ethnography; participant observation; ethnology; textual, hermeneutic, semiotic, and narrative analysis; analysis through symbolic interactionism; ethnomethodology; psychoanalysis; feminist inquiry; phenomenology; phenomenography; deconstruction; action research and participatory action research; and case studies*” (Vache et al. 2008: 143). What concerns our thesis, the concrete research strategy which is applied in our work is “case study” and it will be described in more detail further on in this paragraph.

At this point we consider a turn to the discussion of the concrete research strategies that current research is based on is needed. So, in particular in our research we appealed to such qualitative research strategies as relevant literature review and case study. With regards to the first research strategy – literature review, it should be mentioned that findings from both private and public sector research, especially on such central topic as

“Training Process”, were examined, critically analyzed and incorporated into our “Train the Trainer” Workshop.

What concerns the second research strategy – case study, we would like first of all to provide here a brief insight on the general methodological discussion of this method, and after that we would proceed with more detailed description of the concrete application of this method in our research.

In the general scientific discussion of the case study method two main “paradigms” to the scope of case study method could be distinguished. When it comes to the first perspective, the term “case study” was defined meaningfully by Robert Yin. In his classical work “Case study research: Design and methods” Robert Yin defines the **case study method** as *“a scholarly inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”* (Yin 2003: 33). Hence, it could be concluded that within this approach, case study is conceived as a separate type of research or in other words self-sufficient research strategy. And this research strategy could involve a variety of different methods, not necessarily qualitative. Within the frame of the second approach case study is conceptualized just as a total of methods employed at different stages of the research. This perspective could be associated to the overall group of qualitative data collecting methods.

Regardless of the perspective chosen in a concrete scientific work, the case study method is considered by scholars as a theory-building research method. As Dooley puts it,

“Case study research has the ability to embrace multiple cases, to embrace quantitative and qualitative data, and to embrace multiple research paradigms. Thus, case study research can contribute in a holistic way to all phases of theory development.” (Dooley 2002: 336.)

This ability of case study method to use sources of both groups of data collecting methods: qualitative and quantitative, as well as “the ability to embrace multiple cases” and “multiple research paradigms”, – could be considered as strength inherent to it.

However, there are also downsides existing related to this method, as obviously for any other research method. And the very same multiplicity of sources of information and

paradigms (that sometimes could be even contradictory) described above could be also counted as a downside of case study method, as it has the potential to lead to misconceptions. Another downside of this method is weak generalizability of results, which could be gradually overcome by examination of more and more cases.

One more disadvantage of this method to be mentioned is subjectivity of this research approach, which could be also intensified with the plenty of information sources available. Nevertheless, each research method should correspond to the targets of a concrete study, and hence case study method has the right of existence. This idea could be illustrated by the following example: *“The researcher who embarks on case study research is usually interested in a specific phenomenon and wishes to understand it completely, not by controlling variables but rather by observing all of the variables and their interacting relationships”* (Dooley 2002: 336). The considerations we had when selecting the research method for current study were of the same direction: to achieve the research target the whole scope of data available from different sources on the Training process and Train-the-Trainer topics should be collected, matched and analyzed in detail.

When it comes to our study, the concrete case that has been analyzed is obviously Continental corporation. It is very important to distinguish here also the specific focus we had within the case analyzed. To reach the purpose in view, both in theoretical as well as in practical parts of this paper, we concentrated on the training processes and practices, and even more specifically – on Train-the-Trainer. The detailed description of our case – Continental corporation (i.e. company background, some elements of the HR practices and processes most relevant in the context of this thesis), will be presented in the following, third Chapter.

The data that has been collected and presented in the theoretical part of this paper, was further on analytically analyzed and as the outcome of this analysis we obtained the first draft of “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop (including concept and materials) that we will describe in the second, empirical part of this research. Such **data analysis method** could be designated as modeling. Modeling could be understood as *“the process of elaboration, building abstractions and inferences by analogy, as well as design of scientific hypotheses on the nature of phenomenon under analysis”* (Naideneov and

Chestnokov 2007: 85). And correspondingly, a model is the total of abstractions and inferences on the nature of phenomenon under analysis. In our case this total resulted in the development of the Workshop concept and of course the content – presentation itself.

We would like to make a remark that our version of “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop is not the ultimate truth; it is just the model we developed, just one of a larger variety of alternatives, first draft to be tested in pilot runs and to be adapted. The next, fourth Chapter we would start with detailed clarification of the Concept that we have developed for the “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop to be implemented at Continental. And then in the second paragraph we would share the materials we have worked out for our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop.

3.2. Empirical object

As Gusdorf puts it,

“Effective training is not an isolated event in an organization. Training must be strategic in that it is designed to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of employees to help them achieve the organization’s strategic plan. Therefore, effective training cannot be designed until we first understand the organization.”
(Gusdorf 2009: 5.)

This will be the very concern of this particular paragraph, and we will pay attention here to the organizational features that might be helpful for understanding the Training culture of Continental and the background of the project “Future Growth”, to which our research intends to contribute.

As it was already stated in the introduction to our thesis, the overall **empirical object** of this research is represented by Continental corporation, which is a private multinational company with headquarter in Hannover. Moreover, Hannover’s headquarter is also the place, where our research was conducted. Until now Continental has established its

business in approximately 49 countries all around the World and the overall number of its employees is more than 170 thousand people.

The corporation is divided into two major parts: the Automotive Group and the Rubber Group. Within the Automotive Group there are three divisions: Chassis & Safety Division, Interior Division and Powertrain Division. Within the Rubber Group there are two divisions: Tire Division and ContiTech Division. In order to provide more precise understanding on where in the organization current research was held, we would like to mention that the researcher has been placed in the Human Resources Development (HRD) Department belonging to the Tire Division.

When it comes to the question “Why it is Continental, not another company, that was chosen as the empirical object?” – it could be answered not only that this company happened to be the internship place for the author of this thesis. Continental could be considered a good example for describing the training process because it is constantly growing and developing global player, having consistent training systems and processes (aligned with other corporate processes) in place that are working in 49 countries worldwide. It should be also mentioned that the business needs, practical experience and deep fundamental investigations are going hand to hand at Continental, for example such fundamental models like “Training Process steps model” and “Competency model” are existing and introduced into practice in this company. Moreover, the topic of internal trainer education (qualification optimization) was actual at the moment of this research execution.

Now we would shortly present the background of the project, which name has been mentioned above – “Future Growth Strategy 2025” (or simply “Future Growth”). This is a global project, aimed at “covering the pipeline of new talented employees” and the need in effective training and development programs for current employees. As it could have been noticed, this is a strategic project, which is planned to be implemented until the year 2025. In order to meet this target, two subprojects were distinguished within the overall “Future Growth” project, they are: “Conti Tire Campus” and “Trainee Program 2025”. The former focuses on training and education of all current Continental employees, the latter is meant for creating and implementing a consistent company-wide strategy for Trainee Pools, aligned and standardized for all functional areas. The

subproject to which the current research is related is obviously the first one – “Conti Tire Campus”.

The overall goal of the “Conti Tire Campus” sub-project was defined as: “We will have defined, developed, and implemented the globally coherent framework of Tire Training that supports the Future Growth Strategy 2025”. The scope of project is overall Training oriented, and there are several work packages that represent more concrete aspects related to Training, they are: “Training Landscape”, “Training Process and Quality”, “Trainer Concept” and “E-Learning” work packages. This research as it was already mentioned is aimed at improving trainers’ qualification by educating them how to be professional Trainers, and correspondingly intends to contribute to the “Trainer” work package.

It should be mentioned here that within the time our research has been executed the state of affairs changed and “Conti Tire Campus” project firstly was transformed in the way that only one of the previously stated four work packages, i.e. “E-Learning” was defined as the primary focus of the first stage of the project. Herewith it was assumed that implementation of one online learning platform for the entire Continental Tires organization as the first step would be an essential background for all other related activities. It was also assumed that further on the results of this first project would be forwarded to the next project team which would continue with realization of other work packages.

However, after several months “Conti Tire Campus” project was assigned “on hold” status completely, since a lot of preliminary preparation work needed to be done even for the kick off of the first stage of “Conti Tire Campus” project, in other words the company was not ready to implement such global changes at once. Hence, our Train-the-Trainer workshop at the moment could be considered as a future outlook, a strategic initiative, which would hopefully serve Continental corporation in the future.

4. DEVELOPING TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOP: TOWARDS TRAINER EDUCATION OPTIMIZATION AT CONTINENTAL

4.1. “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop: Concept design

As it has already been mentioned earlier in this paper, and as could be inferred from the heading of this chapter, in the empirical part of current research our efforts are directed towards elaboration of a “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop that could be helpful for optimizing Continental’s internal trainers’ education/qualification. And this particular paragraph is devoted to the detailed examination of all elements of our Workshop’s Concept.

From the very beginning we would like to present an overview of the Concept, incorporated in the standard layout, which is used at Continental for all Training initiatives (see Table 2.). This Program Overview table was developed by the author of this paper and this is how it looks like:

Table 2. Continental “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop: Program Overview.

Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental search and finding of effective behaviour as a Trainer based on the principles provided during the Workshop • Reflection of own style as a trainer • Intensive peer and Trainer feedback
Target Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White collars • Job experience min. 5-7 years, acknowledged experts in their function
Concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive concept, very much different from standard trainings • The logical sequence of Training Core Process is taken as the basis for the Training structure • For every step in the Training Process there is an informational input from the Trainer followed by group work/simulations • Participants have a chance to practice the major steps in Training Process and present their results to colleagues and the Trainer • After each simulation a feedback session is organized
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Agenda
Group Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-10
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 days
Nomination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via local HRD Conferences

Now we will step by step unfold the meaning of each of the Concept elements presented in the table above. Moreover, some other crucial aspects of the Workshop's Concept would be disclosed further on in this paragraph.

Let us start with discussion of the targets of our Workshop. The activities for our Training were designed in order to meet a range of targets, that could be grouped in three main clusters:

Overall Target in terms of the benefits of this Workshop for the “Future Growth” project: optimization of functional experts' education/qualification as internal Trainers and therefore contributing to Continental's Future Growth strategy 2025.

Considering the **organizational focus**:

- Comprehensive, effective knowledge transfer within the corporation via a real-world-oriented self-learning system using internal trainers (the “knowledge disseminator” principle);
- Optimization of self-learning processes in all functional areas.

Individual focus:

- Experimental search and finding of effective behaviour as a Trainer based on the principles provided during the Workshop;
- Reflection of own style as a trainer; and
- Getting intensive peer and Trainer feedback for future improvements.

All of the targets listed above represent different facets of the “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop; these targets complement each other and all together form the complete picture of the outcomes expected for the organization and employees alike at the end of this Workshop.

The next logical aspect to discuss in the current context, i.e. description of the Workshop's Concept, we consider to be the “target group” – the specific characteristics of the future audience. The trainees of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop would be

functional experts at Continental corporation. First of all we will start with formal criteria of the employees this Workshop is targeted at. This is white collars with minimal job experience of 5-7 years. Moreover, as has been stated above, it is important that they are acknowledged as experts in their field of responsibility. So we assume that the trainees have advanced knowledge in their function and perform their job on the level “sometimes exceeds expectations” or “exceeds expectations”. Long professional experience, being cognizant of Continental organizational culture and, what is very important, knowledge of their colleagues needs are among the advantages of the functional experts, who will be being prepared with the help of our Workshop for the role of future trainers. Therefore, they were chosen to be trained as future Trainers for more junior and less experienced colleagues. However, they were generally missing knowledge and experience in demonstrating effective behaviour as Trainers so far, and our Workshop is supposed to help to cover this gap.

As in every other Train-the-Trainer initiative, the emphasis on the trainees in our program is quite strong. Of course it is not possible to know all the details about trainees’ personalities for example, or previous experiences in leading Trainings, however, some basic information (like years/times of training experience or their area of responsibility) could be obtained via sending a questionnaire prior to the training. If these characteristics would be known in advance, this would help the trainer to tune the Training program a bit or may be adapt his/her style to the specifics of the group.

Now we will provide more details concerning the overall idea of the Training – we will describe the concept of our Workshop. Getting back to the Chapter 3, where the objectives of overall “Future Growth” project and “ContiTireCampus” sub-project were explained, we could better understand why there is special significance in developing and implementing the Concept of training Continental internal Trainers. Training of specialists in all functions is apparently very important in terms of their input to successful pursuit of Continental business strategy. However, training of functional experts who further on will train other specialists is even more important as it ensures that the Training Programs they develop and deliver to their colleagues are of proper quality.

The role of functional experts as trainers is multifaceted and not as simple as it could seem from the first glance. At the very basic and trivial level they are providing instructions to their colleagues. However, behind this level there is a very intensive and thorough work in: assessing the training needs; design the Training concept; develop the content of Training program; deliver the training effectively to the target group; evaluate the outcomes; adapt content, measurements, etc. based on the feedback. But this is not everything related to their roles, on the very deepest level our functional experts have the role of “change agents”, who contribute to the Continental “Future Growth” strategy 2025.

Our primary concern when developing this “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop was to give functional experts some real-life experiences via simulation of processes and procedures that should take place when they will be elaborating Training programs in their area of expertise. Also including professionals with various backgrounds is considered to be beneficial as it could provide a good atmosphere for ideas, notions and perspectives exchange, sharing of experiences during the Workshop. At the end the combination of these two essential for our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop features are perceived by researchers as helpful in enriching future trainers with new effective behavior samples and practical experiences.

Taking into account practical emphasis of the Workshop described above, the overall concept of our “Train-the-Trainer” program could be designated as interactive. It notably differs from standard, conventional training programs. As has been mentioned in the Table 2 with Program Overview, as the basis for our Training structure we adopted the logical sequence of Core Training Process steps. In the Training blocks devoted to each step of the Training Process, there are two sub-blocks: 1) informational input from the Trainer; 2) followed by group work (or discussions)/individual assignments/simulations. Thanks to such organization, all the participants have a chance not only to understand the Training Process well, but also to practice the major steps in Training Process and present their results to colleagues and the Trainer. After each simulation a feedback session is organized, which brings even more value in terms of training transfer and helps future trainers to behave more effective and efficient next time.

And now let us move to the description of the other critical aspect – the content of our Workshop. First of all, let us remember that the structure of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop, as it has been mentioned, is based on core steps in the Training Process. Here we would provide just the Agenda, i.e. only overview of the topics which are supposed to be covered during the Workshop (see Table 3.). However, second paragraph of this chapter would be completely devoted to presenting the content/material of the Training in the format of PowerPoint presentation, which is supposed to be shown during each “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop to the participants. So let us present here the overall Agenda for both days of the “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop developed, as all other materials of the Workshop, by the author of this paper:

Table 3. Participant Agenda for “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop.

When	What	When	What
Day 1		Day 2	
09:00	Welcome & Agenda	09:00	Welcome Back
09:15	Self Introduction & Icebreaker	09:10	Presentations + Feedback
09:30	Training Process Step 1. TNA	09:55	Coffee Break
10:00	Exercise	10:10	Presentations + Feedback
10:30	Coffee Break	12:00	Lunch
10:45	TPr. Step 2. Training Design. Input 1.	13:00	TPr. Step 6. and Step 7.
11:15	Exercise	13:30	Exercise
11:45	TPr. Step 2. Training Design. Input 2.	14:45	Wrap up & Written Feedback
12:15	Exercises	15:00	The END
12:50	Lunch		
13:50	TPr. Step 3. Training Development		
14:15	Exercises		
14:45	TPr. Step 4. Training Delivery		
15:15	Exercises		
15:45	Coffee Break		
16:00	TPr. Step 5. Training Evaluation		
16:30	Discussion, Exercise & Homework		
18:00	End of Day 1		

Moreover, we would quickly provide here our assumptions on some critical organizational aspects for the Workshop. What concerns the optimal volume of participants per each “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop session is considered to be 8-10 functional experts, the maximal capacity could reach around 12 trainees, more is strictly not recommended. The reason for such restriction is obviously lying in the interactive Concept of our Workshop. In case the number of trainees in our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop appears to be more than 12, there is a feasible risk of having not enough time for each person to gain enough practical experience (in sub-group and individual activities) and hence harming the effectiveness of the whole initiative.

When it comes to duration of the Workshop – as it could be seen from the participant Agenda above, within our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop concept two days of training are foreseen. Once again, the primary concern we have is providing our functional experts with an opportunity to practice all the principles taught, receive feedback and in such a way master their style and behaviour as effective Trainers. Such outline of the program makes it impossible to finalize all the Training content in one day and correspondingly leads us to a two-day Workshop.

When it comes to internal communication regarding our Workshop and to the process of how employees are becoming the participants of our Workshop – they will be nominated by their superiors called “HRD Conference”. According to Continental practices, such HRD Conferences take place regularly, twice a year (and always firstly on the local level and after that on the divisional level). The main focus of HRD Conferences is always performance review, career path development and succession planning, as well as approval of the nominations for Continental development measures (Corporate and Divisional) for the next year for the talent pool, i.e. people with high performance and high potential. The nomination of functional experts for our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop and approval of these nominations would happen via local HRD Conferences as at this level concrete information on the level of expertise of functional experts is available.

Now we consider it is necessary to describe the tutors/trainers who will be responsible for implementation, effective delivery of the Workshop to the target group of Continental functional experts. As it has been recently mentioned, it is important to train

line specialists but it is even more important to educate and have highly qualified cadre of experts who would train those line specialists themselves. At the very highest level of this pyramid would rather be the qualification of Trainers leading our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshops. In the role of Trainers on this level we would suggest experienced internal trainers coming from HR function at Continental. Or as a second option in this role could be a Trainer from Training agency “Contur”. This agency used to be a part of Continental corporation in the past, but had dissociated in recent years and currently provides professional training and consulting services not only within Germany, but also throughout the whole world, with Continental as one of their core customers.

In order to provide additional help to functional experts and give them some reference after our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop is over, a supporting material in the form of “Training Process Mastery” Manual will be developed. This Manual will be future trainers needs oriented and will comprise not only the Training Process steps and principles discussed during the Workshop, but also some more recommendations and practical guidelines.

Moreover, we would like to make an accent here on the benefits that Continental is expecting this Train-the-Trainer Workshop to bring to the company. There could be four main benefits of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop distinguished, they are:

1. Training is done by internal experts (verified quality and adherence to Continental’s standards);
2. Positive response to training because it is directly related to everyday work tasks;
3. Training can be real needs based, tailored to each group of trainees (ex. based on level of expertise);
4. Big potential for savings in training capacity and training time, huge cost savings.

And finally we consider that at this point it is necessary to mention the ways that Training effectiveness is planned to be measured. Here we would suggest an evaluation model for measuring the outcomes of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop. First of all,

directly after the Workshop itself we will ask functional experts to provide us their feedback via a questionnaire aimed at clarifying their reactions (both affective and utility judgments). What about the behavioural criteria or transfer of training we suggest to measure it in two steps, as this procedure will enable us to judge on how our functional experts are able to provide good quality of both: 1) how they adapted their style and the way of interaction, instruction and material delivery; 2) on the content and quality of material they provided. The former, is to be measured with the same method as has been described above for functional experts (questionnaire on reactions, including their perception of the trainer). The latter would be measured with the interview (less preferably, but if needed questionnaire) method, where direct supervisors of each employee is asked about the performance improvements (how the employee applies acquired skills on his/her workplace). This measurement is recommended within 6-12 month after the training has taken place.

4.2. Content of the “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop

In this paragraph, as it has been previously mentioned, we would finally present the full content of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop by providing here detailed explanations on the materials to be presented to the future trainers. The content of the presentation that we elaborated (for the full version of the presentation see Appendix 1.) is based on the data obtained from literature review. Some further readings and investigations on other organizations’ practices in the field of interest were also considered. The Workshop’s structure is based on the Training Process steps of Continental Model, which was slightly adapted for the purposes of the Workshop.

As a rule at the beginning of every step some crucial questions are posed, followed by detailed explanations and recommendations; informational blocks are mixed with practical activities to let the future trainers reflect their style, share experiences and ask questions in case some difficulties may arise. As it was mentioned above, in the current

paragraph we would not avail the presentation itself (the whole presentation to be shown during the Workshop is available in Appendix 1.), in this paragraph we would provide the most critical materials alongside giving clarifications on the logics of different informational blocks and the exercises, so that it could serve as a methodological guidance for our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop.

4.2.1. Introduction to the Workshop, agenda, objectives

Our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop is starting logically with the preface. The Trainer conducting this Workshop (coming either from HR function at Continental or also an experienced trainer from Training agency “Contur”, as we indicated in the previous paragraph) will first of all of course introduce himself and will quickly but reasonably explain: why everybody is present in this training room; what is the business need for this Workshop; and what is so to say the history of such topics as “training”, “trainer” and especially “internal trainer” at Continental. What regards the last point, it should be mentioned that at Continental situation has changed with the expansion of the company’s establishments, i.e. opening of new production plants and sales offices. Such territorial expansion at the end of the last century and beginning of the XXI century and therefore growth of the number of Continental employees (a great part of which was represented by young or inexperienced in the specific tire business specialists) caused the need to produce a cadre of qualified functional experts, notably internal trainers who would be qualified enough to ensure tire business specific, company specific and their function specific know-how/knowledge transfer.

However down to recent times such internal trainers, i.e. functional experts educating less experienced colleagues, didn’t obtain special education themselves on such topics as for example “corporate training process standards”, “Continental training process model” or “professional training delivery”. This Train-the-trainer Workshop, as it was mentioned already in the introduction of this paper, was established to cover this gap and provide Continental’s functional experts with knowledge as well as develop their trainer competencies and hence increase their effectiveness as internal trainers.

After this “historical” part of the introduction, the Trainer leading the Workshop would briefly present to the participants all the topics to be covered during the Training, in other words – the Agenda of the following one and a half Training days (for details see Table 3. on page 57). We understand that at this point of time not each of the Agenda points would be clear to the participants, but this is not the focus at the beginning, it would clarify itself later. The main focus in the beginning is to give participants an overview, a broad picture of the Workshop – so to say its width and depth. It is crucial that the participants make sure that the Workshop will take 1,5 days (so that they will not be available for anything or anyone else during this time) – this is actually what has to be explained to the participants and insured well in advance – at least several months before the Workshop takes place. Another key aspects that the Trainer of the Workshop should ensure from the beginning are that the participants get the first understanding of the Training structure (brief and not detailed, but structured, which will be developed and practiced during the Workshop); and last, but not least – that the Training is very interactive and therefore each and every participant is expected to have an active position, constantly providing sufficient input from their side. Hence, the main concern of the Trainer while presenting the Agenda would be to get these messages across to the participants.

The next point to be covered in the introduction part of the Workshop is presentation of the Training objectives. First of all, the trainer should mention that the overall target of the Training is to develop key trainer competencies. After that the trainer should go into more details and make an accent on each concrete competency to be developed. It is also to be noted by the trainer that these competences are logically connected to the main Training Process steps. Therefore, among these competencies are: identification of training needs in an organization/department; designing training plans that meet the training needs identified; developing a training program based on the training plan; effective delivery of the training program to the target audience; evaluating the training effectiveness adequately and catholically; and finally making adaptations to all the previous steps if needed, based on the evaluation data.

Moreover, not only informing participants on the objectives they would see on the slides would be required, what would be even more crucial at this point is that the

trainer arranges a discussion and facilitates it in such a manner that at the end all of the participants come to an agreement that these objectives are feasible to be reached during the training and that these competencies are required for them to conduct a training effectively – this is important because it is one of the crucial principles in adult learning that adults learn eagerly and effectively only if they see the real benefits of these knowledge/competencies for their lives.

To sum up, these objectives would firstly once again remind the participants of the Training structure (the first input on it was provided in the Agenda), but what is more important these objectives should be as the flash light to the participants, showing them the real benefits that they can gain from the Workshop and implement in their working life.

Afterwards, as it makes sense for many reasons (like warming up for the participants, trainer's convenience in knowing all the names, conducting openness and a good psychological atmosphere, etc.), some interactive activity with all the participants of the Workshop to get to know each other should be held. There are numerous of these exercises available not only in open sources, but also as a rule in each company's and of course in each trainer's repertoire. For example, the game with throwing a ball or a toy to one another, introducing self, answering the previous question and asking the following person questions like "What was the worth thing you have ever eaten?" or "If you were a tire, which tire would you be?" – could be used for these purposes. However, as it is not the focus of current paragraph, we would neither provide here a concrete instruction, nor recommend which of these exercises should be chosen. What particular exercise is held does not really make a big difference and could be individually chosen and adapted by the Trainer, the main concern is that the format of such an exercise is in line with the format of our Workshop.

So if the trainer of the Workshop would do everything according to the instructions provided above, we consider all these explanations and exercises would make a smooth start into the Workshop and create a positive working atmosphere. The next step would be devoted to the discussion of key concepts related to the topic and detailed examination of each training step.

4.2.2. Key concepts and steps in the Training Process

Further on we consider that, before starting with detailed examination and practice on each of the Training Process steps, it is necessary to briefly discuss the definition of at least the “Training” itself and its objectives. We have chosen the definition of Noe (Noe, R., 2008), that we provided in the theoretical chapter of current thesis, to be presented within our Workshop. This definition sounds like: *“a planned effort of a company to facilitate employees’ learning of job-related competencies, that include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance”* (Noe 2008: 5). The main reason for choosing this definition was that the central term the author rests on is *“job-related competencies”*. Moreover, the chosen definition incorporates such features as: orientation on positive change (*“facilitate employees’ learning”*); KSAOs centeredness (*“include knowledge, skills, or behaviours”*); implying retention and application of acquired KSAOs (*“critical for successful job performance”*). All of these aspects were inferred to be the key characteristics that should be present in the term “Training” in the second Chapter of this paper. Hence, we consider this definition overall quite complete and appropriate for the purposes of our workshop. Moreover, another target of the Trainer within this discussion would be to briefly explain the participants of our Workshop the competency based approach as applied to “Training”.

The second part to be discussed here briefly is “the purpose of training”. For it we have chosen Judith Brown’s definition: *“The purpose of training is to support the achievement of organizational goals by increasing the necessary skills of its employees”* (Brown 2002: 570). However we have replaced one word there, i.e. instead of “skills” we put “competencies”. The reason we let ourselves such liberties is because the term “competencies” is wider and it entails such terms as “knowledge”, “skills” or “behaviours”. Moreover, as we have inferred in the theoretical Chapter, all of these, not only “skills” could be increased or improved with the help of training, and all of these notions/phenomena might be equally significant to the organization.

We consider that within this discussion the Trainer should also mention about the difference between two very often mixed terms, which are “training” and

“development”. The differentiation, as we have already discussed in the second Chapter, was in a straightforward way made by Cascio and Aguinis (Cascio and Aguinis 2011). To separate these two terms from each other the authors resource to the temporal difference in application of these terms: training is meant to influence positively on the current job of an employee (*“immediate or near-term application”*), and development is implemented when there is a need to prepare an employee for a future position (*“there may be no immediate use”*) (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 345).

The next subtopic within this discussion of the Training Process is logically the scope of Training. At this point we could turn to KSAOS and explain all the connections between them and the scope of Training, but we consider that within the limits of our Workshop it is not necessary to go into theory too deep. Moreover, as we adhere to the competency based approach to training and this Workshop is also based on this theoretical foundation, therefore the Continental Competency Model is to be studied here in detail. And of course the Model would be visualized and displayed on the screen for the participants (see Figure 6.).

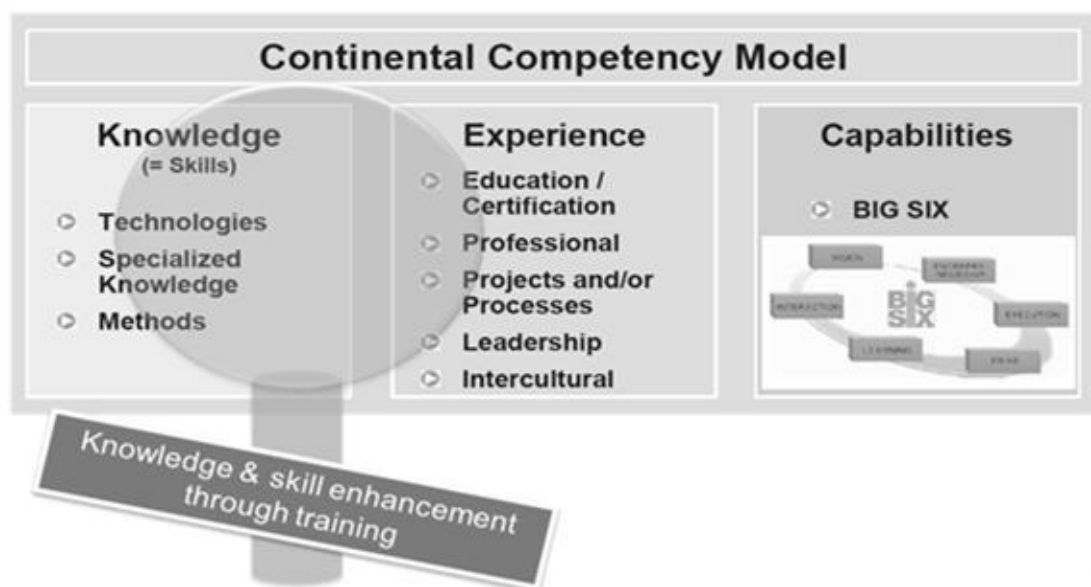


Figure 6. Continental Competency Model (from Continental Competency Model and BIG SIX Capabilities. Standard Presentation, 2013: 2).

First of all the Trainer should mention that this Competency Model is being implemented as the basis for other HR processes worldwide within Continental corporation.

The Trainer might also mention that some questions could come to participants' minds, like: "What was the necessity to develop such a model?" or "What is the benefit to have it?" The answer is simple: Continental Competency Model, as it has already been mentioned, serves as a common language for competencies across the company.

As it could be inferred from the figure above, at Continental Competency is conceived as an integrative concept comprising: knowledge, experience and the BIG SIX Capabilities. The meaning of the first two elements or "components" of Competency so to say are more or less clear from the descriptions displayed on the picture above (see Figure 6.). However the third element, i.e. the in-house concept "BIG SIX Capabilities", might need more clarity on it, which the Trainer should provide.

The basis of BIG SIX Capabilities is formed by personal characteristics that were defined within the company as essential for achieving business results successfully/effectively. These six competence categories are the following: Vision, Entrepreneurship, Execution, Drive, Learning and Interaction. The BIG SIX Capabilities play an important role in Continental's HRD core processes, initiatives and programs.

After the discussion on the key Training related concepts, the next logical step would be to come over to the examination of the Training Process steps. But before presenting the Continental Training Process concept ready, we consider it might be beneficial to give the participants a possibility to fulfill an exercise in which they would have to focus on the topic, think on it hardly, and possibly find close to the reality solutions. It does not mean that previously, while discussing the key concepts for example, there would be just a monolog of the Trainer and that the participants would not be addressed with any queries, the Trainer should do that and constantly challenge participants, involve them as much as possible and encourage them for active participation. In this particular exercise, for example, the participants would be asked to answer the following question: "If you were going to provide a training in your functional area to your less experienced

colleagues, what steps would you have to go through?” However, first of all this question would be addressed not to the entire group, in the first part of this exercise each participant would have to answer it on his/her own, i.e. each participant would be asked to create his/her model of Training Process steps. This individual part would be followed by a group discussion and if possible construction of a common model (agreed on by all the participants) on a flip chart.

When the participants will be ready with their Training Process steps model, the Trainer should turn the discussion to clarification of Continental Training Process concept, the one that was presented in the paragraph 2.2. Training process: theoretical discussions and Continental model (see Figure 4. in theoretical Chapter).

What would be important to mention here is that this concept is aligned with other HR initiatives at Continental and that it is the standard way to arrange the Training Process in the company, which is expected to be adhered to by each internal trainer.

After such a thorough full approach to the largest topic to be studied during the Workshop – Training process steps, and after the trainer asks participants for any questions left and provides all corresponding explanations, only then we would recommend to move to the following steps of the Workshop, i.e. deep examination of each Training process step.

4.2.3. Training needs analysis

As we have underlined above, when the participants have the full picture of the Continental Training Process concept and they understand that this is the way to act for them in their working life, we suppose a wish to get closer to the essence of this process and to master it should appear in them. At this point it would be the time to examine each of the Training Process steps in detail and give our future trainers the opportunity to gain some practical experience, which would be helpful for them when they will be in charge of conducting a Training in the area of their functional expertise.

So from then on the group will be moving from one Training Process step to the other, starting with the first one of course, which is called “Training Needs Analysis”.

This step is one of those that might require time not only for training some competencies in practical exercises, but also for understanding the practical needs and benefits it entails. We can see two main reasons for it: it is quite a multifaceted and that’s why complicated topics from one side; and from the other side – analyzing training needs is usually what people are not even thinking about, or are not used to do in their previous experiences.

That’s why we recommend that in the beginning the Trainer would make sure that the term “Training needs assessment” itself is clear to the future trainers. As the basis for the input from the Trainer, we would suggest Gusdorf’s definition of this concept: “*a training needs assessment is conducted to identify the gaps between the employees’ actual performance and desired performance*” (Gusdorf 2009: 5). We would suggest to may be substitute the last expression “*desired performance*” with more precise from our point of view category “performance requirements”. Such modified definition would be also more objective as performance requirements should be taken from the employees’ job descriptions or position descriptions. Hence, these are “performance requirements”, which are critical and essential to identify the gap in employees’ competencies and with that Training needs.

Moreover, it is important to let the future trainers understand that there is not always a need for training, it might happen that other solutions would appear to be more relevant to cover the gap disclosed in the process of “Training Needs Analysis” (TNA). This is one concern to be underlined by the Trainer and it has been reasonably discussed in the theoretical part of this paper. Another concern to be taken into consideration by the future trainers is that training might be just the beginning in a whole complex of measures, and that depending on the nature and complexity of the identified gap, other organizational measures/changes in addition to training might be needed.

After these clarifications we consider it would be important to emphasize once again the necessity and list the major benefits of conducting the TNA, and doing it of course prior to the Training program development.

For this we would turn to the quite a short but reach in content list, developed by Judith Brown (2002). As it was discussed in the theoretical Chapter of our Thesis, this author suggests four main reasons why needs analysis must be done before training programs are developed. The benefits of conducting the TNA in advance, according to Brown, are the following: it will bring to surface the specific problems existing in the organization; the data received would provide a good basis for justifications and obtaining support from management; based on these results, training effectiveness measurement system is to be build; it would help in defining the costs and benefits of a particular training (Brown 2002: 569-570).

The next step within TNA discussion would be to turn to the learner analysis. Some more specific aspects with regards to the audience/learner analysis might be firstly discussed in the group and then an input should be given by the Trainer. The Trainer is to emphasize the topic of how it is important and why it is important to understand what is the target group for the specific training, what are the needs and other relevant characteristics of the learners.

In this context we consider that it is necessary to challenge the future trainers with such questions like: “What are the specific characteristics of adult learners?” or “How children and adults differ when it comes to the learning process?” After giving the future trainers a possibility to express their own views and share experiences, our workshop Trainer should provide some clarifications and sum up some key points on this topic.

We would suggest the Trainer to highlight the following aspects or specific characteristics of adult learners, that we consider especially applicable to such situations when training is held at work: adults acquire the information eagerly when they feel they miss it and having it would help them to be more effective at work; and therefore they expect the knowledge or skills acquired to be applicable in their working life (hence, they should be willing to practice as much as possible during the training and the trainer is to offer them such opportunities).

After that we would like to proceed with informational input on the methods that could be employed to collect this data. As additional advantages of this informational block

we see: summary of everything what has previously been discussed with regards to the Training needs analysis from one side; from the other side – this information would be a move forward and will provide our functional experts with some directions and algorithms for future activities.

The trainer could firstly ask the participants to offer their own versions of data collection methods for conducting the TNA. When the list suggested by participants will be fixed on the flipchart, the Trainer should add the missing ones (for example, questioning the target group or sharing related experiences with other internal trainers or functional experts) and underpin such crucial aspects like: discussions with the stakeholders at the very early stage are crucial for obtaining their support and clarifying training outcomes they expect; consideration of all company's internal training related procedures is also one of the keys to success.

After the discussion of the suggested data collection methods we would offer our participants an opportunity to implement all the methods and strategies in practice straight away, in order to train and develop their TNA competency.

The exercise offered to our participants within this context would consist of several questions with the key message: “Imagine you have to develop a training program in your functional area: describe how would you collect the data and conduct the overall process of TNA?”. The trainer should clearly state as well that this exercise is supposed to be completed in fifteen minutes.

The next and all together final logical block within the discussion of the first Training step would be devoted to “solutions”: first of all the Trainer would have to remind to the participants that training is not the only solution to bridge the gap identified in TNA; after that the topic of what is “in scope” and “out of the scope” of Training as a solution should be discussed; finally, the topic “Training solutions effectiveness” should be covered. Everything related to those aspects has already been precisely examined in the second Chapter of this thesis, so we see no need to double all this information here. For all the links on tables and figures please refer to the second Chapter as well (see Figure 1., Figure 2. and Table 1.).

After these more theoretical discussions, we would recommend the Trainer to give the participants a possibility to practice a bit on these topics and offer them another exercise, linked to the previous exercise in which they had to develop strategy for and “conduct” a TNA for a training in their functional area.

But before challenging the participants with the following exercise, we would like to mention once again the quote after Gusdorf, which we already provided in the theoretical Chapter. We find it so precisely expressing the essence of the topic under discussion that we repeat it here again: *“careful analysis of performance gaps determines what training needs to be done or if there is a need for training at all”* (Gusdorf 2009: 5).

So at this point it would be necessary to arrange a discussion, which would be the last thing within the examination of the first Training Process step, and ask the future trainers the following questions: “Considering the TNA you have done in the previous exercise, do you think that training as a solution could be effectively applied to cover the gap you identified?” and “If yes, what kind of training solution would it be? And would this only solution be enough to cover the identified gap or some other measures might be needed?”

4.2.4. Training design

Let us now move to the next, second Training Process step, which is known as “Training design”, and with which we would develop in our participants the competency of designing training plans that meet the needs identified in the first Training Process step.

In the second Training Process step there are also quite a lot of details to be considered. We would start the discussion with the topic of Training goal setting, which we consider logical. Then we would proceed with such aspects like training principles consideration, with the related topic of training methods, and finish with identification of resources required for the Training.

So first of all, the Trainer should involve the participants in an active thinking and discussion process, which could be reached by just asking them to provide a definition of Training goal. After giving the participants a couple of minutes for formulating their own ideas, these ideas are to be focused on and critically analyzed in the group. And only after that we would recommend the Trainer to explain participants the idea that Training goals are meant to identify the particular knowledge, skills or competencies that the trainees will be able to apply at work after the training takes place.

And in order to let the participants practice in formulating Training goals they would be asked to define “What your target group would have as the outcome after taking part in the functional training you have been analyzing in the previous exercises?”

What could be also recommended to add within this discussion is the citation after Pynes, which we of course have examined in the theoretical Chapter of our thesis. This remark by Pynes concerns the quality of the Training target: *“The development of training objectives should be a collaborative process incorporating input from management, supervisors, workers, and trainers to ensure that the objectives are reasonable and realistic”* (Pynes 2009: 313). This is where an accent should be made by the Trainer, so that in the future our functional experts devote to this issue enough attention and time.

Within this discussion the Trainer might also remind participants of the SMART principle, which is applicable for every goal, however everybody should keep in mind that there are some specific and very critical requirements for the Training goal. From the first look it might seem quite simple, however, when it comes to the real need to develop a proper goal for a Training held by oneself, then, especially for an inexperienced Trainer, difficulties might appear. And only with practice and experience internal trainers would need less time and would be able to define Training goals reasonably and in a way that suits the whole organization and all stakeholders almost from the first attempt.

Before proceeding with the other specific topics like methods or resources, we consider it would be beneficial to briefly discuss the overall fundamental training principles, in which the Trainer’s role is crucial. We would like to note here that these principles

should be adhered to not only within the Training Design Process step, but also at least during the two following steps: Training Development and Training Delivery.

These are the basic training principles that Van Wart developed based on the major learning theories (behaviorism, social learning theory, cognitive learning theory, and adult learning theory), that we have also in detail discussed in the Theoretical Chapter. Among the “*seven fundamental training principles*” by Van Wart are the following: participants should be asked to define their personal goals in the beginning of the training, which would increase their involvedness; the training environment and the tasks should be as close to the real-life work environment as possible; participants should be given maximum opportunities to be active and to practice during the training; constructive feedback from the trainer and other participants is required for increasing training effectiveness; diverse and multifaceted methods, forms of activities and stimuli are necessary during the Training (Van Wart 2005: 284).

The Trainer should also note here that relying on this list of principles could help to increase trainees’ involvement, the meaningfulness of training in their perception, training transfer correspondingly, and hence training effectiveness overall. That’s why we consider these principles crucial and necessary to implement not only during one or couple of the Training Process steps, but starting from the Training design step and throughout the whole Training Process, till the last step – Training adaptation.

After this more general overview we would turn to providing an informational input on the techniques as Van Wart called it, or training methods/approaches. It would be important and strongly recommended that after or within providing this input the Trainer draws participants’ attention to the fact that no training approach/method is enough to be chosen as the only one for the whole Training, it’s always a very thoroughly thought through sequence of training methods, that makes the Training efficient. This thought was also more broadly discussed in the theoretical Chapter of this thesis.

For these purposes the Trainer could once again use the same strategy – first of all turn to the participants with the question “What kind of training methods do you know or may be even already implemented in your own practice as a trainer?” After posing this

question, the group would be directly asked to produce a list of training methods they know on a flipchart.

And following the completion of the list, most probably some discussions and questions may arise, or even doubts/arguments from some of the participants, which the Trainer of course has to facilitate and help the group to systematize. Then, depending on the situation, i.e. how full would the final list of training methods suggested by the group be, the Trainer has to make an informational input and with detailed explanations and challenging questions to the participants add the missing options.

And of course to underpin the freshly obtained knowledge and experience how all the aspects are working, we would offer the future trainers to practice them in the next exercise, with a possibility to receive peer feedback. This exercise, as it could already be understood, consists of two parts. In the first part our participants would be given ten minutes in order to individually design the structure of their trainings, i.e. create the Training Agenda (preliminary listing, prioritizing and building from all the topics to be covered an appropriate training structure) and also decide on the training method for each of the Agenda points – how would the material be delivered and in what way would the participants be able to practice on the topic.

For the second part of the exercise participants would be asked to divide into small groups – two to three people in one. In these small groups each of the participants would have to present to the others his/her Training structure and the training methods chosen, during this time the role of the rest would be to listen, analyze the suggested ideas, make notes and at the end give constructive feedback to the peer, which would help him/her to improve the training structure and at the same time won't be demotivating.

After that we would proceed with the final logical block within the second Training Process step, which is related to the identification of Training resources. Within this topic the Trainer should draw attention of the participants to the importance of adequate and realistic planning of all kinds of resources (investments of time, money, human resources) at the very initial steps of the Training Process. An accent should be made

here on the point that the required resources might be quite of a wide range and all of them have to be taken into consideration in advance.

Moreover, some buffer resources must be considered and added to the final cost sheet to be presented to the stakeholders and sponsors – this would be a guarantee that in case any unexpected costs arise, no additional approvals would be needed and the training would still take place. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to examine this topic in detail. The process could be arranged as it has been done with some previous topics: first participants are challenged with the task to create a list of all possible resources that might be required for conducting their training; after that the Trainer comes in with additional information, explanations and structuring the material.

Depending on the completeness of the discussion and the final list agreed on by participants, the Trainer should add several of the following resources, ex.: Trainer – who would be the trainer and how much time/money investments (depending on if it is external or internal trainer) it would cost the organization?; Participants – what is the target group, what are their experiences and expectations, how big should the group be?; Time – what date and time will the training start and how long would it last (for this of course the Agenda should already be available)?; Location – in what country, city, which building will the training take place? If transportation would be needed for the Trainer or participants and how would these costs be covered?; Room – how much rooms would be required for the Training? How should the room/rooms look like?; Equipment – What equipment and in what quantity would be needed in this room/rooms (computer, beamer, telephone, flipcharts, pin boards, markers, pens and papers, etc.)?; Training materials – what training materials are needed, who will develop them and who will make sure they are ready in time and available at the training?; Food – coffee breaks, lunch or may be a dinner required and who will take care of the organization?, etc.

And to conclude this Training Process step the following exercise aimed at developing the training resources planning/design skills of our participants would be offered to them. This would be an individual exercise, for which the Trainer would ask each of the participants to make a list of resources they consider necessary for their Training to take place. Participants should be also reminded to consider each of the resources category

discussed above and think if any additional resources might be required. One important remark to be done here by the trainer is that this list is supposed to be shown to the stakeholders and sponsors in order to get their agreement and support for the Training conduction. Participants will be given five to ten minutes to complete this task.

4.2.5. Training development

The next, third Training process step we would logically proceed with is called “Training Development”.

Let us first of all, within examination of this topic, turn to discussion of the critical aspects to be considered while developing the content of a Training program. The Trainer could start this topic with posing some challenging questions to the participants. First of all, the trainer should describe the situation like: “Imagine you have fully completed the first two Training Process steps and received appreciation and support from the stakeholders, management and sponsors. Now you are going to develop the content of your training, but before going to each and every detail, consider the overall level of your sources etc.”. Then, in case participants would require more concreteness, the following questions could be formulated: “When it comes to developing the content of your training, what sources of information would you appeal to?”, “Are these sources reasonable and proven?” or “May be you would need some consultations with other functional experts on some topics?”.

Moreover, the Trainer has to remind the participants that the training content should be balanced in terms of the reasonable proportions and correlations between informational blocks/inputs from the trainer, group discussions and other group work (exercises, simulations, etc.) and individual tasks aimed at practicing and developing the required competencies. What is also quite important to note here is that all of the logical parts listed above altogether work like one mechanism towards reaching the Training goal(s).

Within this discussion the Trainer could also mention that not all of these questions are equally valid or meaningful for all trainers. For example for functional experts the

question about getting consultation from content experts might be not that decisive (though they may still be willing to get some advice from their colleagues) like for full time trainers.

Within the discussion of different aspects related purely to the content, we would like to provide our future trainers also some guidance on the principles of structuring the content. The Trainer should once again underline that the information, which is better structured and adapted to the audience, would be better perceived and would have positive impact on training transfer. Therefore the next logical step in our Workshop would be discussion of the principles of effective sequencing of the material. The trainer should as usually ask the participants for their opinion and experiences in this context, and then provide some examples like: the terms and concepts, models (and some basic skills) that are fundamental and crucial in frames of the concrete training, should be presented to the participants in the beginning; the most simple and basic material should go first so that the more complex information is build on it and participants find the interlinks and correlations easier; and once again – after each informational input there should be interactive activities or exercises, so that there is a balance which improves material acquisition by the participants and allows them to practice and develop required competencies.

After that an exercise aimed at training their competencies of structuring training material and developing training content would be offered to our participants. This would be an individual exercise. For this exercise the Trainer would give our participants about ten minutes and would challenge them with the following questions and tasks: “Take your Training structure you have lately created and revise it”, “If you consider some improvements are needed, change the sequence of topics”, “Do you think the structure looks reasonable now? If yes, divide each of the topics into subtopics and write down in bullets which concrete content would you include there”, “Consider if there is a balance between informational blocks, exercises, etc.”.

One more of the sub-points to be taken into consideration within the discussion of the third step – Training Development, is Training materials development. It is obviously impossible to give any concrete recommendations on the content of Training materials within the limits of our Workshop as it is meant for functional experts in a range of

various areas. However, we would present our participants several basic principles that should be adhered to in order to produce efficient Training materials.

The trainer could in accordance with the “tradition” of our Workshop start with a structured discussion and pose the question of key characteristics of efficient Training materials to the participants. And after this discussion it would be necessary to give required specifications and clarifications. And finally, the trainer should provide the informational input to summarize and structure the discussion. The trainer is to list the four fundamental principles which are crucial for efficient materials: the language of the materials shouldn't be too complicated and the manner in which they are written should be structured and adopted to be easier understood by the participants; training materials shouldn't be massive, they are meant for reference and should be compact; they should be practical and it is important that required for the job information could be easily found; training materials should be very well structured and contain concrete solutions for work related challenges.

Finally the last informational block in this Training Process step devoted to the principles of media selection would be introduced to our future trainers. In this concrete case the Trainer is to present the information first and only after that a group discussion would be arranged. Just one question could be posed to the participants before the informational block and it is “What kind of media could be overall applied in a training?”

Following a short conversation the trainer should turn to the key principles that should be adhered to when choosing media for the delivery of a concrete information or instruction. There are two main principles: the first one says that there is a number of media with which one message could be delivered equally effectively; the second one says that effectiveness of the same media may vary for different target groups and in different situations, so only practice and experience will show which media works the best. The trainer is also to remind participants that the media is just a tool to express some content and the content itself is more significant.

And finally the last exercise would be offered to the group, namely a group discussion would be arranged in the format of a brainstorm. Participants will be asked to

brainstorm on the question: “For what purposes what kind of media could be effectively incorporated in a training?”. They will be given about seven minutes time in order to give ideas, summarize them on a flipchart first of all without any critics and comments, and finally for the analysis of these ideas and presentation of the outcomes to the Trainer.

4.2.6. Training delivery

Now we came to the fourth Training Process step, i.e. Training delivery. This step could be also called “implementation phase” or, as we have already stated in the second, theoretical Chapter of current paper, “the moment of truth” as at this step the quality of all the previous steps becomes evident.

The major aspects to be considered at this Training Process step could be grouped into three main logical blocks: methods of increasing the engagement of trainees; the second key topic would be questioning; and the last one – giving and receiving feedback during the training.

The trainer leading our Workshop should start with the first point, i.e. the trainers’ manner of Training material delivery and how to increase engagement of trainees. Within this discussion it would be meaningful to refresh the basic Training principles, the once that were developed by Van Wart and that have recently been addressed to in the Training Process step two – Training Design. The most relevant of the seven basic training principles when it comes to Training Delivery are:

- Actively involve the learner;
- Give feedback;
- Use a variety of techniques and stimuli.

Most of the other aspects were already discussed in the previous Training Process steps, now within the discussion on Training Delivery we will devote more attention of our future trainers to these three topics.

But before going into detailed examination of each of the above mentioned key topics, we would recommend the Trainer to discuss with our participants firstly the overall principles of effective Training delivery. The discussion could start either from questioning the participants or from providing informational input, and correspondingly the activity left would go second.

When presenting this block of information concerning the overall principles of effective Training delivery the Trainer could make an accent on the following aspects: the manifestation of training target as well as handling with participants' expectations from the training should be done right in the beginning; an atmosphere of understanding and trust, where participants would feel safe should be created (this would let them feel free and not being afraid of mistakes or criticism, instead would let them be actively involved in the tasks); the manner of explanations and the language of the Trainer have to be easy, understandable and structured; there should be clear logics and structure overall in the training, reasoned exposition of the material and links between different parts (between blocks of information, within them, between inputs from the Trainer and exercises/discussions); and the final principle to be mentioned here concerns questioning – it is necessary to challenge participants with questions as well as always ask them for questions from their side.

Afterwards within the discussion of these principles, the Trainer could ask the participants why they think these principles are important and what benefits they can bring. And of course the Trainer should provide his explanations and clarifications on all the points, except probably the topic of questioning, which we would recommend not to discuss in detail now, instead it would be suggested to wait a bit till the separate block on questioning within Training Delivery Process step will be examined.

Besides those aspects listed above, that could be called common sense and are oriented at organization of the material or describing the internal logics of the process, the future trainers should also be aware of the meaning of such external aspects, as for example mimics, gestures or voice quality, which accompany the training delivery process one way or another. Herewith we already come closer to the logical block devoted to increasing the engagement of trainees.

With this regard we consider it could be interesting and also useful for the future trainers if a discussion on this topic is conducted and they have a possibility to exchange experiences and get some insights. The following aspects could be discussed: the audial presentation of the material by the trainer (including the speed, volume etc.); the body language of the trainer (distance, body pose, arms flourishing, expression on the face, etc.); the way he is listening to the trainees, including the body language; the manner of answering the question he is being asked during the training.

The trainer should moderate this discussion so that the trainees finally understand that absolutely everything matters in the delivery process, or in other words in the “moment of truth”. This everything starts with the appearance of the trainer, his voice, his feeling of confidence in himself and in the training material (trainer’s passion about the topic usually motivates and inspires the participants), his respect towards and interest in the trainees (as our attitudes, state of mind, feelings are always felt by other people unconsciously). From the process point of view such aspects as interactivity, engagement of both audio and visual modes, variety of learning experiences, maximizing their similarity to the working conditions and showing how participants can apply everything being studied when they are back on the job – all these aspects help to engage trainees and therefore should be incorporated in the training delivery process.

After this discussion a turn to the second logical block within this Process step should be done, which is closely tight to the first one and was already mentioned several times above, this crucial topic is called “Questioning”. It should be explained by the trainer that it is a multisided phenomenon and it relates not only to the development of challenging questions for the trainees, but also incorporates such aspects like encouraging participants to ask questions, and also the trainers’ reaction towards these questions and answering them.

Within the discussion of this topic the Trainer should make an accent on the idea that questions are also a multifunctional phenomenon, during a training they serve to accomplish a range of functions. And the main of these functions should be listed and discussed with the participants: first of all, the Trainer asks questions to clarify if the information presented or an instruction provided is clear for the participants; possibility to ask questions is important for the participants in order to move on along the training

effectively without any “black spots”; challenging and even not very much challenging questions encourage participants for mental activity, critical thinking, active conversation, sharing of experiences, etc., and hence increase their overall activeness and involvement in the training; and last but very important role of questioning in a training is that they can turn into a tool for debriefing when it is needed, as a rule after some exercises or activities.

After this discussion in order to practice the questioning skills of our future trainers we would offer them a practical exercise. It would be a group exercise and the Trainer should first offer the participants to join the same groups they were in for the previous exercise. Each of the group members would have to choose one small topic (better subtopic) from the training Agenda he/she created recently. When the topics are chosen, the Trainer would challenge the participants with the following tasks: “Think on the content to be reasonable for presenting this topic in a training and how would you deliver it” and “Don’t forget about the means for trainees’ involvement, bring interactivity into your speech with the help of questioning”. Finally, each participant should present his/her mini-speech to the rest of the group. The Trainer must make a special emphasis on one more instruction: “While one of the group members is presenting his/her topic the rest should be actively listening, involved in the process by answering/asking questions if needed and what is also important – make notes and be ready to provide structured feedback to the speaker”. The time available for preparation should be about five minutes and then also five minutes time per participant would be provided for presenting the prepared material and receiving feedback from peers.

Upon the completion of this exercise we consider it would be the time to turn to the third, final logical block within the limits of the Training Delivery step, which is feedback. Having this fresh immersive experience as the first input on the topic “feedback” would serve the participants as the background and ease the acquisition of further on provided material.

The Trainer could start this topic from describing the essence of balanced feedback, what it consists of, how and why these aspects are important. And of course in the first place it should be explained that a balanced (or constructive, or efficient) feedback always consists of two aspects – appreciation and criticism, the secret is in the right

combination of both. But before talking about the algorithm for providing balanced feedback, the role of each of the aspects should be clarified. Appreciation shows what the person is already doing good, this charges the person with confidence and resources for future achievements, talking about training environment – it increases the motivation of trainees to take over new behavioural patterns back to job, strengthens the acquisition of new skills and competencies. And the second element – criticism also plays an important role for a balanced feedback because it points out weaknesses or mistakes. Moreover, if the criticism is constructive it also encourages the person to correct these downsides and even turn them into his/her strength.

Then the algorithm of providing balanced feedback could be analyzed. In this context the correlating theory – the principle of “sandwich” in giving feedback could be mentioned for illustration of the mechanism how these two aspects should be combined together. Moreover, the Trainer should emphasize that feedback would be constructive only in case if both of these aspects (appreciation and criticism) are present, notably that the feedback must begin and end with positive, encouraging words and that spaces for improvement and the right direction should be pointed out in the middle. In case any of these aspects is missing or they are provided in a wrong sequence, then the feedback could turn out to be demotivating, or misleading, or all in all useless.

Alongside with providing this block of information the Trainer should involve participants in a discussion, making sure that everything is clear to them and if not participants are asking questions, that everybody correlates their former experiences with the provided principles and realizes the gaps to work on and what improvements should be done in the future.

What we would also recommend the Trainer with regards to this topic is of course to refresh (and for some participants may be learn) the basic principles for providing constructive feedback. As it has been done previously, the Trainer could start with posing the respective question to participants. And then summarize this topic with the following messages: when providing feedback it is wrong deeds or behavior what should be discussed, not the personality or character of the individual (these are stable characteristics which are almost not possible to correct in contrast with behaviour); only concrete facts (achievements or fails) should be discussed, no generalizations or

unproved information to be appealed to; the messages, especially negative, must be expressed in personal form so that the individual understands that it is a subjective opinion, not a fundamental fact; it is important to provide feedback as soon as something happens or at least within a week after, otherwise things are quickly forgotten and it becomes obsolete and irrelevant; feedback should be provided in a trustful atmosphere and face-to-face, just between two people, nobody else should be present or interrupting it; and finally, what we have recently discussed in detail – the principle of balanced feedback should be adhered to.

The final activity in the Training Delivery step would be another group exercise. This exercise would allow our future trainers to compile, interlink and assimilate the material of all the first four Training Process steps, hence we would suggest the Trainer to pay special attention to the instruction for it. Firstly the participants would be divided into groups of three. Then they would have to choose only one of the three Training programs that each of them has previously developed. The tasks to complete in fifteen minutes would be the following: to design a Training flowchart; ensure that this flowchart is complete and detailed enough; to build up an Agenda that would be handed out to participants. In order to make the work on Training Flowcharts structured and detailed enough (but just within the limits of this exercise) it would be suggested to the participants to concentrate on the following points and create a table with such columns: timing; topic/subtopic; media required for the material delivery; practical exercises/discussions on this topic; and required resources.

This exercise is aimed at practicing one of the crucial skills of any trainer (valid for all the Training Process steps) – building up and implementing the logistics of the training, i.e. planning of all the training preparation activities, structuring the content and related experiences, defining the required resources.

4.2.7. Training evaluation

Having finished with the previous exercise and its debriefing, we would proceed with the examination of the fifth Training Process step, which is called “Training Evaluation”.

Working on this step we would also start with posing key questions, which would help us to arrange all the material within this Training Process step discussion into two main logical blocks: essential elements in Training Evaluation; and the evaluation methods.

In the beginning we would present our future trainers all the key elements to be considered when developing the Training Evaluation strategy. While providing this informational input on the key elements the Trainer of our Workshop should complement them with examples and encourage questions and comments from the participants.

The informational input our Trainer would provide with regards to the key aspects to be considered in the process of Training Evaluation strategy development is based on the list elaborated by Cascio and Aguinis (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372) that we have in detail examined in the theoretical Chapter. We would recommend our Trainer to make an accent on several points.

First of all Cascio and Aguinis advice to use “*multiple criteria*” when measuring the Training outcomes – the Trainer should provide explanations on the possible criteria for measuring the training results. The importance of studying not only “*the criteria themselves*”, but also “*the relationship between internal and external criteria*” should be emphasized by the Trainer. Further on the Trainer should come to the point that according to the authors, thorough experimental control throughout all the training steps is needed in order to ensure the validity of results of a training intervention. Another point the authors recommend to consider concerns the influence of different organizational factors on training outcomes (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 372).

The Trainer should at the end note that according to the authors, in order to develop an effective method of evaluating Training outcomes, trainers should consider all the

aspects from the list, so that the evaluation method incorporates as much of them as possible.

After this discussion the Trainer should turn to the second logical block within the Training Evaluation Process Step called “Evaluation Methods”, which makes it clear how the evaluation strategy could be implemented. The Trainer could first appeal to participants with the question “What evaluation methods you know or may be already applied in your trainings?” Following this discussion, in case any of the main evaluation methods will be missing, the Trainer should add them to the list created by participants. And as it has already been mentioned, the Trainer should once again focus attention on the fact that it is necessary to incorporate several evaluation methods in one training evaluation strategy to ensure validity of results.

In order to foster assimilation of this material by our future trainers and practicing their Training Evaluation strategy elaborating skills, as well as their skills in providing and receiving feedback we would offer them another exercise. The first part of the exercise would be individual and the participants would be asked to elaborate a Training evaluation strategy for the trainings they have been working on during our Workshop. They would also need to consider and list the concrete evaluation methods they would incorporate as well as resources required for the implementation. For all of these tasks our participants would be given five minutes.

For the second part of this exercise the participants would be divided into small groups of three and in these groups each of them would share his/her ideas with the others. After each presentation the evaluation strategies would be discussed in the small groups and feedback would be provided to the speakers.

All the materials discussed up to this moment are to be incorporated in the program of the first day of our Workshop. But the first day will not be finished for our participants just with the examination of the fifth Training Process step. Before our future trainers go home they will be given a home task to be prepared on the next training day. And their task would be to develop a detailed Action Plan (incorporating all the five studied during the first day Training Process steps) for the trainings in their functional areas they have already been working on during the first training day – so basically it would

be summarizing, reorganization and improvement of what has been already done. The participants should also be reminded to think on the delivery of these results in a proper manner using the freshly gained knowledge.

And of course the second day of our Workshop would begin with the presentation of Action Plans prepared by each of the participant. The timeframe for each of the presentations would be about ten minutes. Moreover, feedback sessions would be arranged after each participant presents his/her Action Plan. Feedback sessions would last about seven minutes (maximum ten minutes per person).

Half of the second training day (till lunch) will be devoted to these presentations, and if needed some time could also be spent for this after lunch, as it is important that each and every of our future trainers takes this opportunity to feel and act like a trainer. This simulation is the crucial moment within the whole Workshop, throughout which all of our participants would demonstrate all their strong sides and difficulties they have as trainers. They will also have the possibility to observe and learn from others, both from mistakes and from findings. Moreover, the feedback our future trainers will receive from the trainer leading the Workshop and from colleagues alike could and should be put into action and used for their development.

Only when all the presentations are over, the last two Training Process steps could be considered. These are the steps requiring least time to be examined within the limits of our Workshop as there are would be not much possibilities to practice them directly.

4.2.8. Update of training records

The sixth step in the Training Process to be examined after all the presentations are complete is called “Update of Training records”.

The character of this pre-last step, which takes place after the evaluation phase, is mostly administrative. Moreover it could not be discussed more or less concretely until there are Training Evaluation results, and correspondingly practiced within our

Workshop, hence it would take few slides and few minutes to give an overview on the essence of this Training Process step.

The Trainer should first of all turn to the participants with description of an imaginary situation that the Trainings on which they have just presented their Action Plans are already held, Training Effectiveness is measured and the results are available. And participants would be asked if they consider such state of affairs as a complete Training process or they would prefer to somehow use the data received for further improvements. The trainer should discuss with the group their experience, vision and suggestions on further actions possible after Training Evaluation data received overall as well as their suggestions on the process of training records update, its components and procedure.

Further on participants should be informed by the Trainer about the Training records update process, common practices and Continental corporate standards related to it. Some examples should be provided by the Trainer or small discussions could be organized after particular sub-topics if the participants feel the need for it.

In the beginning of providing an input on the “Update of training records” topic the Trainer should emphasize the importance of this Training Process step in the Training cycle, its meaning for the viability and effectiveness of any corporate Training in the future. The Trainer should also underline in the beginning that the measures related to Training records update are to be undertaken only after the Training Evaluation data is analyzed and respective conclusions are drawn.

Next the Trainer has to pay attention of our future trainers that according to corporate guidelines it is necessary to cooperate with representatives from the HR department as well as direct supervisors of the training participants. In the discussion of previous steps it was also mentioned that involvement of all the stakeholders from the very first Training Process step is crucial for the success of the training. Here we would recommend the Trainer to focus more explicitly on the role of HR in the whole Training Process and in the Update of training records as well. And of course it should be in detail explained what and how to communicate to the direct supervisors when the conclusions are available.

Then a discussion on concrete records to be updated has to take place, which are: training matrixes; qualification matrixes; individual training plans which are at the moment available at Continental in the form of online HRD tool with individual profiles, access to which have only the employees themselves, their direct supervisors and the responsible HR person. It could be also underlined that training theorists as well as practitioners recommend it, and that at Continental all the kinds of records to be updated are already for a long time available in standardized IT-based solutions.

And at the end of this Training Process step examination, the Trainer should highlight the importance of one more crucial measure to be undertaken, which is definition of further steps – not only for every individual participant of the training, but for the organization as well.

4.2.9. Training adaption

And finally we can turn to the examination of the very last Training Process step – “Training Adaption”. We consider it would also be worth mentioning why this phase should not be discarded from the Training cycle, this time we would launch this discussion with a citation.

As modern researchers we have recently appealed to Cascio and Aguinis put it, *“the real payoff from program-evaluation data is when the data lead to organizational decisions that are strategically important”* (Cascio and Aguinis 2011: 378). We consider that this idea, binding the pervious Training Process step with this last step “Training Adaption”, once again strengthens the necessity of further measures definition (both organizational and individual as it has been mentioned) and making maximal use of the efforts and resources invested in a training. In this context the Trainer could ask the participants to share their former experiences or ideas on how the process of taking and implementing concrete decisions and measures, including Training adaptations, works in Continental.

After this discussion the Trainer would go into detailed explanations on all the aspects related to the Training Adaption process. First of all it should be emphasized that it is necessary to revise the whole Training process, conduct an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses based on the results of Training Evaluation. Only then it would become clear what the gaps are and what adaptations should be done to the previous version of the Training Program.

The most essential feature of the last Training Process step – the aspect of continuance, almost endlessness – should not only be addressed, but really stressed by the Trainer of our Workshop. We believe that there is always place for improvement, even if the training was held for quite a lot of times, not talking about pilots or several initial rounds/runs. So depending on the maturity of the concrete Training process, improvements of different range and kind might be needed, they might be more or less extensive: for example, starting with some slight adaptations to the Training content or some adaptations to one-two Training Process steps and ending with consistent adaptations to all or almost all of the Training Process steps.

What we would also recommend our future trainers is to obligatory cooperate with the corporate HR within this context as they would provide consultations in case of questions arise as well as they might know functional experts from other functions that encountered and successfully dealt with similar difficulties.

We consider it is necessary and possible within the limits of our Workshop to provide our functional experts an opportunity to practice effective trainer skills relevant for the last Training Process step. And in the last exercise we would offer our future trainers the chance to adapt at least some Training Process steps, the three most extensive steps, so almost the entire job they did during the two days of our Workshop. Their task would be to analyze and write down what adaptations they would do to “Training Design”, “Training Development” and “Training Delivery” steps, based on the knowledge, experiences and feedbacks (as well as self-reflection) received during the Workshop. Our participants would be given about ten minutes time to complete this task.

And the very last steps to go through within our Workshop would be: request for a written feedback from all the participants, certificates handing ceremony and wrap up.

So after the last exercise participants would be given out the Feedback forms in paper format and would be asked to fill them in directly. When everybody hands in the filled in Feedback forms back to the Trainer, the ceremony of certificates handing delivery to each of the participants would start. This ceremony would be followed by the closing speech of the Trainer and this would be the end of our Workshop.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. The main findings

At this point we can admit that the overall target and main objectives of our thesis were reached within the limits of this paper. We reviewed currently available scope of literature on organizational training, training process and Train-the-Trainer method in particular. The basic concepts that underpin our study (like organizational Training, the Scope of Training, Development, Learning and Learning principles, Training Process, Train-the-Trainer, effective Trainer) were defined, scrutinized and analyzed. The essential elements and steps in the Training Process were examined in every detail in the theoretical part and considered in the empirical part of current paper. In such a way our first research question “What is the training process and what are the possible ways to optimize internal trainer education?” was answered. And finally, the main purpose of our study was achieved: we developed and presented the concept and content of our “Train the Trainer” Workshop, which could be itself considered as the main empirical finding within the limits of this thesis.

As it has already been mentioned, the content of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop was elaborated based on the data obtained from literature review. In order to structure the content in a meaningful way we appealed to the Continental Model of Training Process steps. In this connection the second most important empirical finding is that building the structure of our Workshop based on the Continental Model (of Training Process steps) helps to bring in clear logical structure, which is crucial for the learners to make sense and maximal use out of the Workshop. Furthermore, there is another effect: being taught the Training Process based on Continental Model, future trainers are automatically inspired to be consistent with the company’s internal requirements for the Training Process. Herewith we may consider our second research question “How could Continental Training process model be incorporated into a Train-the-Trainer Workshop concept?” answered as well.

In order to facilitate mastering of the material by learners the following standard layout was adhered to in each logical block of our Workshop: at the beginning of every step

some crucial questions are posed, followed by detailed explanations and recommendations; informational blocks are mixed with practical activities. In addition to this, as it has been planned, the competency based approach to trainer education was incorporated in our Workshop. We found the ways to make it happen, and this is the third most important finding coming out of the empirical part of this thesis. We enriched our “Train the Trainer” Workshop with the following three elements, aimed at developing our future trainers’ competencies: we introduced to them relevant and logically structured informational blocks to enhance their knowledge; we used every possibility to assign the participants practical exercises in order to provide them more experiences; we emphasized effective trainer characteristics and behaviours that lead to success to cultivate in them essential capabilities.

The very next logical step would be to run the first pilot of our Workshop. And only by the results of this pilot Workshop, even a whole series of pilots (or what would provide even more solid evidence – the stability of these results some month after the pilot Workshops), it would be possible to conclude if all the findings mentioned above are valid in the real-world organizational environment. Therefore, till that moment we would better call our empirical findings “presumed findings”.

However, if all or some of the abovementioned “presumed findings” are verified, we suggest that those findings would be applicable not only to the “Train the Trainer” Workshop for Continental, but also for other organizations, namely all kinds of organizations (private, public, NGOs etc.). This suggestion is based on the literature review and all the theoretical discussions introduced in the second chapter of current paper “Theoretical background”.

To conclude this paragraph, we could add that we did a lot of work within the limits of current research, but there are more steps to go in the direction we have just paved. In more detail this logical follow up of the conclusions and results achieved in current paper would be discussed in the following paragraph.

5.2. Suggestions for further research

With regards to suggestions for further research, first of all we would like to distinguish two major categories that could be conceived of. One of the categories concerns the inconsistencies and gaps we found out during the literature review in the theoretical part of this thesis. The other concerns further steps that could logically follow up the work that has been done in the empirical part of our paper. Let us briefly outline possible solutions for both.

During the review and analysis of currently available scope of reasoning and findings by scholars and practitioners alike, we encountered some more or less major inconsistencies and gaps. For example, Training Process models are very diverse, based on completely different criteria and hard to compare and systemize. It would be beneficial if a research aimed at systematization of Training Process models existing is conducted in the future. Going a little bit further, an attempt to create a logical, well-thought and consistent model, which will reflect different dimensions of the process (like temporal, task-oriented, etc.), is needed.

Another topic could be distinguished that needs to be scrutinized in the future and this is the Train-the-Trainer. Until now this was mostly the concern of practitioners dealing with particular real-life demands of some industry or service as a rule (such as forestry or alternative energy services, for example). More statistically verified data on Train-the-Trainer practices exists in research in some specific areas like medical care or elder care. However, this is obviously not enough, methodologically consistent research with a broad perspective is needed.

One more area that requires researchers' attention in the future is the Trainer personality. A variety of lists with effective trainer characteristics is existing, however, some authors (there are other examples) seem just to list those characteristics that appear to be of importance from their experiences, even not trying to classify them. This subjective approach should give a way to overall objective data gathering methods and their statistical analysis in the future even in such a "soft" topic like Trainer personality.

Now let us concern the possible follow-up and further research within the topic we worked on in the empirical part of our paper. First of all, it is necessary to run some pilot sessions of our “Train-the-Trainer” Workshop. This would let us receive the feedback and tune the contents if needed or delivery methods of the Workshop if there are corresponding indications. Moreover, based on the results obtained after conducting a series of pilot Workshops, so defined in the previous paragraph “presumed findings” would be either confirmed or rejected. In the second case we would have to develop another hypothesis or a number of them and of course arrange another set of pilot Workshop in order to test them.

After this stage, the real implementation stage would follow, within which we would assess the effectiveness of the Workshop with the methods defined in the Workshop Concept description, in the previous chapter. The results from these evaluations would provide foundations for further organizational decisions on the implementation, the scope of it and so on. These results would also contribute to decisions on individual employees, for example certification or career path of functional experts, or training plans of line employees (as obviously new training programs would be implemented by functional experts). If appropriately documented and consistently analyzed, all these data could contribute to the field of study on “Train-the-Trainer” topic.

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APPENDIX 1. Presentation to be shown at the “Train-the-Trainer Workshop”



When	What	When	What
Day 1		Day 2	
09:00	Welcome & Agenda	09:00	Welcome Back
09:15	Self Introduction & Icebreaker	09:10	Presentations + Feedback
09:30	Training Process Step 1. TNA	09:55	<i>Coffee Break</i>
10:00	Exercise	10:10	Presentations + Feedback
10:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	12:00	<i>Lunch</i>
10:45	TPr. Step 2. Training Design. Input 1.	13:00	TPr. Step 6. and Step 7.
11:15	Exercise	13:30	Exercise
11:45	TPr. Step 2. Training Design. Input 2.	14:45	Wrap up & Written Feedback
12:15	Exercises	15:00	The END
12:50	<i>Lunch</i>		
13:50	TPr. Step 3. Training Development		
14:15	Exercises		
14:45	TPr. Step 4. Training Delivery		
15:15	Exercises		
15:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>		
16:00	TPr. Step 5. Training Evaluation		
16:30	Discussion, Exercise & Homework		
18:00	End of Day 1		

Objectives

This Workshop is aimed at developing the following competencies:

- › Identification of training needs in an organization/department;
- › Design of training plans that meet the training needs identified;
- › Developing a training program based on the training plan;
- › Adequate delivery of the training program to the target group;
- › Evaluating the training effectiveness (including trainer skills/performance and training content itself);
- › Making adaptations to all the previous steps if needed, based on the evaluation data.

Definition of Training

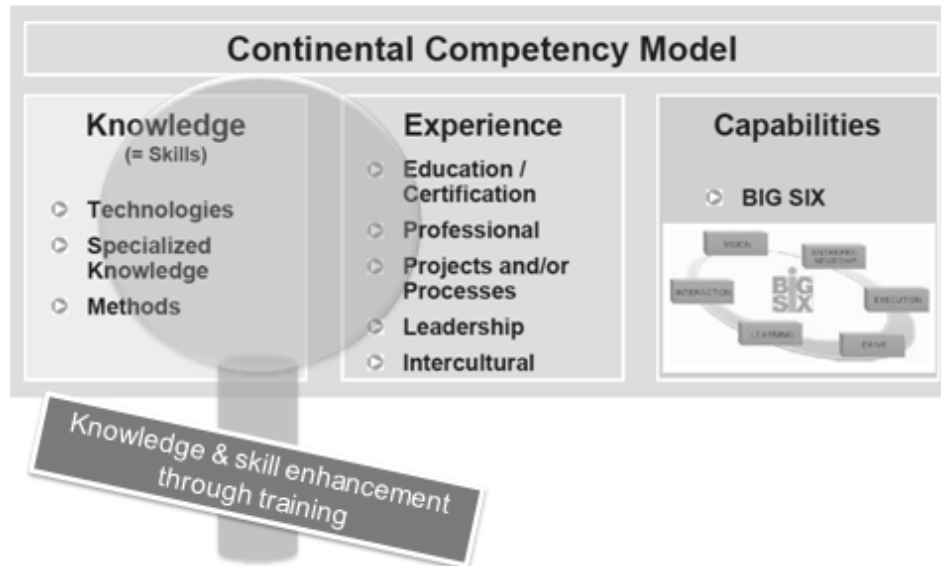
Training could be understood as:

an organization's planned effort to facilitate employees' learning of job-related **competencies**, that include *knowledge, skills, or behaviours* that are critical for successful job performance.

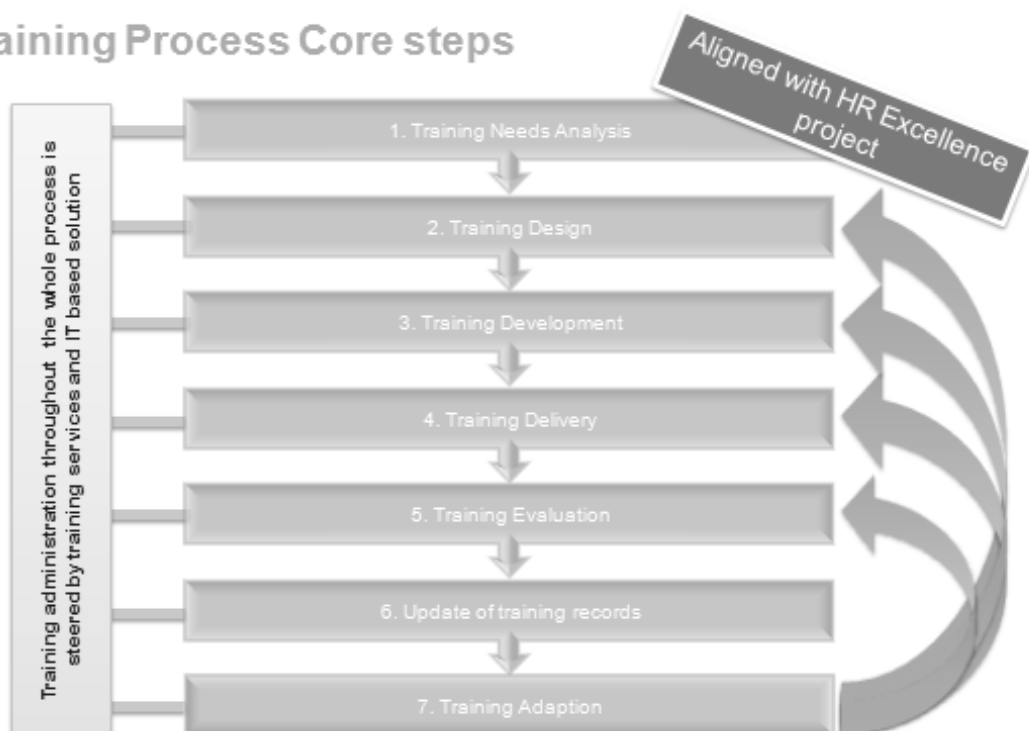
The **purpose** of training is to support the achievement of organizational goals by increasing the necessary **competencies** of its employees.

Scope of Training

› **Knowledge + Experience + BIG SIX Capabilities = Competencies**



Training Process Core steps



Step 1.



Training Needs Assessment: Why?

Four main reasons why needs analysis must be done before training programs are developed:

- › To identify specific problem areas in the organization;
- › To obtain management support;
- › To develop data for evaluating the effectiveness of the training program;
- › To determine the costs and benefits of training (Brown, J., 2002: 569-570).

Why do employees learn?

- › Adult learners usually feel the need to learn when they are ready to develop, advance in some aspect related to their job
- › Hence they are target-oriented in learning and expect the outcomes to be applicable in their daily business
- › They are mostly internally motivated internally, by their own internal rewards

Data collection methods

Some methods for collecting the data during the training needs analysis:

- › Talk to or ask your target group to fill in a questionnaire aimed at clarifying their experiences, demands and expectations
- › Involve other experts who have held internal trainings
- › Consult with the stakeholders of your training in order to clarify their expectations of the training outcomes and KPIs
- › Make sure you consider all company internal policies and procedures related to training

Exercise

Think of a training program that needs to be developed in your functional area.

- › Now try to analyze the training needs.
- › What data is already available to you?
- › What data will you have to figure out?
- › What methods would you employ to collect the missing data?

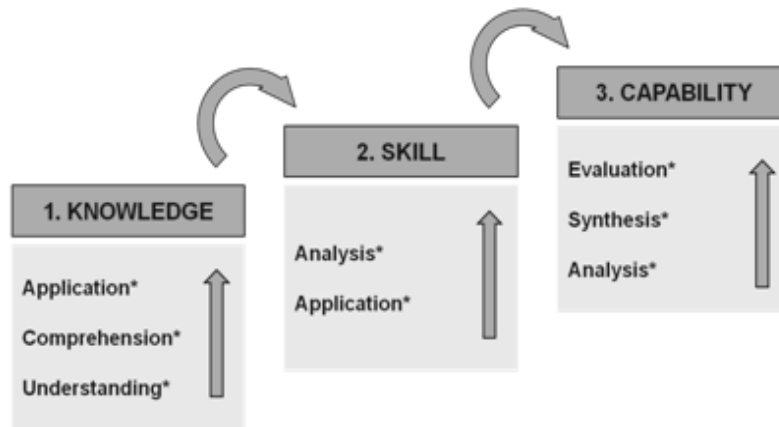
You have 15 minutes.

Would Training be the right solution?

- › What gaps could be covered by training?
 - ⇒ Knowledge, skills, and capabilities
- › What gaps could not be covered by training?
 - ⇒ Technical or organizational matters, ex. lack of resources, lack or inconsistencies in policies or procedures

Training Solutions Effectiveness

- › Training solution has to be selected based on training needs (Knowledge, Skill, Capability)



Discussion

Let us answer the following questions:

- › Could Training as a solution be effectively applied to solve the learning needs you have identified?
- › If yes, what kind of Training solution would it be? Is it Conventional, Instructor-led training or not?

Step 2.



Training Goal

- › A **training goal** identifies what the trainees will be able to **do** at the end of a training.

⇒ Define what the participants will be able to do as the result of taking part in your training?

- › "The development of training objectives should be a collaborative process incorporating input from management, supervisors, workers, and trainers to ensure that the objectives are reasonable and realistic" (Pynes, J. E., 2009: 313).

Training Design: basic training principles

In order to increase the training effectiveness and transfer of training back to work, it is necessary to consider basic training principles when designing the training program.

Seven fundamental training principles by Van Wart are the following:

- › Foster the participant's goal setting
- › Increase the similarity of training to the work environment
- › Use underlying principles
- › Increase the organization of the material
- › Actively involve the learner
- › Give feedback
- › Use a variety of techniques and stimuli (Van Wart, M., 2005: 284).

Some training methods

- › **Interactive input from the trainer:** detailed clarifications with discussions and questions from both sides – the trainer and participants.
- › **Group Exercises:** several people answering questions or solving problems together.
- › **Role-playing:** asking participants to play out some close to the reality cases.
- › **Simulations:** putting participants in some scenarios similar to their working life.
- › **Games:** interactive activities in which participants are applying, testing and improving required skills.
- › **Surveys:** asking participants to answer some relevant questions in written form (might be pre- and post-testing).

Excercise

Design a general structure of your training:

- › What are the main topics to be covered? Leave space after each point of your agenda
- › Fill each of the empty spaces with the most appropriate method, which will provide participants opportunity to practice on the topic

You have 10 minutes.

Now divide into small groups:

- › Each participant presents his/her Training structure and suggests methods
- › Others listen, make notes, give feedback, discuss

Training resources

When designing a training course it is essential to plan and take care of all the required resources in advance.

- › Trainer: Is there a suitable trainer available? Internal or external? Costs?
- › Participants: Who will be the audience and how big the group should be?
- › Time: When will the training take place and how long will it last? Would it be a one-time experience or it would be arranged in several steps? What would the agenda look like?
- › Location: Where will the training take place? Is one room enough or more required?
- › Room: How should the room look like and the furniture be arranged there?
- › Materials: Who will develop training materials and who will take care that they are ready for the training?
- › Equipment: If a beamer, computer, flipchart, markers, papers and pens, name tags, etc. needed?

Excercise

Make a list of resources required for your Training:

- › Consider all the kinds of resources discussed
- › Would anything else be important to consider for your training?

You have 10 minutes.

Step 3.



Developing Content

Some basic questions to ask yourself when developing the content of a training:

- › Is all the information 100% proven or should I consult with some experts?
- › Does the training program and the practical exercises appear to be sufficient to reach the training goal?
- › Is there a balance of inputs, interactive experiences and individual practice?

The sequence of tasks

How should the tasks and their elements be structured to foster the acquisition of training material?

- › Key concepts, definitions and basic skills should be explained and trained early enough.
- › Complexity of the material should be increasing gradually throughout the training, so that the advanced material is introduced in the end.
- › After each logical block of trainer's input some interactive activities and exercises should follow to practice the skills being developed in the training.
- › Too complicated and unlikely to be acquired concepts should be eliminated.

Exercise

Filling in the Training structure with content.

- › Take a new look at the Training structure you have previously designed
- › Revise and improve the sequence of topics and tasks
- › For each topic, starting from the first one, define subtopics and concrete content you will present to your participants
- › Have you included enough information and interactive activities/exercises?

You have 10 minutes.

Developing Training materials

Basic principles for producing efficient Training materials :

- › Training materials should be written in an easy to perceive manner and understandable language.
- › They should act as supporting material, which is complementary to the training content and hence be compact and easy to take away as reference.
- › Training materials are designed with practical focus, so that they would quickly remind and support necessary job-related skills and knowledges.
- › Training materials should serve as manuals, be well structured and provide algorithm for fulfillment of concrete tasks.

Media

There are two major principles to consider when selecting media to deliver the content of a training:

- › The same message could be equally effectively delivered with different media
- › Don't be afraid to experiment, modify and improve, only practice check will show which media is more suitable for concrete audience and situation

Remember:

the message incorporated in the media and the final outcome – this is what matters most of all, not the media itself

Group discussion

- › Brainstorm on the question:

What kind of media could you as Trainers incorporate in your Training in order to achieve the training goal?

- › Summarize your answers on a paper/flipchart.

You have 7 minutes.

Step 4.



Training Delivery

When delivering the training, the following principles should be adhered to:

- › Ask your participants for their expectations and clearly state the training goal in the beginning, this will help to evaluate the outcomes afterwards;
- › Create trustful and friendly atmosphere (never judge or demotivate), encourage participants to be active;
- › When providing informational inputs and instructions for exercises do it in simple and understandable language;
- › Underpin the logics of the training by building connections between logical blocks and material within them, between inputs and practical experiences or discussions;
- › Challenge your audience with questions and encourage the participant to do so as well to increase interactivity.

Questions

The key functions that questions fulfill during the training are:

- › Asking questions help the trainer to make sure that participants understood the material and if the trainer is asked – clarify difficult moments;
- › Questions provoke discussion, reasoning and critical thinking in participants;
- › They increase involvement and activeness of trainees;
- › If posed after practical exercises or role plays questions serve as a debriefing tool.

Exercise

Join the sub-group you were in for the last Exercise.

- › First of all, each of the group members should pick one small topic from your functional area
- › Think how should you deliver the content and formulate instructions if needed
- › Add some interactivity in the content delivery, i.e. some relevant questions
- › Present your topic to the other members of your group

You have 5 minutes for preparation, 5 minutes per person for delivery.

Feedback

Appreciation is important

- › Increases motivation
- › Confirms the participant that he is moving in the right direction and in this way promotes confidence

Criticism is important

- › Makes the participant aware of his mistakes
- › Constructive criticism helps the participant to develop and avoid such mistakes in the future

Providing Feedback

- › Talk about the situation and behaviour of the person in it, not about his/her identity or personal attributes;
- › Speak in "I-form", this shows that it's your personal opinion, not the eternal truth;
- › Be as precise and as concrete as possible, don't talk in general, ex. "You are always late";
- › If possible, provide feedback immediately after the event takes place;
- › Make sure that the feedback is provided individually, without any other witnesses;
- › A balance of constructive criticism and appreciation is important.

Exercise

Join a group of three people.

Choose only one Training that any of your group members was working on.

- › Design a Training Flowchart for the selected Training
- › A convenient way to do it could be by creating a table with five columns:
 - 1) Timing; 2) Topic/subtopic (informational input); 3) Media (supporting the material delivery); 4) Practical exercise (method, instruction); 5) Resources/equipment required.
- › Is there enough detail to allow a trainer to use this Training Flowchart to deliver the training program?
- › Elaborate an Agenda for the participants

You have 15 minutes

Step 5.



Training Evaluation: essential elements

Essential elements to be counted in measuring of Training outcomes:

- › Use of multiple criteria, not just for the sake of numbers, but also for the purpose of more adequately reflecting the multiple contributions of managers to the organization's goals.
- › Some attempt to study the criteria themselves – that is, their relationships with each other and with other variables. The relationship between internal and external criteria is especially important.
- › Enough experimental control to enable the causal arrow to be pointed at the training program.
- › Provision for saying something about the practical and theoretical significance of the results.
- › A thorough, logical analysis of the process and content of the training.
- › Some effort to deal with the “systems” aspect of training impact – that is, how training effects are altered by interaction with other organizational subsystems (Cascio, W. F., & Aguinis, H., 2011: 372).

Exercise

- › Elaborate an Evaluation strategy for your Training, which you would be able to complete in real-life (when and what evaluation method you would use?)
- › What material would you elaborate for implementing it? What resources you need?

You have 5 minutes.

- › Join a group of 3 people
- › Discuss each Evaluation strategy and provide feedback to others: 5 minutes per person

Homework

- › For your Training develop a detailed step-by-step **Action Plan** (starting from TNA methods you will use and ending with your evaluation strategy), including the contents, logistics and Agenda
- › Tomorrow we will start with your Presentations!
- › Do not forget to demonstrate the essential delivery skills when presenting

Presentations of Action Plans

Each of the participants has maximum 10 minutes to present his/her Action Plan.

Task for the audience:

- › While one of the participants is presenting you observe, evaluate based on the principles discussed yesterday and write down your comments
- › Feedback sessions take place after each presentation: 7 minutes maximum

Step 6.



Update of training records

Let us assume that we have measured the Training effectiveness and received the data.

Is it the **end** of the Training cycle?

The answer is: Definitely **NO!**

We should make use of the efforts spent for evaluation.

Update of training records

Once the Training evaluation data has been analyzed and conclusions are made, the following measures are to be undertaken:

- › Cooperate with HR and direct supervisors of the participants;
- › Update records (e.g. qualification matrix, individual training plan);
- › Define further steps, both for the company and for individual employees;
- › Training records should preferably be available in a standard IT-based solution.

Step 7.



Training Adaption

As modern researchers put it,

“the real payoff from program-evaluation data is when the data lead to organizational decisions that are strategically important”

(Cascio, W. F., & Aguinis, H., 2011)

Training Adaption

Adaption refers to *continuous review and improvement* of the Training process.

The course design process is dynamic, not static.

In the process of Adaption consider:

- › Based on documented evaluation from employee/trainer, training design (content, delivery, etc.) has to be improved for future rounds, of course only in case corresponding elements of the Training program appear to be inconsistent;
- › Cooperate with HR, training responsible;
- › Improvements/adaptations should preferably be documented in a standard IT-based solution.

Exercise

Based on the feedback you received during two days of our Workshop from other participants and the trainer, and your own experiences/self-reflection, prepare a list of adaptations that you would make to the following steps of your Training:

- › Training Design
- › Training Development
- › Training Delivery

You have 10 minutes.

Feedback on our Workshop

- › Please fill in our Workshop Feedback form