

**The Effect of Training and Development on Employee Attitude as it Relates to Training  
and Work Proficiency**

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### **Abstract**

One of the fundamental issues facing businesses, organizations and institutions today is conflict management. An important aspect of that management is human resource development, which plays a key role in conflict management and diffusion. It is incumbent upon training and development professionals to design, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of their programs in reducing disputes in workplace performance.

This study explores the relationships between training experiences and attitudes and attitudes about perceived job proficiency. In a sample of 237 full-time salaried/exempt and hourly/ non-exempt employees from one academic institution and three businesses in the states of Maryland, Delaware and Arizona, we find a direct relationship between one's positive training experiences and attitudes and one's proficiency. In this study, 86.8% of those who had updated training had the most positive attitudes towards training ( $\text{Gamma} = .293, p < .05$ ). Furthermore, 80% of those who had negative training attitudes also had negative views on their proficiency ( $\text{Gamma} = .465, p < .000$ )

## The Effect of Training and Development on Subsequent Employee Attitudes as it Related to the Importance of Training and its Effects on Work Proficiency

Any institution of higher learning or business whose goals are to survive and prosper in this present day diverse and regressed economy has found it imperative to invest in ongoing training and development to improve proficiencies in production as well as to acquire the greatest return in investment of human capital (Knoke & Kalleberg, 1994). Although this area of training effectiveness seems paramount, and although training is an integral part of the employer-employee relationship, Knoke & Kalleberg (1994) suggest "...direct evidence about company training practices based on representative samples of diverse employing organizations is almost non-existent". Furthermore several authors have suggested that training is most extensive only in establishments which operate in complex market environments. (Rowden & Conine, 2005; Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008). Additionally Rowden and Conine (2005) have indicated that there is limited research on human resource development in small and mid-sized businesses. According to these authors, most people believe that small businesses do little, if any, development of their workers. Moreover, Rowden and Conine (2005), cite *Training Magazine*, which annually conducts research on the training industry in the United States, as not even attempting to contact businesses with fewer than 100 employees. Additionally, in their annual research sample, only 16% of their sample consisted of companies between 100 and 500 workers. In general, little human resource development occurs in small businesses (Hill & Stewart, 1999). In summary, a slowly growing number of authors are currently doing more research in the areas of training and development and its effects on employees that we have not seen in past literature.

Cheng and Ho (2001) also discuss the importance of training and its impact on job performance:

“While employee performance is one of the crucial measures emphasized by the top management, employees are more concerned about their own productivity and are increasingly aware of the accelerated obsolescence of knowledge and skills in their turbulent environment. As the literature suggests, by effectively training and developing employees, they will become more aligned for career growth – career potential enhances personal motivation” (p. 22).

To illustrate Cheng and Ho’s (2001) position, Constantino and Merchant (1996) commented that “...both training and education are necessary components for a successful conflict management system...” (p. 22). One might clearly imagine how failure to provide training and education by the organization could result in conflict between employer and employee. Such conflict could potentially lead to any number of complicated scenarios, including but not limited to formal complaints by the employee which eventually become actual law suits against the organization, all of which could cost the industry time, energy and money. When universities or businesses withhold opportunities for training and development, they also fail to demonstrate an understanding of how to identify organizational conflict. According to these same authors, all organizations should have a conflict management system in place. (Constantino & Merchant, 1996). When conflict is manifested in the organization by clusters of employees who are dissatisfied, this group dissatisfaction state of mind can result in frenzied chaos, dissatisfaction, grievances and turmoil in the organization. Again, having a conflict management system in place would potentially be able to short circuit such a disruptive process. Clearly it is extremely important that employees benefit from ongoing employer provided training. “One of the most frequently encountered human capital development interventions is training...” (Campbell & Kuncel, 2001 p. 278). In order to enhance job performance, training skills and behaviors have to be transferred to the workplace, maintained over time and generalized across contexts (Holton & Baldwin, 2000). Consequently, specific job training is a complicated matter and has been the focus of much of the training literature (Chiaburu & Teklab,

2005). More specifically, in addition to the exact nature of job training, training is seen as relevant to fostering a positive relationship between learning satisfaction and the effectiveness of applied learning (Liu, 2002; Wang, 2001). As an aside, even though authors have suggested that training programs are vital to organizations (Knoke & Knalleberg 1994; Liu, 2002; Wang, 2001) training programs are often the first to go” (Young, 2008). This trend to cut training programs during poor economic times seems short-sighted, if in fact, training does affect job proficiency and relieves workplace conflict.

Moreover, several authors have also written about the importance of staff development. Both formal and informal training opportunities are thought to provide a forum for the development of talent. When talent is fostered and nurtured, competitive advantages in performance are untainted (Becker & Gerhard, 1996; Bowling, 2007; Davenport, 2006; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Furthermore, the organizational commitment or “...the relative strength of an individual’s identification and involvement in a particular organization” (Pool & Pool, 2007 p. 353) depends on effective training and development programs. According to these authors, organizations demonstrating keen insight make provisions for satisfying the training needs of their current workforce. Cheng and Ho (2001) have indicated adequate training produces marked improvements in employee communication and proficiency of performances as well as extending retention time. Moreover, when programs target communication skills with co-workers, there are significant increases in profit as well as a greater number of reported positive working relationships that are formed. Employees with good communication skills gather more information concerning procedures and technologies related to job performances, thus assuming greater accountability and subsequent responsibility, both of which affect improve proficiency (Adams, 1989; Gordon, 1977). Also, training and education have been shown to have a



significant positive effect on job involvement, job satisfactions and organizational commitment (Karia & Asaari, 2006).

Similarly, Ahmad & Karia, (n.d.) have emphasized the relationship between training and attitude as it relates to working with others. Employees with positive attitudes become stakeholders in the process and job accomplishment is of a higher priority. Furthermore, successful organizations achieve a partnership between workers and management. The partnership includes participation in teamwork activities and continuous learning application. The reported findings further suggest that an employee's participation in decision-making and problem solving develops organizational trust (Anschutz, 1995).

Corporations and businesses need to grow and innovate continuously, pursue sustained development, and cope with rapid change in their external environments as well as increasingly competitive international markets. Hence, organizations need to strengthen or expand the knowledge base, skills, and abilities of their employees. For this purpose, education and training must be incorporated into a systematic and formal system if the goals of employees and corporation are to be attained (Liu, 1999; McGehee & Thayer, 1961; Wu, 1991; Yang, 1974).

Training, as defined in the present study "is the planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinants of individual job performance" (Chiaburu & Teklab, 2005). Training is related to the skills an employee must acquire in order to improve the probability of achieving the organization's overall business and academic goals and objectives. Positive training offered to employees may assist with reduction of anxiety or frustration, which most employees have experienced on more than one occasion during their employment careers (Cheng et al., 2001).

According to Tsai, P, Yen, C.Y., Huang, L. and Huang, I. (2007) employees who are committed to learning showed a higher level of job satisfaction that has a positive effect on their

performance. Moreover, Locke defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from a positive appraisal of our job or job experiences (Locke, 1976). The literature suggests that commitment results from adequate training and development for successful job completion and an increase in job performance (Tsai, et al. 2007).

In addition, the larger the gap between the skills required to perform a task and the actual skills available for performing a task, the greater the lack of job satisfaction and the greater the increase in employee turnover within the organization. Conversely then, not having the skills to perform a job correctly can set up employees for failure and put the business at a less than competitive disadvantage. The resulting high turnover would predict the need for even more training that would then have a direct impact on the bottom line of any business.

Moreover, poor performance reviews due to inadequate job training can produce employee dissatisfaction and conflict. Although there is no direct link in the literature between training and job satisfaction, Rowden & Shamsuddin, (2000) and Rowden & Conine (2005) argue that the most thoroughly trained employees will better satisfy the needs of their customers and employees.

In summary, although the literature strongly suggests a direct relationship between job training and job performance as well as job training and employee attitudes, there is little empirical support for this suggestion. Clearly there is a need to provide such empirical support. Moreover, conflict between employee and employer as a result of failure to provide for training needs has served as a secondary motivation for conducting research in the area of conflict management systems. The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between training and development and its perceived impact on employee attitudes and perceived job performance proficiencies. If in fact, a gap exists between training attitudes and job

proficiencies, it is likely that the perception of job training is not adequate. This gap could then result in conflict between the employees and employer. The existence of such conflict would, therefore, create the need for developing and implementing a conflict management system.

The present study elaborates and extends previous research by exploring participant attitudes in an academic institution as well as in three businesses, one of which is a small to moderate size business that is usually overlooked in other research studies. The hypotheses in this study specifically address the relationship between employees with training experiences who have positive attitudes about training (training attitudes), and those positive training attitudes are perceived to improve job proficiency.

## **Methodology**

### **Procedures**

Using convenience sampling, four organizations were recruited through personal contacts which business professionals including one university and three for-profit businesses. Participation by the academic institution was approved by the Director of Human Resources. The approving and granting authority for the companies was respectively the Director of Operations, Executive Advisory Board Committee, and President.

The strategy behind the choice of this particular target population was to determine cultural variations between academic and for-profit businesses by assessing attitudinal differences in relationship to training and development and by comparing the result of these assessments. The exempt/salary and non-exempt/hourly staff at the academic institution were selected based on past history of training and development if the Human Resources Department had offered training opportunities. The university's Human Resource Department provided the primary investigator a list of all exempt/salary and non-exempt/hourly employees. A survey

developed by the primary investigator, along with other supporting documents, was sent to each employee on the list.

Each company that was contacted also reported ongoing training initiatives and offerings similar to those offered by the academic institution in the past. The participants representing the three companies were determined by their availability and willingness to volunteer to participate in the survey. In accordance with the guidelines of the Human Subjects Committee, participant anonymity was maintained.

Participants were provided a packet containing a participant instruction sheet, a risks/benefits analysis sheet, a disclosure form, a consent form, a survey form, and a self-addressed stamped envelope addressed to the primary investigator.

Once data were returned to the primary investigator, all consent forms were separated from the original survey, placed in a designated folder, and locked in a file cabinet housed in the primary investigator's locked office. All returned surveys were coded and the results entered into a statistical system package (PASW). All data had been run and completed, and the results of the surveys are made available upon request.

The initial sample for this study totaled 487 full-time exempt/salaried and non-exempt/hourly employees. The total number of surveys returned was 237, yielding a response rate of 48.6 %. Each participating business had ongoing training initiatives and offerings similar to those of the academic institution. All participants for this study were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. No compensation was given in exchange for participation. This study was approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). (See Appendix A)

The sampled organizations include a university in Maryland with 380 exempt and non-exempt employees, an Arizona Corporation's subdivision of 50 employees, a Delaware company's department with 34 employees, and a Maryland Corporation with 60 employees. Random sampling techniques were employed to arrive at a representative sample of each division of interest.

### **Survey Development and Testing**

The survey for this study was created by the author as part of a graduate course requirement. The survey was composed of 20 items, 16 of which were rated on a 4 point Likert - type scale ranging from 1= Fully Disagree to 4 = Fully Agree. Three remaining items were demographic information (gender, age and job status). The final item was an open-ended question that asked participants about preferred training protocols. This final item was analyzed separately and did not directly address the hypotheses.

Two different reliability measures were generated to test the survey instrument used for this research. A Chronbach's Alpha test of reliability was used to establish the internal reliability of the scaled variables as a whole. The Chronbach's alpha score derived was .915 (see Table 1) surpassing the minimum of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978).

A second reliability measure called the Guttman Split-half Reliability Coefficient Statistic was computed to assure reliability of the scale items. The test is designed to compare the items in the first half of the scale with the items in the second half of the scale. The obtained Guttman value was .815, suggesting strong reliability of the instrument (See Table 2).

Instrument validity tests were conducting using experts and hypotheses testing. A Psychologist, human resources representative, business vice – president, and business employee reviewed the survey to establish face validity. All four agreed that the questions on the survey

appeared to measure what they were intended to measure. Construct validity using hypothesis testing assesses the correspondence between the concept itself and the empirical indicators of the concept. Concurrent validity also uses hypothesis testing to show differences between groups about whom we know differences exist. Each of the hypotheses below were tested using Chi-Square and Gamma statistical procedures.

**Hypothesis 1 ( $H_1$ ):** Those employees with training experiences have positive attitudes about training (training attitudes).

**Hypothesis2 ( $H_2$ ):** Positive training attitudes are perceived to improve job proficiency.

## **Data Overview**

### **Sample Demographics**

The sample for this study was composed of 63.4% women and 36.6% men (See Chart 1). In this sample 55.7 % of the participants ranged in age from 19 to 49, and 44.3% were over the age of 50 (See table 3).

The sample for this study was composed of 124 (52.8%) of exempt/salaried employees and 111 (47.2%) of non-exempt/hourly employees See Table 4). Chart 2 reveals the distribution between the four groups who participated in this study. The largest participating group in this study was composed of the University in MD with a 56.22% response rate. The second participating group in this study was the MD Corp with a response rate of 15.02%. The third participating group of this study was the DE Division with a response rate of 14.59%, and the last participating group of this study was the AZ Corp with a 14.59% response rate (See Chart 2).

## **Independent Variables**

In order to best discover demographic factors that may affect one's training attitudes and perceptions on job proficiency, it is necessary to look at whether or not gender, work status, and type of business are related to the dependent variables.

Additionally several single survey items were identified as potentially affecting one's views on perceived job proficiency. These are: Updated Training – item #6 on survey instrument Effective Coaching – item #8, Meaningful Coaching – item #9, Solicits Input – item #12, Training Attitudes is a scale created using questions 1-5 on the survey instrument (see items listed below)

Q1: Effective Tools: On-the-Job training is an effective tool for learning new skills.

Q2: Communications: Developmental training should include effective communications, team building, and coaching.

Q3: Levels: Development training should be afforded to all levels and /or positions.

Q4: Growth and Advancement: Training and development is important for job growth.

Q5: Advancement: Training and development is important for potential advancement.

## **Dependent Variables**

The following two variables, Training attitudes and proficiency that are described above were identified in the hypotheses as the dependent variables in this study. Proficiency is also a scale using items 6, 8, 9 and 12 from the survey.

Q6: Updated Training: I receive updated training which is required for my position.

Q8: Adequate Training: My supervisor conducts effective coaching sessions with me.

Q 9: Meaningful Coaching: My coaching sessions are meaningful and motivational.

Q 12: Solicits Input: My supervisor solicits my input on issues and opportunities.

In terms of construct validity the results of Tables 8 and 15 both suggest that the concepts (training attitudes and perceived job proficiency) do in fact measure what they are intended to measure.

Table 8, on Updated training by training attitudes has a moderately strong Gamma score of .293 that is statistically significant at  $p < .05$  ( $H_1$ ).

Table 15, on training attitudes and perceived job proficiency also has a moderate Gamma of .465 with a  $p < .000$ . ( $H_2$ ).

Both tables also provide evidence for achieving concurrent validity. In  $H_1$  it was expected that those with more updated training would favorably view more training. (See Table 8, to confirm this and see details above).

$H_2$  predicted that those with strong positive attitudes towards training would also have greater perceived job proficiency. This was confirmed in Table 15 (See details above).

## Results

Analyses of gender by training attitudes, work status by proficiency, and business by proficiency were computed. In Table 5, gender by training attitudes resulted in the finding that women (73.6%) had significantly greater positive training attitudes than did men (60.0%) with Chi sq of 6.519, df 2,  $p < .05$ . The results of the work status by proficiency (See Table 6) resulted in the findings that 25.6% of non-exempts/hourly employees disagreed that they received adequate job training compared to 12.4% of the exempt/salaried employees (Chi sq = 6.310, df 2  $p < .05$ ). The results of the business by proficiency (see Table 7) showed that the DE Division (71.9%) compared to AZ Corp (31.2%) and the MD Corp (53.3%) had significantly more participants who often agreed that training provided enhanced job proficiency (Chi Sq = 20.757, df 6  $p < .005$ ).

Gamma tests assessing the strength of the association of the cross tabulated data between the following eight comparisons were measured: Updated Training by Training Attitudes, Updated Training by Job Proficiency, Effective Coaching by Job Proficiency, Meaningful Coaching by Job Proficiency, Meaningful Coaching by Training Attitudes, Solicits Input by Job



Proficiency, Solicits Input Training Attitudes cross tabulation, and Training Attitudes Proficiency cross tabulations.

Table 8 shows the relationship between updated training and training & training attitudes of those who were fully updated on training, 86.8%, had positive training attitudes compared to only 65.6% of those who disagreed with being up-to-date in training.  $\text{Gamma} = .293, p. < .05$  reveals that this is a moderate, significant relationship between the variables.

The crosstab of updated training by proficiency shows (see Table 9) a significant and high strength of association between updated training and proficiency. Eighty – three point three percent fully disagreed that they had updated training and disagreed that they are proficient, compared to the 7.7% that fully agreed to having updated training and disagreed to being proficient. This shows a significant and strong relationship between updated training and proficiency ( $\text{Gamma} = .592, p. < .000$ ).

Table 10 shows that 71.4 % of those who fully agree that they had effective coaching also fully agree that they feel proficient compared to 13.0% who fully disagreed that they had effective coaching. This shows a high and significant correlation between effective coaching variables and effective coaching ( $\text{Gamma} = .619, p. < .000$ ).

The crosstab between meaningful coaching by proficiency (see Table 11) reveals that 88.9% fully agree they had meaningful coaching also fully agree that they felt proficient compared to 6.7% who fully disagreed that they had meaningful coaching and fully agreed that they were job proficient. This shows a very strong significant relationship between meaningful coaching and perceived job proficiency ( $\text{Gamma} = .728, p, < .000$ ).

In Table 12, those who fully agreed that they had meaningful coaching, 94.1%, also had very positive training attitudes compared to 64.9% of those who disagreed about meaningful

coaching, yet had positive training attitudes reveals a moderate and significant relationship (Gamma = .252,  $p < .10$ ).

Table 13 of solicits input by proficiency demonstrates that 82.4% fully disagreed that their supervisor solicits input from them which lead to less agreement (disagree) on proficiency compared to 1.6% who fully agreed that supervisors solicited their input and disagree that it positively impacted on proficiency. This shows a significant and very strong relationship between bosses who do not solicits input and employees who do not feel proficient (Gamma = .845,  $p < .000$ ).

The crosstab of solicits input and training attitudes (see Table 14) cross tabulation reveals that 83.1% fully agreed that having supervisors solicit input effects training attitudes. Moreover, 52.9% who fully disagreed with solicits input, however, fully agreed that it impacts on training attitudes. This shows a moderate and significant relationship between employers who solicit input and employee attitude about training (Gamma = .344,  $p < .005$ ).

The training attitudes and perceived proficiency crosstab (see Table 15) showed that 80.0% disagreed that they feel positively about training and also disagreed that they feel proficient compared to 13.9% who fully agreed that training was positive and disagreed that they felt proficient. The relationship between training attitude and perceived proficiency showed a moderate and significant correlation (Gamma = .465,  $p < .000$ ). See Table 15.

The final analysis analyzed the answers to the open-ended question that solicited requests for potential training topics. A total of 87 participants (22.89% of the total sample) answered the open-ended question: "I would like to have the following training offered." Common themes were soft skill (i.e., leadership, effective communication, mentoring, etc.) and technological training. Out of 87 responses, 47 participants (54% of participants) requested more soft skill

training such as leadership, effective communications, and mentoring. Thirty-six participants (41.3%) requested more technological training such as computer programming and software applications. Two participants (2.29%) responded as not having the available time for training due to budget cuts/constraints. One participant (1.14%) requested “any form of training,” and 1 (1.14%) participant indicated the need for more “real-world” training. Some participants provided more than one response and others did not indicate a preference so the percentages will not add up to 100%.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the first hypotheses, those employees with training experiences have positive attitudes about training (training attitudes), and the second hypotheses that positive training attitudes are perceived to improve perceived job proficiency. The results of this study support the hypotheses. The Gamma calculations found strong significant associations between those employees who fully agreed that they had updated training and subsequent positive training attitudes, as well a feeling of job proficiency. The results also showed those employees who fully agreed that they received effective coaching and those who fully agreed they received meaningful coaching felt they showed greater job proficiency.

These results agree with those of Belker & Gehard, (1996), Bowling, (2007), and Davenport, (2006), who also suggest that the quality of training has a lot to do with employee feelings of importance in the job.

The results of the questionnaire strong a significant relationship between bosses seek employee input and employees’ feeling of strong job proficiency. This finding also supports the literature that discusses the impact of job training on psychological variables such as motivation

and commitment (Chang & Ho, 2001; Liu, 2002; Pool & Pool, 2006; Wang, 2001), organizational trust (Anschutz, 1995) and willingness to go above and beyond to meet their job requirements (Rowden & Conine, 2005).

Although this study did not directly assess organizational “conflict” it seems clear that because training is seen to be so important in forming positive attitudes that may further lead to job proficiency, and not receiving adequate training is associated with a feeling of reduced competency, it seems very reasonable to predict that poor training could result in poor attitudes about performance which then could lead to poor performance. This finding opens up employees to an entire set of potential consequences, one of which is conflict in the work place environment. Such consequences could include poor performance review, lack of organizational trust (because the employee feels unfairly evaluated because he was not adequately trained in the first place), and the beginning of a downhill spiral leading to possible termination and subsequent cost to the organization.

Clearly, where job training is concerned, poor fits between employee and job/organization result in eventual performance gaps (Harrison, 2005) emphasizing the need for conflict management systems to be in place in any and all organizations.

Surprisingly, the research did not find significant differences in attitudes between the younger and older employees. However the research did find significant differences between men and women with respect to overall positive training attitudes. Women, significantly more often than men, held positive attitudes toward training. It was not known if these results suggest that women felt that training is more beneficial to them than to men because of the current technical nature of current job demands being placed on women( who may not feel prepared for these demands), or if women are more supportive of extra educational demands than are men in

general. Research might want to address this issue in the future, particularly, if one finds that training programs will need to take gender into account as they are being developed.

Although exempt/salary and the non-exempt/hourly employees fully agreed that training was related to job proficiency, when they disagreed, they disagreed significantly. Specifically, non-exempt/hourly employees disagreed more strongly that attitudes were related to job proficiency. Although an interesting finding, more interesting is the finding that both groups fully agreed at equal levels that attitudes were related to job proficiency, again supporting the original hypotheses.

The finding that the Delaware division significantly more often agreed that attitude leads to proficiency than did the other three organizations may be explained by the fact that those employees had just completed a job training, which may have affected their position.

Interestingly, in Table 7, the highest fully agreed ratings that attitudes affect proficiency come from the university in Maryland and the Arizona Corporation. This author was told that in the Arizona Corporation, job training occurs very regularly, and for the first three probationary years, employees are expected to pass proficiency tests following each training session in order to stay employed at the company. An excellent study for future research might investigate whether job training that requires passing proficiency tests is seen as more valuable than training not having this requirement.

In summary, this author researched the hypotheses that adequate job training is related to positive attitudes about job proficiency, and that having adequate job training is related to positive attitudes about job training. The results have supported the hypotheses. However, given the nature of the research, there are several limitations to this study.

Survey research has many problems associated with its use. Surveys are self reported instruments, and as such, may not be completely valid or reliable. However, it can be reported that a strong internal consistency of the instrument was confirmed by using both Chronach's Alpha and Guttman's Splite-half Coefficient. Both of these measures provide reliability information when instruments use formats that generate ordinal data.

A major limitation to the interpretation of the results has to do with the instrument (See appendix 4). A close examination of Table 4 shows the direction provided between questions 5 and 6, "If you have not had training, please skip questions 6-12". This directive probably should not have been included on this questionnaire because it may have eliminated all those respondents who have never been trained, leaving only respondents who have had some training, effective and ineffective, meaningful and non-meaningful. Given that industry trains very often, and given that the return rate for the three for-profits organization was 100%, the missing data came from the Maryland university sample. Only 130 questionnaires out of 380 were returned from the Maryland university. Omitting this directive may have extended the sample from those who had some type of training to include a category for those who had never received training, making the comparison more meaningful. Based on the present finding, one may never know how those "never having training" felt about their competence.

Moreover, it may have been better to have used a true 7 point Likert scale, allowing the author to make finer discriminations in the findings.

Additionally, the survey could have included more useful demographic information questions, as well as questions related to conflict. Specifically, respondents could have been asked if they felt they received the right amount of training, and if that having the right amount of training ever resulted in a negative performance consequences. Respondents could also have

been asked questions related to how conflict is mediated in their workplace, and how important it was to them to have an actual conflict management system in place in their place of work.

Even though the study could have been methodologically improved in several ways, it is still important to state that this study is one of only a few attempting empirically to answer questions related to the importance of job training. Furthermore, this study is also a first attempt at trying to assess the real importance of adequate job training to the employee, and the far reaching complications of the ensuing conflict in our present day work environments when competitive and meaningful job training is unavailable. Chris Young of Rainmaker Group, Inc. has noted that the “training and development budget is often the first to go and the last to come back” (Young, 2008). Organizations undergoing fiscal challenges may target employee training as the first cost cutting measure. If we follow the collective wisdom of successful businesses, conflict management system professionals, and the results of this empirical research, one must conclude that effective and ongoing training and development should be the final cost cutting measure. Training and its positive effects on employee attitude and proficiencies create long lasting stakeholders and could serve as the binding force for business success during trouble times.

When understanding the connection between employee attitudes about competence and potential organizational conflict, a conflict management system maybe the first line of defense to assess and assist in the analysis of the fits and gaps when dealing with the organizational culture of attitude and training.

Cheng and Ho claim that as a result “ungraded” employees look for improving their job performance, as well as enhancing their future career prospects. Obviously, when employees transfer their positive learning content to their job, a win-win solution for both organizations and

employees can be accomplished (2001). Therefore when employees are provided better and more intensive training, the result is an increase in self-worth, and greater job performance proficiency. If the employee's perception is one of having sufficient training and development, it may also serve as a catalyst for enhancing the employee teaming effect.

Future research could build on this study's results by measuring quantitatively the actual increases in job performance as well as the actual changes in job proficiency attitudes. This could be accomplished in a simple pre-test, post-test design using a control group not having had the training as a comparison group. It would be valuable to connect perception to actual changes in job performance that can be quantified and measured. Attitude studies like this one are limited to representing what the person would be feeling should he/she be in that position, or try to recall what he/she felt when she actually was in that position. More actual behavioral data of this nature might convince upper level management to invest in employee development programs.

When examining the open-ended question on the survey that asked about preferred training programs to be offered, most responders requested training on soft skills, such as leadership, values, effective communications, etc. and technology training such as, computer literacy, computer updated software programs, etc. These results of the open-ended question strengthen our position that employees require and desire training that will make them competitive in this highly demanding market.

In summary, the present survey was conducted to assess a relationship between attitudes about training and perceived subsequent job proficiency. The data that were collected supported our hypotheses that job training is correlated with positive feelings about job training and that positive job training predicts positive attitudes about job proficiency. Limitations to this study



have been considered and suggestions for future research have been provided. Clearly, empirical research in the area of expected job training and resulted job proficiency and potential organizational conflict is only in its infancy. This study has been an important first step in this line of research.

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**Appendix A- Statement of Approval Committee on Human Research-Addendum**

Salisbury

**Statement of Approval  
Committee on Human Research**

Date: May 25, 2010

To: Debra Truitt

Title: ADDENDUM: The More Important Training and Development is to a Person, the More Likely They will be a Team Player with their Co-Workers and a Better Employee to the University

The Committee on Human Research has considered the above application and, on the basis of available evidence, records its opinions as follows:

- (1) The rights and welfare of individual volunteers are adequately protected.
- (2) The methods to secure informed consent are fully appropriate and adequately safeguard the rights of the subjects (in the case of minors, consent is obtained from parents or guardians.
- (3) The investigators are responsible individuals, competent to handle any risks which may be involved, and the potential medical benefits of the investigation fully justify these studies.
- (4) The investigators assume the responsibility of notifying the Committee on Human Research if any changes should develop in the methodology or the protocol on the research project involving a risk to the individual volunteers.

The application is considered to be: \_\_\_\_\_ Exempt, X Expedited, \_\_\_\_\_ Full Committee provided that no names are used.

Sincerely,

George Whitehead 

George Whitehead, Chair Committee on Human Research

## Appendix B- Survey

### Survey

Please be as detailed as possible when answering each question. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the following questions or feel that any questions do not apply to you, please feel free to leave the response space blank and move on to the next question. All the questions are in relationship to your work environment at this academic institution.

Once you are finished with your responses to the survey questions, please insert the survey sheet in the provided self-addressed envelope.

Rate your responses according to the scale provided. Please check the appropriate box that applies.	Fully Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	Not Applicable
1. On-the-Job training is an effective tool for learning new skills.					
2. Developmental training should include effective communications, team building, and coaching.					
3. Development training should be afforded to all levels and/or positions.					
4. Training and development is important for job growth.					
5. Training and development is important for potential advancement.					
<b>If you have not had training, please skip questions 6-12.</b>					
6. I receive updated training which is required for my position.					
7. The current training offering is not adequate for my professional needs.					
8. My supervisor conducts effective coaching sessions with me.					
9. My coaching sessions are meaningful and motivational.					
10. I feel valued at my job.					
11. I feel that I am part of the team.					
12. My supervisor solicits my input on issues and opportunities.					
<b>If you have not had a mentor, please skip questions 13-14.</b>					
13. Having a mentor is important to me.					
14. I meet with my mentor on a scheduled basis.					
<b>Rate your responses according to the scale provided. Please check the appropriate box that applies.</b>	<b>1 – 2 years</b>	<b>3-9 years</b>	<b>10-19 years</b>	<b>20 + years</b>	
15. Other than professional trade skills the last training course I attended was:					
16. I have been at my current job for:					
<b>Rate your demographics according to the scale provided. Please check the appropriate box that applies.</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>			
17. I am					
	<b>19-49 years</b>	<b>50+ years</b>			
18. My age is:					
	<b>Exempt/ Salary</b>	<b>Non-exempt/ Hourly</b>			
19. My employment status is:					
<b>Please answer the following question.</b>					
20. I would like to have the following training offered:					
© Debra L. Truitt					

**Table 1-Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistic**

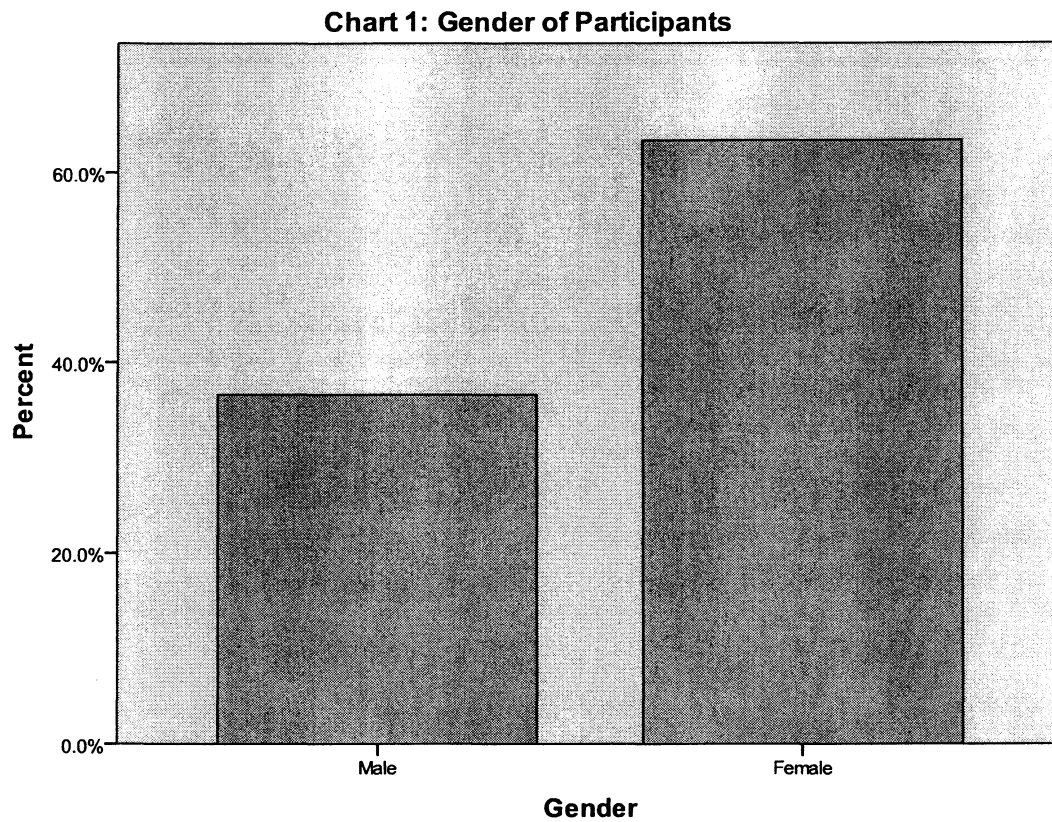
Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.915	14

**Table 2-Guttman Split-half Reliability Statistics**

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient	.815

- a. The items are: On Job Training, Include In Development Training, Train All Levels, Important for Job Growth, Important for Advancement, Updated Training, Training Not Adequate.
- b. The items are: Effective Coaching, Coaching is Meaningful, Feel Valued At Job, Feel Part Of Team, Supervisor Solicits Input, Having A Mentor, Meeting With Mentor.

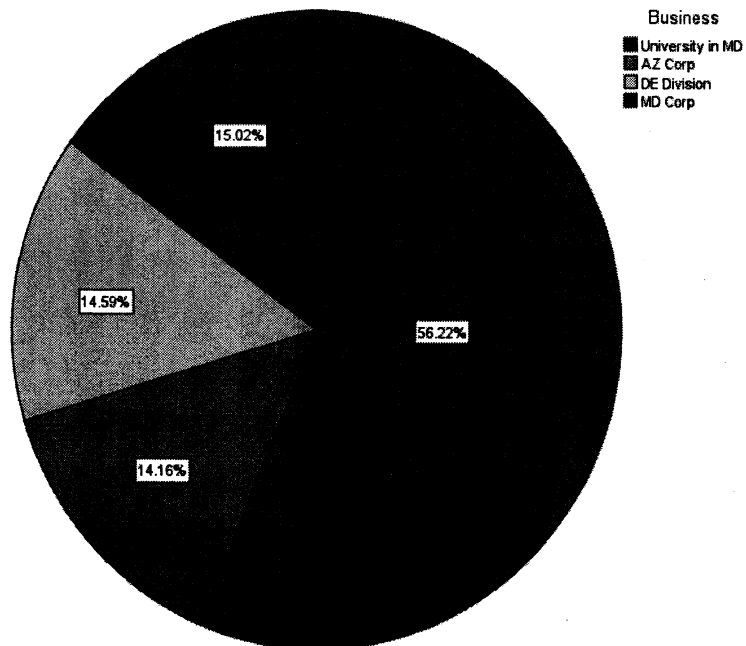


**Table 3-Chart 1: Gender of Participants****Table 3: Age Distribution**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	19-49 years	131	55.7
	50+ years	104	44.3
	Total	235	100.0
Missing	99	2	
Total		237	

**Table 4-Chart 2: Business Distribution****Table 4: Demographic of Participants Exempt/Salaried and Non-Exempt/Hourly**

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Exempt/Salaried	124	52.8
	Non-Exempt/Hourly	111	47.2
	Total	235	100.0
Missing		2	
Total		237	

**Chart 2: Business Distribution**

**Table 5 -Gender by Training Attitudes**

Crosstab: 5 Gender by Training Attitudes						
			Training Attitudes			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Gender	Male	Count	2	32	51	85
		% within Gender	2.4%	37.6%	60.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	6	31	103	140
		% within Gender	4.3%	22.1%	73.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	8	63	154	225
		% within Gender	3.6%	28.0%	68.4%	100.0%

Chi Sq = 6.519, df 2,  $p < .05$

**Table 6- Work Status by Proficiency**

Crosstab: 6 Work Status by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Work Status	Exempt/Salaried	Count	12	50	35	97
		% within Staff Status	12.4%	51.5%	36.1%	100.0%
	Non-Exempt/Hourly	Count	23	34	33	90
		% within Staff Status	25.6%	37.8%	36.7%	100.0%
		Total		Count	35	84
% within Staff Status	18.7%			44.9%	36.4%	100.0%

Chi Sq = 6.310, df 2, p &lt; .05

**Table 7-Business by Proficiency**

Crosstab : 7 Businesses by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Business	University in MD	Count	16	36	44	96
		% within Business	16.7%	37.5%	45.8%	100.0%
	AZ Corp	Count	6	9	13	28
		% within Business	21.4%	32.1%	46.4%	100.0%
	DE Division	Count	3	23	6	32
		% within Business	9.4%	71.9%	18.8%	100.0%
	MD Corp	Count	9	16	5	30
		% within Business	30.0%	53.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	34	84	68	186
		% within Business	18.3%	45.2%	36.6%	100.0%

Chi Sq = 20.757, df 6, p < .005

**Table 8-Updated Training by Training Attitudes**

Crosstab: 8 Updated Training by Training Attitudes						
			Training Attitudes			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Updated Training	Fully Disagree	Count	3	1	9	13
		% within Updated Training	23.1%	7.7%	69.2%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	1	10	21	32
		% within Updated Training	3.1%	31.3%	65.6%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	1	25	53	79
		% within Updated Training	1.3%	31.6%	67.1%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	0	5	33	38
		% within Updated Training	.0%	13.2%	86.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	5	41	116	162
		% within Updated Training	3.1%	25.3%	71.6%	100.0%

Gamma = .293,  $p < .05$

**Table 9-Updated Training by Proficiency**

Crosstab: 9 Updated Training by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Updated Training	Fully Disagree	Count	10	1	1	12
		% within Updated Training	83.3%	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	8	19	5	32
		% within Updated Training	25.0%	59.4%	15.6%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	12	44	27	83
		% within Updated Training	14.5%	53.0%	32.5%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	3	10	26	39
		% within Updated Training	7.7%	25.6%	66.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	33	74	59	166
		% within Updated Training	19.9%	44.6%	35.5%	100.0%

Gamma = .592, p &lt;.000

**Table 10-Effective Coaching by Proficiency**

Crosstab: 10 Effective Coaching by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Effective Coaching	Fully Disagree	Count	15	5	3	23
		% within Effective Coaching	65.2%	21.7%	13.0%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	13	25	10	48
		% within Effective Coaching	27.1%	52.1%	20.8%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	5	40	24	69
		% within Effective Coaching	7.2%	58.0%	34.8%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	0	6	15	21
		% within Effective Coaching	.0%	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	33	76	52	161
		% within Effective Coaching	20.5%	47.2%	32.3%	100.0%

Gamma = .619, p &lt;.000



**Table 11-Meaningful Coaching by Proficiency**

Crosstab:11 Meaningful Coaching by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Meaningful Coaching	Fully Disagree	Count	10	4	1	15
		% within Meaningful Coaching	66.7%	26.7%	6.7%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	12	19	6	37
		% within Meaningful Coaching	32.4%	51.4%	16.2%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	5	45	22	72
		% within Meaningful Coaching	6.9%	62.5%	30.6%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	0	2	16	18
		% within Meaningful Coaching	.0%	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	27	70	45	142
		% within Meaningful Coaching	19.0%	49.3%	31.7%	100.0%

Gamma = .728, p &lt;.000

**Table 12-Meaningful Coaching by Training Attitudes**

Crosstab: 12 Meaningful Coaching by Training Attitudes						
			Training Attitudes			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Meaningful Coaching	Fully Disagree	Count	3	2	11	16
		% within Meaningful Coaching	18.8%	12.5%	68.8%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	0	13	24	37
		% within Meaningful Coaching	.0%	35.1%	64.9%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	1	22	48	71
		% within Meaningful Coaching	1.4%	31.0%	67.6%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	0	1	16	17
		% within Meaningful Coaching	.0%	5.9%	94.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	4	38	99	141
		% within Meaningful Coaching	2.8%	27.0%	70.2%	100.0%

Gamma = .252, p &lt; .10

**Table 13-Solicits Input by Proficiency**

Crosstab: 13 Solicits Input by Proficiency						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Solicits Input	Fully Disagree	Count	14	1	2	17
		% within Solicits Input	82.4%	5.9%	11.8%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	14	11	0	25
		% within Solicits Input	56.0%	44.0%	.0%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	7	50	16	73
		% within Solicits Input	9.6%	68.5%	21.9%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	1	15	47	63
		% within Solicits Input	1.6%	23.8%	74.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	36	77	65	178
		% within Solicits Input	20.2%	43.3%	36.5%	100.0%

Gamma = .845, p &lt;.000

**Table 14-Solicits Input / Training Attitudes Cross Tabulation**

Crosstab: 14 Solicits Input by Training Attitudes Cross tabulation						
			Training Attitudes			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Solicits Input	Fully Disagree	Count	3	5	9	17
		% within Solicits Input	17.6%	29.4%	52.9%	100.0%
	Disagree	Count	0	8	17	25
		% within Solicits Input	.0%	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	2	25	46	73
		% within Solicits Input	2.7%	34.2%	63.0%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	1	10	54	65
		% within Solicits Input	1.5%	15.4%	83.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	6	48	126	180
		% within Solicits Input	3.3%	26.7%	70.0%	100.0%

Gamma = .344, p &lt;.005

**Table 15-Training Attitudes / Proficiency Cross Tabulation**

Crosstab: 15 Training Attitudes by Proficiency Cross tabulation						
			Proficiency			Total
			Disagree	Agree	Fully Agree	
Training Attitudes	Disagree	Count	4	0	1	5
		% within Training Attitudes	80.0%	.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Agree	Count	13	30	10	53
		% within Training Attitudes	24.5%	56.6%	18.9%	100.0%
	Fully Agree	Count	17	51	54	122
		% within Training Attitudes	13.9%	41.8%	44.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	34	81	65	180
		% within Training Attitudes	18.9%	45.0%	36.1%	100.0%

Gamma = .465, p &lt;.000