

Trainer's Article By See Teck Meng



TITLE

Competency-Based Learning and Assessment

Competency comprises knowledge, skills or attributes that are required to perform activities in a given role or fulfill a particular job function effectively. Competency-based training is concerned with outcomes, not the time spent in learning. Thus with a competency-based learning approach, a learner or participant is deemed to be trained or competent if the participant can perform the outcomes desired. This is against conventional practice to consider the person trained only at the end of a defined training programme. Everyone has the capacity to learn, it simply happens at a different rate and maybe in different ways for each one of us.

Assessment of workplace performance is a feature of everyday working life. You collect evidence or information about activities, compare them against the workplace requirements or industry guidelines and make a judgment as to whether the activity has been carried out according to the standard required. Workplace assessment is about judging whether a person has reached the appropriate level of competence. The skills and knowledge may have been gained in a number of ways, such as through experience in their current or previous job, life experiences, accredited or informal training courses. Competence means being able to operate in a real world situation. Competency-based assessment is the gathering and judging of evidence in order to decide whether a person has achieved a standard of competence. The main features of a competency-based assessment system are:

- Competency-based assessment is *criteria based*. This means that learners are assessed not in competition against others. They are assessed against a standard criteria or benchmark. The criteria used may be from a set of competency standards, learning outcomes or other performance outcomes.
- Competency-based assessment is *evidence based*. This means that decisions about whether a person is competent are based upon evidence demonstrated, produced, gathered or provided by the person to be assessed.
- Competency-based assessment is *participatory*. The person to be assessed is involved in the process of assessment. Competency-based assessment supports the underpinning principles of adult learning in that there is no pass or fail; rather a person is assessed when they believe they are ready to be judged for their competence. A judgment of competence can be based on a range of assessment activities. Assessor and the person being assessed have the scope to negotiate the form of assessment activities.

Moving to a knowledge-based economy, education and training have become progressively more crucial in enhancing the employment prospects of a worker. The concept of lifetime skills can no longer be tenable. As the economy moves up the value chain, workers are expected to continually acquire new skills and knowledge to remain employable. Human capital will become the key competitive advantage in a knowledge-based economy. As the pace of change will rapidly increase due to globalisation and technology, workers must be highly agile and be able to quickly acquire and apply new skills, knowledge and technologies to continuously create new value, product and services.

See Teck Meng

Mobile : (65) 97696813
Email : tmsee2000@yahoo.com.sg