
Training Needs Analysis and Performance Consulting Course

23 – 27 August 2027
Geneva





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Programme Summary

Training needs analysis and performance consulting form the subject of this one-week training course for heads of learning and development at advanced level, culminating in a costed annual learning plan built from diagnosed needs. Many training plans are still compiled from course requests, leaving the real causes of weak performance untouched. The approach moves from strategic alignment through three-level analysis to cause diagnosis, prioritisation and planning. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in training needs analysis and performance consulting.

The Business Case

A learning function that cannot show why each programme exists struggles to defend its budget. Rigorous needs analysis links every learning investment to a defined performance gap, and performance consulting routes non-training problems to the managers who can fix them. The result is a plan that sponsors can challenge line by line and that directs limited funds to the gaps with the greatest business consequence.

- Learning Spend Alignment: Improves as each funded programme traces back to an evidenced organisational, role or individual gap.
- Time to Competence: Shortens as new and promoted staff receive targeted learning rather than generic catalogue courses.
- Avoidable Training Requests: Fall as environmental causes are routed to the right owner.

Principles and Evidence Base

- McGehee and Thayer Three-Level Model: Organisational, task and person analysis structure the diagnostic sequence of Sessions 1 to 3.
- Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model: Environmental and individual factors are tested in Session 3 to separate training from non-training causes.
- Mager and Pipe Performance Analysis: Separating skill deficiency from other barriers guides the cause interviews in Session 3.
- ADDIE: The Analysis phase defines how needs analysis outputs feed design, delivery and evaluation in Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Leaders accountable for the learning strategy and budget.
- Analysts who gather and interpret performance data to identify learning needs.
- Managers who negotiate learning priorities with business unit heads.
- HR leaders who link competency, appraisal and workforce data to development decisions.



The programme serves learning functions in banking, energy, healthcare and government.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to align learning needs with strategic objectives.
2. Participants will be able to construct an organisational, role and individual needs analysis using the three-level model.
3. Participants will be able to diagnose whether a performance gap has a training or a non-training cause.
4. Participants will be able to select data-collection methods suited to the scope of an analysis.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise learning needs using impact, urgency and cost criteria.
6. Participants will be able to justify a costed annual learning plan to executive sponsors.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Strategic Foundations of Training Needs Analysis

Where do genuine learning needs originate in an organisation?

- McGehee and Thayer Three-Level Model
- Linking Strategic Objectives to Capability Requirements
- Reactive Requests Versus Proactive Needs Analysis
- Organisational Analysis: Goals, Climate and Resources
- Stakeholder Mapping and Sponsor Agreements

Day 2: Role and Individual Needs Analysis

What must each role achieve, and where do individuals fall short?

- Task and Role Analysis for Critical Positions
- Competency Gap Assessment Against Role Profiles
- Using Appraisal Data and Its Limitations
- Survey, Interview, Focus Group and Observation Design
- Triangulating Evidence and Sampling Decisions

Day 3: Performance Consulting and Root Cause Diagnosis

Is the gap a training problem at all?

- Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model
- Mager and Pipe Performance Analysis Flowchart
- Environmental Barriers: Information, Resources and Incentives
- Consulting Conversations With Line Managers
- Recommending Non-Training Interventions



Day 4: Prioritising Needs and Designing the Response

Which needs deserve funding first, and in what form?

- Prioritisation Matrix: Impact, Urgency and Cost
- Writing Performance-Based Learning Objectives
- ADDIE Analysis Phase Outputs and Design Handover
- Choosing Delivery Modes: Classroom, Digital and On-the-Job
- Costing Learning Interventions and Budget Scenarios

Day 5: Building the Annual Learning Plan

Is the training needs analysis ready for executive approval?

- Consolidating Day 1 to Day 3 Findings Into a Needs Register
- Applying the Day 4 Matrix to the Full Needs Register
- Planning Evaluation Measures From Analysis Baselines
- Presenting Findings to Executive Sponsors
- Costed Annual Learning Plan Completion

Methodology

The programme is built around a data workshop. Participants work through a fictional organisation's strategy papers, appraisal summaries, survey returns and interview notes, then repeat each step for their own organisation. Cases from banking, energy and healthcare show how needs, data sources and sponsor expectations differ by sector and by level of the role analysed.

- Suggested activity: Classifying ten training requests as training or non-training gaps using Gilbert's model.
- Suggested activity: Designing a short needs survey and interview guide for one critical role.
- Suggested activity: Ranking a needs register with the prioritisation matrix and defending the ranking to a panel.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a costed annual learning plan for their organisation. It contains strategic drivers, a needs register by level, cause findings, non-training recommendations, prioritised interventions, a budget and baseline measures. It is used to secure sponsor approval for the next planning cycle.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is the training needs analysis programme suitable for experienced L&D leaders?

Yes. It is set at advanced level for heads of learning, training analysts and HR directors, and assumes experience of managing learning activity.

Which models does the training needs analysis course rest on?

It rests on the McGehee and Thayer three-level model, Gilbert's Behavior Engineering Model, Mager and Pipe performance analysis and the Analysis phase of ADDIE.

How is the annual learning plan from training needs analysis training used at work?

You can use it to secure budget approval, agree priorities with business heads and set baselines for later evaluation.

How does training needs analysis and performance consulting differ from a course on training evaluation?

Evaluation measures what learning changed after delivery. Needs analysis decides, before any spending, whether learning is the right answer and which gaps to fund.