ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 6 - number 220 Wednesday 19 october 2022

The use of role-playing games in corporate training

Why is role-play training beneficial for companies and what are the best practices to make it even more effective?

Role playing is an active learning technique in which employees act out specific roles under the guidance of a trainer. For example, two people might simulate a meeting between an employee and an angry customer. Based on their interactions, the trainer will be able to fill in knowledge gaps and/or point them in the right direction.

Integrating role-plays within **corporate training** plans allows for a safe environment in which employees can prepare for difficult or unfamiliar work situations and gain confidence in their abilities.

Why use role-playing games in corporate training?

Training through role-playing offers several advantages: let's find out the main ones.

- **Highlights current skill levels -** When an individual participates in a role-play scenario, he or she has the opportunity to demonstrate how he or she would actually handle a similar situation in real life. This removes much of the hypothetical nature of the training and allows the trainer to see how the staff reacts, gathering data on each employee's skill level and highlighting his or her strengths and weaknesses, a key activity to help them improve their skills.
- **Prepares participants for real-life situations -** Role-plays allow employees to experience situations they might encounter on the job, getting real-time feedback on their performance.
- **Increases confidence -** By providing a safe environment in which to face different scenarios for the first time, role-playing increases confidence in team members.
- **Develops empathy -** Simulating scenarios and acting in roles other than their own helps employees understand customers' perspectives and develop empathy.
- **Develops problem solving skills -** Through role-playing, participants gain experience in handling difficult situations and developing creative problem-solving skills.
- **Reduces errors -** The opportunity to experience real situations in safe environments helps to decrease errors in real life.
- **Improves team building and social skills -** Role play is a social activity in which participants interact within given situations, which encourages them to work together to find possible solutions.

How to make role-playing games educationally effective

As we have seen, integrating role-playing games within corporate training strategies offers a variety of benefits. But what to do to make sure they are educationally effective?

- **Use real places** - To be effective, a role-play must be as realistic as possible. Put participants in the physical locations where they would actually experience the scenarios you're trying to replicate, whether it's a store, the warehouse, or an executive's office.
- **Imitate real-world scenarios** - Locations alone are not enough: the scenarios must also be realistic. So provide your employees with personality profiles of the characters they are to impersonate.
- **Film role-playing** - Filming participants in role-playing scenarios is a valuable teaching tool. It allows people to review their behaviors as well as strengths and weaknesses. It also allows them (and you) to "record" improvements as they progress.
- **Hire consultants and actors** - Getting an authentic role-playing experience from your employees can be difficult to do on your own. So consider bringing in professional consultants and actors to make the scenarios even more realistic and the training even more effective.

How to conduct a role-play

Once we have identified the benefits and best practices related to the use of role-play in education, let's look more concretely at the basic steps for conducting a role-play.

Step 1 - Present the problem
Before starting the role-play session, present the topic and provide instructions on the training process. You can also explain why you decided to tackle that particular scenario, what the purpose of the role-play is, and what results you hope to achieve.

Step 2 - Choose a scenario
Once you have completed the introductory phase, give participants more details about the problem to be addressed and the scenario to be played out, and be sure to provide enough detail to make the training session as realistic as possible.
Consider using scenarios that participants might experience in their work, such as working in a team with other employees, assisting customers, or marketing a new product.

Step 3 - Assign roles
At this point, introduce the characters involved in the scenario and assign roles. . Some characters may be employees who will manage the situation, such as salespeople. Other participants may represent secondary characters, such as customers. Finally, others may watch the performance and offer feedback.
Make sure each participant understands his or her role and tasks according to the assignment.

Step 4 - Start the game
Now it's time to play: let employees play their roles while others watch. At this stage, you might advise participants to escalate the situation gradually. For example, an impatient customer might start calmly and then become irritated and angry. This mode allows employees to practice various social skills and situations, making the session more effective and employees more productive in real-life situations.

Step 5 - Discuss the experience
Regardless of the outcome of the role play, it is essential to discuss it with all participants. For example, if one person cannot find the correct approach, invite participants to analyze the reasons and suggest different strategies. If, on the other hand, a person has found the right solution to the problem, discuss the elements that made it effective and any alternative solutions. Either way, the discussion will help participants gain a deeper understanding of the social dynamics related to the work situation and how they can deal with it in real life.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator