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Barry Johnson & Mandy Geal

Let's be clear
by Barry Johnson with Mandy Geal, Learning Partners Ltd.

When working with companies it is not unusual to find that they have their own definitions of processes. Our experience is that these definitions are often not the result of discussion and conscious decision, but have evolved or been assumed. The local definition of Training, Development, Education and Learning is not immune from this phenomenon. In one company, Education was defined as all courses done in an educational establishment, Training was anything done 'off the job', and included presentations and conferences, and Development was learning done on the job. It seemed to work for them. It did mean, for example, that on-the-job training was 'development', as was coaching, irrespective of the purpose, and responsibility for each process was unclear. In another company, Development was hierarchical progression and management training, and included general training both on and off the job.

The question is what is the difference between these processes and what is common? This is not a new problem. In the 1970's the Department of Employment, Industry Training Boards and the Manpower Services Commission did much to clarify this situation.

In the interest of a discussion, we offer this summary to help professional trainers and HR professionals think this through, based on that 'ancient' thinking.

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Diagram to summarise the purpose and responsibility of education, training, and development		
National responsibility	Manager's responsibility	Individual's own responsibility
EDUCATION	**TRAINING**	**DEVELOPMENT**
Input standard - Output standard	Job analysis - present SKA	Potential and ambition
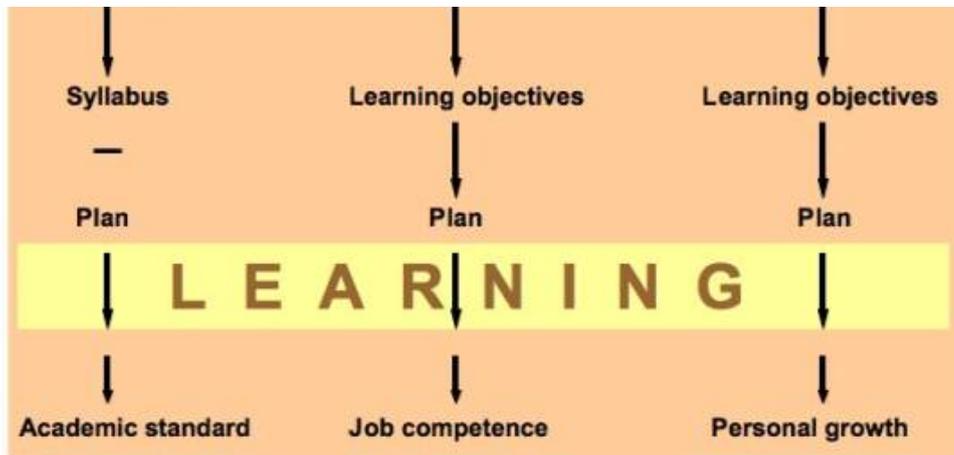
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Perhaps a useful place to start is what is common. From the diagram, this can be seen to be 'learning'. The processes of Education, Training and Development have Learning at their core. So, what is learning? The simplest answer is, 'a relatively permanent change in behaviour.'

Let's work through the processes and let's start with Training so we can use that as a model for comparing the other processes.

In **Training**, the purpose is job competence. The process starts with a job analysis. It doesn't matter if it is a low skill job, a complex job, a manager's job, a complete job or an element of a job. Managers and trainers have to know what skills, knowledge and attitudes (SKAs) are needed. Then the person is analysed. Which of the required SKAs does the person have? The important bit is the gap between the two. Now we can set some learning objectives. That is, we can say, *given a situation or some piece of equipment* the trainee will be able to *do whatever he or she is required to do to some standard*. With that clarity, we then plan to put the person through some learning process either on or off the job and ideally both. Then we do it. The output is a competent worker producing the required outputs to the required standard. Well, that was the learning objective in the first place.

You may note that how the learning is achieved does not determine the title of the process. Sometimes it's off the job at some form of classroom-based course or in a work bay that replicates the real situation; sometimes its on-the-job training; sometimes it's coaching… You name it, it is probably used. The specific instructional or learning process depends on what has to be learned as well as other factors such as safety, cost, number of trainees and so on.

There are parallels in **Education**. The start point is to look at the final standard required. These are usually nationally defined or approved - in the main GCSE, A levels, ONC, HNC, degree and

so on. Students have proved they can enter the course of study by meeting the standard of a lower level course of study, so for a degree they have A levels as that is the entry qualification. In a similar way to training, people are put through learning processes (including lectures, reading, experiments, field studies, tutorials and so on) that depend on what has to be learned. Students then sit examinations to demonstrate they have learnt what they were supposed to have learned.

The real difference is purpose. The output of education is academic excellence in a subject or discipline; that is the students have acquired a common agreed standard and that standard is itself graded.

Development starts with the person – his or her potential, latent talents and what it is he or she wants to achieve. In a similar way to the other two processes, the person is helped to set some objectives and to plan the learning that he or she requires in order to achieve his or her potential or ambitions. The person then goes through whatever learning process is appropriate.

Let us return to the diagram. Here the responsibilities are clarified.

Education is a national responsibility exercised through the government and to a lesser extent through bodies such as Professional Institutions.

It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that the people in his or her care have the skills knowledge and attitudes to meet their accountabilities. It follows that managers are

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skills knowledge and attitudes to meet their accountabilities. It follows that managers are
responsible for **Training** and this is usually facilitated through the HR and Training
departments of the organisation.

Development is the responsibility of individuals, usually facilitated by their managers.

Perhaps the process boundaries are not quite as sharp as implied above. On a learning event
some participants may be being educated, some may be under training and some may be
developing themselves, but they all are going through the same learning process.

Afterthought. Recently on a radio programme the difference between education and training
was neatly clarified. What was said: most mothers in the UK were in favour of sex
education. However, they were not in favour of sex training.

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