

“Any lingering doubts were put to rest the moment we began working with Michaels & Associates consultants, perhaps even before that at the RFP stage.”
~ Process Manager



The impact on the department is beyond our expectations.



~ Process Manager

CHALLENGES

Redesign new hire curricula to get competent, productive employees on the job quicker

Evaluate a six-month new hire training program with a fresh perspective

Overcome a culture of departmental silos and a perception that only insiders could do the job correctly

APPROACH

Perform a thorough assessment to evaluate the current training program and business processes that affect the existing curricula

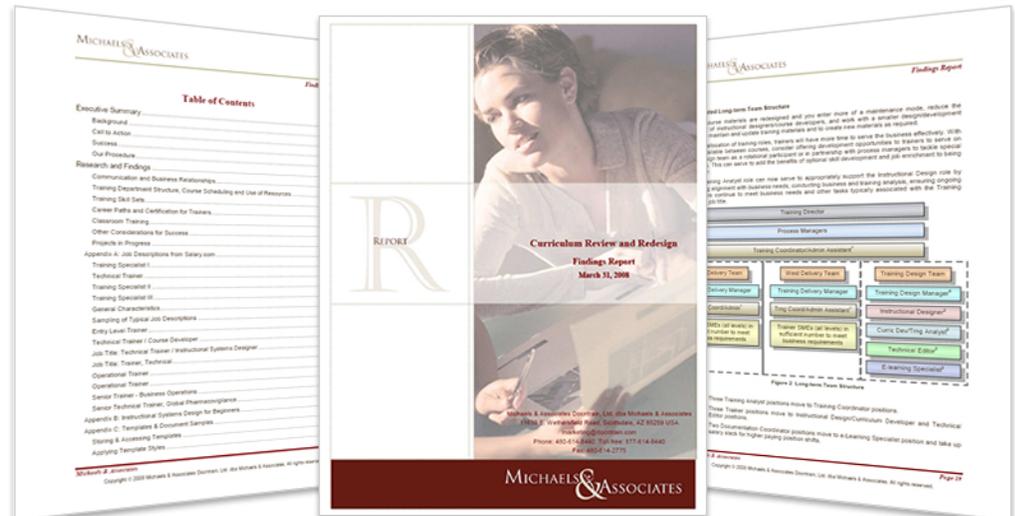
Make clear recommendations for improved curricula, with detailed evidence of findings

RESULTS

Ability to address factors for success based on sound research and findings

Ability to begin restructuring the Training department to make significant improvements in trainers' working conditions

Better understanding within the organization of the challenges of training, with insight on how departmental processes can impact training



HEALTH BENEFITS ORGANIZATION RESPONDS TO BUSINESS DEMAND

A major health benefits organization that employs more than 6,000 people faced a challenge: the new hire program did not effectively meet the increasing business demand for a) competent employees with b) minimal down time. The Training department believed that they could respond to this demand and set out to discover how they could reduce the time it takes trainees to become fully productive in their respective departments.

The Training department employs over 30 full time trainers to deliver a comprehensive new hire training program that encompasses approximately 30 courses delivered in the first six months of employment at four locations. Facing the daunting task of condensing the curricula without sacrificing employee competence, Training's senior management wasn't sure where to start so they asked Michaels & Associates for assistance.

"All the Michaels & Associates staff were models of professionalism, yet warm and personable."

~ Process Manager

"Michaels & Associates educated our learning team on the role and value of training in an organization such as ours. We've been able to use this knowledge to educate the business, open up partnerships that may not have existed before and improve partnerships that were already in place."

~ Process Manager



A THOROUGH ASSESSMENT UNCOVERS OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET DEMAND

To gain validation of their belief and an objective understanding of training needs, they asked Michaels & Associates to conduct a thorough assessment of the training program and business processes that impacted the overall curricula.

The assessment consisted of a series of interviews, observations and evaluation of the current curricula and materials. The goal was to identify factors impacting the design, development, implementation and maintenance of training courses and materials to determine ways to improve the program and ultimately reduce the length of training.

The interview and observation portion of the assessment took place in multiple locations over a total of 12.5 days. Interviews were conducted with trainers; Training management; existing representatives; documentation coordinators and various levels of Operations management from Claims, Membership and Billing and Customer Service. Classroom and job site observations filled in gaps and clarified information from interviews.

In addition to interviews and observations, Michaels & Associates consultants evaluated a wide variety of resources including job descriptions, metrics, online reference materials, training manuals, quizzes, skill checks, games, worksheets, course syllabi and informal job aids created by individuals to fill knowledge gaps and support memory. The consultants then analyzed the resources to determine whether they were job based, learner centered and effective.

“The recommendations and finding were solid, right on target and were the jumping off point for several major initiatives that have been underway for the past 18 months. I like to say that Michaels & Associates taught us to fish. That is, they gave us the knowledge, skills and tools we needed to ultimately reach our goal of becoming the preeminent learning organization.”

~ *Process Manager*



EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

At the conclusion of the assessment process, the Michaels & Associates consultants used their experience and knowledge, along with the client's unique characteristics and the analysis of the situation, to capture critical findings and make recommendations in a formal report. The consultants then presented the findings and recommendations report to Operations management, Training management and trainers.

The result of the presentation was overwhelmingly positive. The health benefits organization now has the information necessary to address factors for success.

Today, a number of projects presented in the findings and recommendations report are under way. These projects are working to reduce the length of training and fill skill gaps. The client is also starting to restructure the Training department to broaden Training's ability to meet business needs and make significant improvements in trainers' working conditions, skills and curriculum and course structures.

The opportunity to include Operations throughout the process resulted in additional value to the organization. Departments that work with the Training group on a regular basis have a much better understanding of the challenges of training within the organization, and they now see how their own departmental processes can impact training. Job assignments have shifted to become more effective and appropriate, some reporting structures have changed and respect for all areas has increased. The opportunity to improve internal communications will serve the organization well for the future.