



TRAINING NEEDS: Thomas Sample

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This is a people-person who will not only push to achieve results through others but will also seek to maintain quality.

He is particularly strong in communicating facts and information and is prepared to spend time ensuring that they are presented in a logical and systematic fashion.

He has a passive, compliant element within his characteristics which may cause him to take longer than usual, perhaps even vacillate, in decision-taking.

There are conflicting elements within Thomas Sample's characteristics: the need to get a quick result, counterbalanced by slow decision-taking. These opposing attributes are likely to make Thomas Sample internally tense and anxious, leading to: poor problem solving, lack of innovation and insufficient organisation either of self or others.

We therefore recommend the following training as a means of limiting his potential inner conflict and maximising his performance.

DECISION MAKING

Thomas Sample needs to:

- understand and analyse the problems
- think systematically, logically and quickly through a situation
- identify and evaluate alternatives
- be able to act within areas of knowledge and expertise and within organisational guidelines
- take timely decisions which will enhance the performance of the organisation.

Competent decision makers have good judgement, particularly if the decision is tough. They are prepared to listen to others' views, discuss important issues, considers all the implications and have the confidence to take timely and shrewd decisions. They appreciate that it is not always possible to get others to agree, but if 80% of their decisions are quality decisions then their success rate is high.

Poor decision makers fall mainly into two types: the first perceives that good decisions are quick decisions and therefore they act without considering all the implications; the second type being reflective, spends so much time relecting on matters, that they vacillate or procrastinate rather than take action. These non-assertive individuals may feel insecure and will therefore look to others to confirm their thinking. This indecisiveness can become their greatest weakness.

The content of the training will be vital if Thomas Sample is to be successful at decision making. It may be necessary to split it into more than one course. Typically the content will include:

- The decision making process - Analysing the situation/problem, checking for understanding, evaluating the alternatives, discussing ideas, formulating decision guidelines, calculating the risk, setting objectives and time scales, implementing decisions.
- Listening and understanding - Its importance in decision making.

- Risk analysis - Allowing the decision maker to assess the likelihood of success without wasting too much time and effort by gathering facts.
- Innovation and judgement - The importance of ideas in decision making.
- Timing and communication - Bringing others into the process and carrying them along with it.

To get the best out of such training Thomas Samples manager should set and monitor decision making projects for some time after training.

INNOVATION

In order to become more innovative Thomas Sample should learn to:

- question whether things are satisfactory as they are
- change things in order to improve performance
- search for ideas even in the most difficult situations
- look outside the normal parameters
- consider all ideas even if they appear revolutionary
- move forward positively and confidently

Good innovators create enthusiasm in others and question existing systems, equipment and skills. They regularly come up with new and productive ideas. They are rarely satisfied with things as they are and will invariably question the status quo in the search for improvement.

Less innovative people, fear that they will make embarrassing mistakes and will prefer to stick to the risk-free tried and tested systems. They generally lack the confidence to think laterally and rarely come up with new or exciting ideas, generally preferring to improve on the ideas of other more innovative individuals.

They perceive the best innovators as unnecessarily high risk-takers who change things for the sake of change.

In order to expose Thomas Sample to new ideas, training will be needed in two areas, namely Self Awareness and Lateral Thinking.

Self Awareness

- Modifying behaviour.
- Overcoming fears - Rejection, making mistakes
- Creative and Lateral Thinking
- Removing mental blocks
- Questioning the status quo.
- Brainstorming - A mind opener for new ideas.
- Techniques for Innovation - Trusted and tested methods.

Once training is complete it is important that reinforcement within the working environment takes place. Projects requiring innovative approaches should be provided for Thomas Sample by his manager on a regular basis.

OTHER POTENTIAL TRAINING NEEDS

The recommended training needs listed above are the key priorities for Thomas Sample. Other training and development programmes which would enhance performance include:

- Problem Solving
- Lateral Thinking

It should be noted that the training needs which have been recommended relate to soft competences. Vocational, specialist and/or technical job-related training is not included within this report.