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# The Importance of Effective Training Manual Designs for Employees who Assist People with Disabilities

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THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE TRAINING MANUAL DESIGNS FOR EMPLOYEES  
WHO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

by

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B.A., Southern Illinois University, 2017

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Science

Department of Rehabilitation Administration and Services  
in the Graduate School  
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May 2019

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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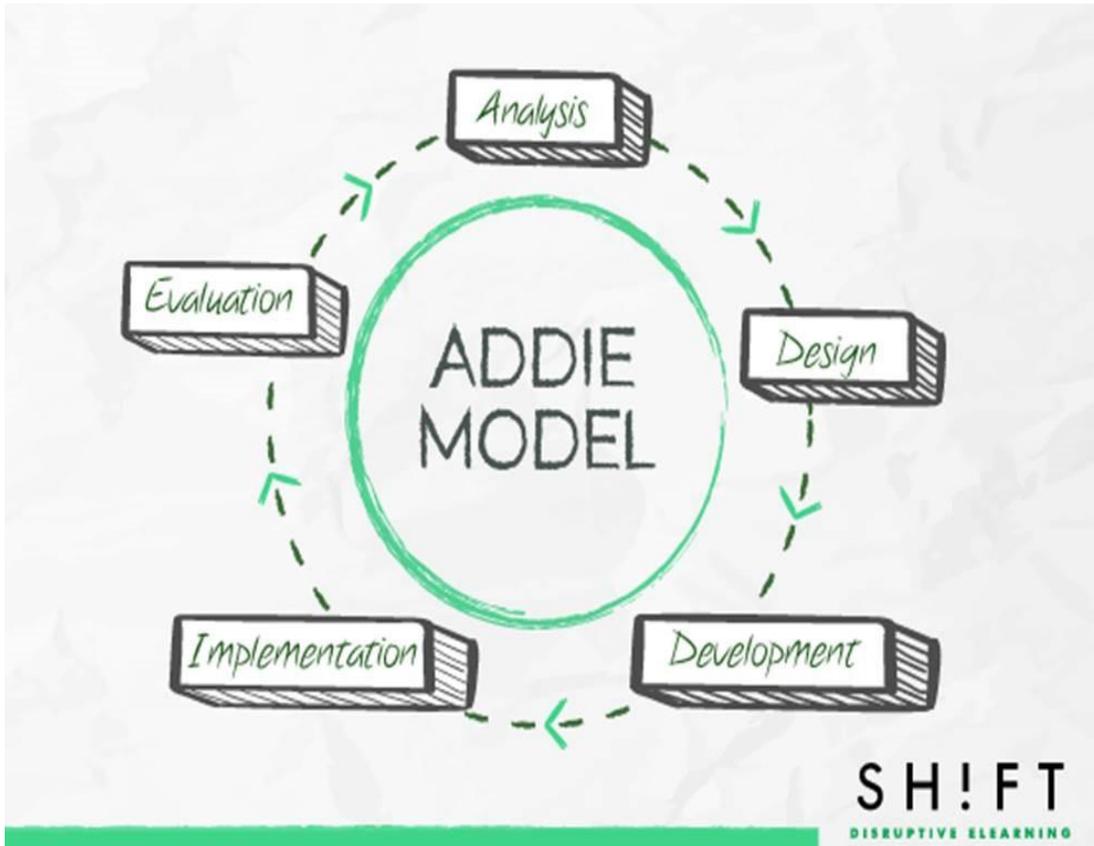
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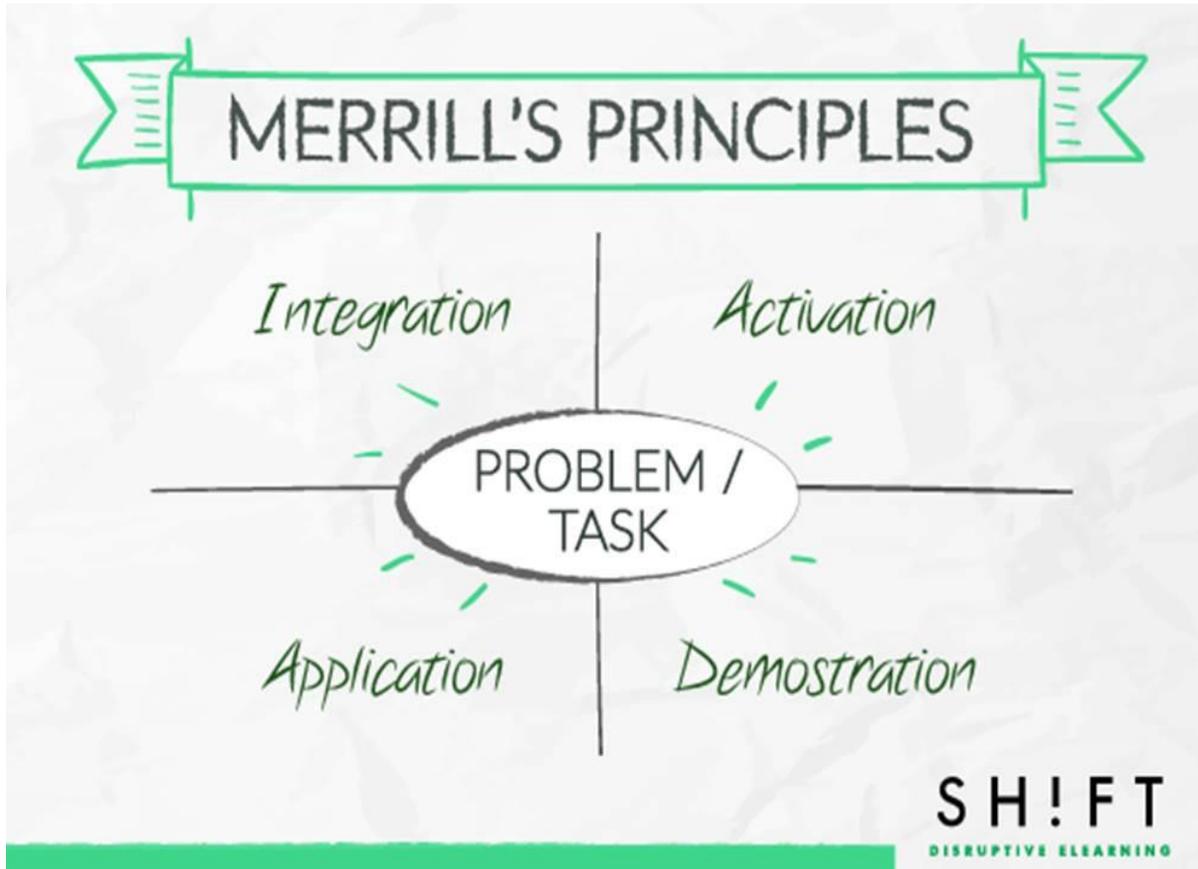
**FIGURE 1: Experiential learning model by Kolb**

LEARNING STYLES	DESCRIPTION
<b>THE DIVERGER</b>	A learner who learns from concrete experiences by reflectively observes these experiences from different perspectives. The strength of the diverger lies in his or her imaginative and creative abilities to relate with others. Hence, this learner is somebody who is more inclined to work in groups, has strong communication skills, and is open to personal feedback.
<b>THE CONVERGER</b>	A learner who learns from abstract conceptualisation and then finds practical applications of the ideas that he or she has learned. This learner is proficient in solving new problems because he or she likes to find practical applications of the ideas learned. The strength of this learner lies in with the ability to set goals and solve problems or make decisions using first hand experiences. This learner prefers to deal with technical problems rather than interpersonal issues, and hence, is able to control the expression of emotions well.
<b>THE ACCOMMODATOR</b>	A learner who learns from both concrete experiences and active experimentations. The strength of this learner lies in the ability to implement plans and tasks and then becomes actively involved in these new activities. This learner likes challenges and often makes decisions based on intuition than logic.
<b>THE ASSIMILATOR</b>	A learner who learns from both abstract conceptualisations and reflective observations. The strength of lies in the ability to systematically plan, organise and analyse in the most logical form. He or she prefers information that is logical, valid, and well thought through.

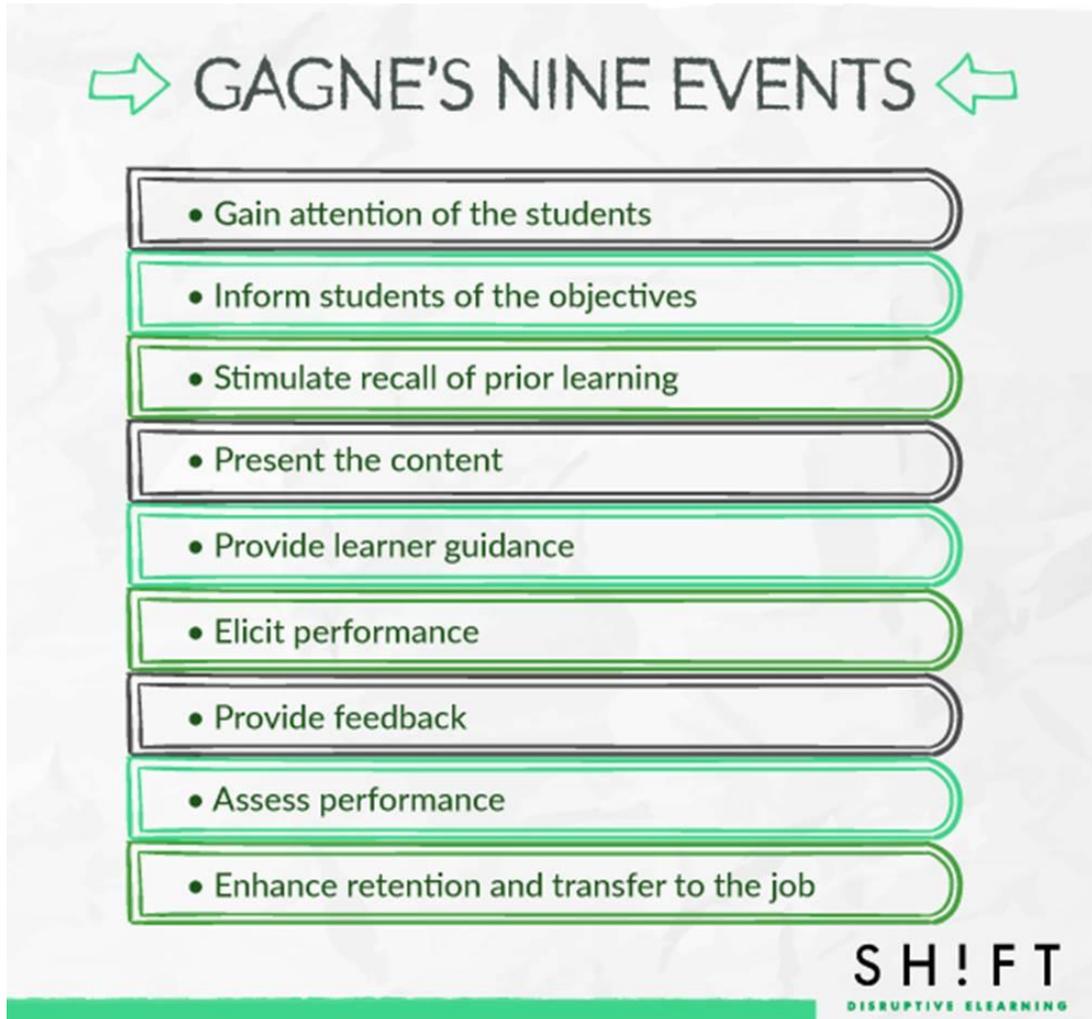
**FIGURE 2: Addie model**



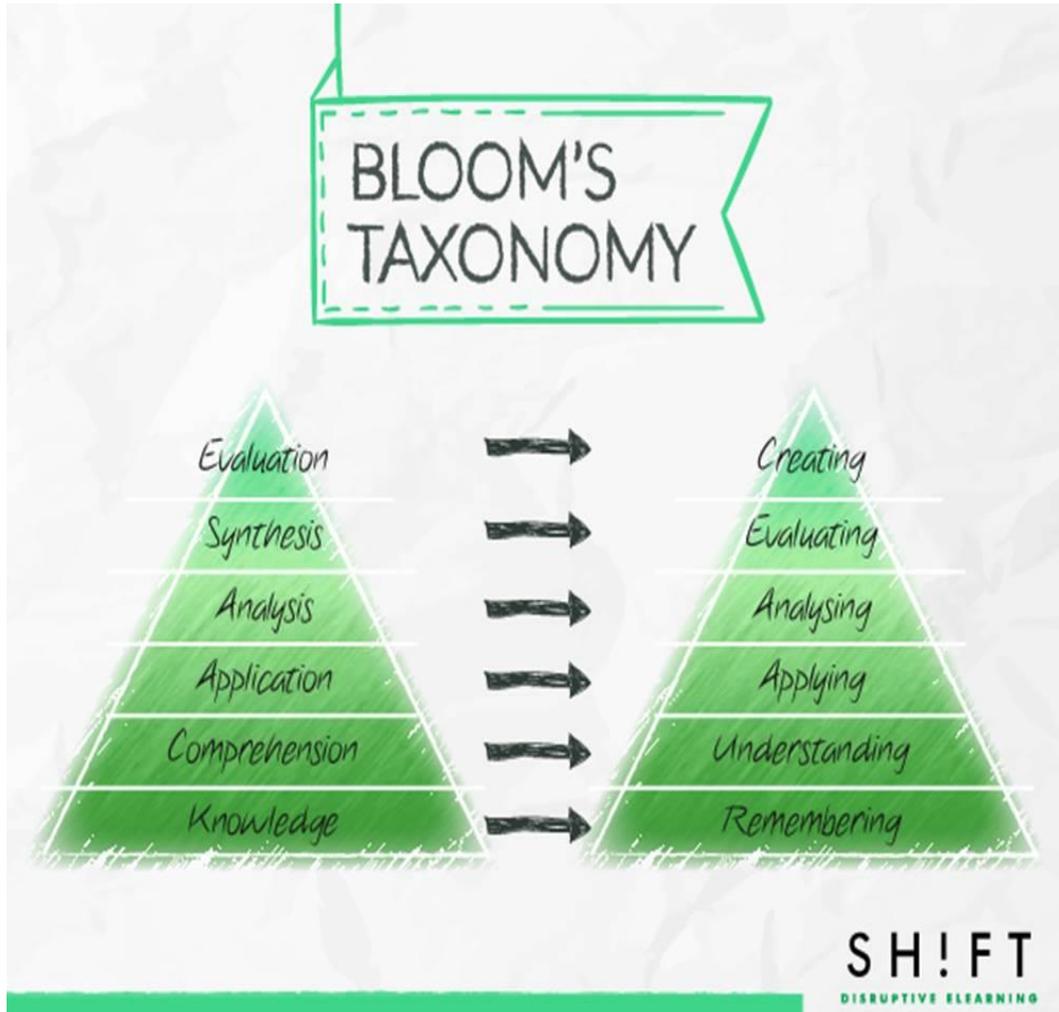
**FIGURE 3: Merrill's principles**



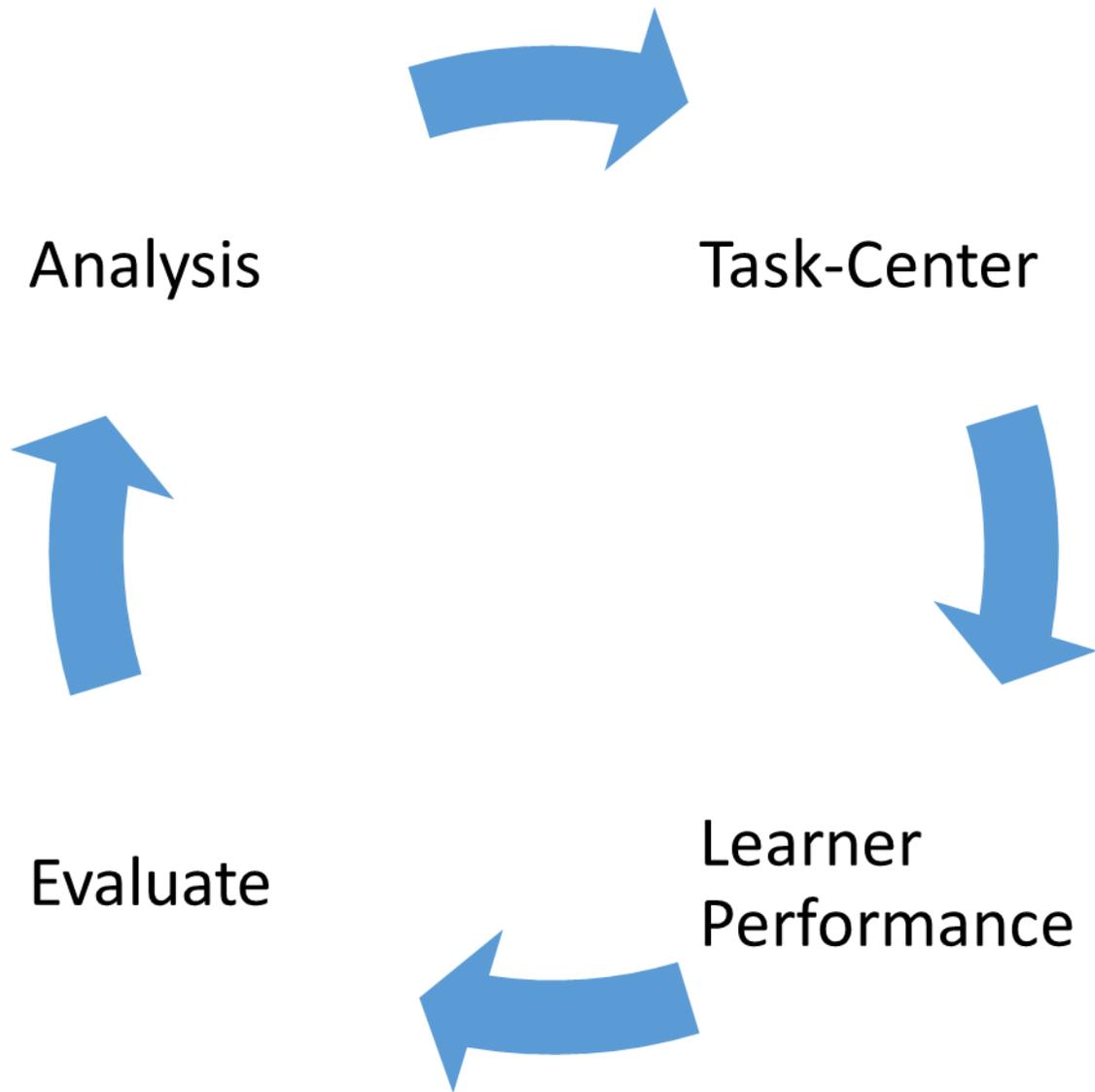
**FIGURE 4: Gagne's nine events**



**FIGURE 5: Bloom's taxonomy**



**FIGURE 6: Reflection model**



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Training and development aimed at improving employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities are core considered to be critical human resource practices for organizational efficiency (Peretz & Rosenblatt, 2011). Employees are the "human capital" that create the foundation of organizations' resources and capabilities for serving their clientele (Hesketh, 2014). Investment in human capital contributes to economic and business growth for the benefit of employees, employers and the wider economy (Coff & Kryscynski, 2011; Foss, 2011). Employee's talent, skills, personal attributes and creativity shape organizational futures. In sum, human capital an essential building block for creating value and skill development is one of the means of achieving this.

#### **Purpose of the project**

This paper will focus ways in which organizations contribute to employee skill development through the design of training. This study presents a literature review on models of training and development. No single training model can meet the need of all employees or all employment settings (Lepak & Snell, 1991). Historically, research has demonstrated that reliance on one method of training alone, will not prepare employee for the multiple demands that they will encounter in their work settings (deJong, 1991; Marsik, 1987). New employees typically receive training when they start a job, but existing employees may not receive continuous training while on the job. Consequently, they may be informed on new policies, procedures and information that the new hires are receiving (Schwartz. M, 2006). Conducting continuous training will keep employees up to date on policies, procedures and information, thus supporting a sustainable, knowledgeable, and effective work team (Cameron & Green, 2015). Recognizing

that multiple forms of in service training are exist (one on one, online, etc.), reviewing every method of in service training is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, this paper will focus on one aspect of the in service training process, the production of effective training manuals. Related research will be reviewed and examples will be given to demonstrate how training manuals can be developed and used effectively. This includes the organization of a training manual, the training designs upon which manuals are based, and the use of manuals for continued employee training.

Developing effective training process begins with a job description, clear performance measures, establishing the position identifying the key job elements (Kathman & Kathman, 2000). It fills in educational gaps and allows employees to expand their skills. By participating in an effective in service training program, employees will be able to present and educate other employees who are assisting individuals with disabilities. As such, an effective manual should be based upon an assessment of needs, and clearly defined solutions and goals (Smith, 1984).

To assess needs, administrators must have a clear understanding of what type of information is important for their employees. This is particularly true for those working with persons who have disabilities since changes in this field occur very quickly the behavior and needs of persons with disabilities may be unpredictable dependent on their diagnosis (Loyd, 2010). Based on the multiple needs of persons with disabilities there will always be an abundance of situation or scenarios that cannot be anticipated or included with a fixed model of training. This may lead to employees feeling unequipped with materials and skills to handle situations on their own, or they may become too dependent on other employees to instruct them on how to move forward. As a result, overburdened and untrained work staff may choose to leave their positions. In the United States the annual turnover rate is 19%, the involuntary

turnover rate is 8%, and the cost per new hire averages \$4,129 (Alexandria, 2016). For nonprofit, state and federal agencies serving those with disabilities, this high turnover becomes very costly (Novak, Rogan, Manck & DiLeo, 2003) while services to individuals with disabilities suffer.

### **Definition of terms**

Disabilities “a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment” (ADA, 2009).

In-service training is defined: (1) as the improvement of job performance by the provision of organized staff activities, (2) as a tool for preventing and correcting facility problems, and (3) as a tool for completing facility missions (Smith, 1984).

On the job training: “provide employee with task-specific knowledge and skills in work area” (Branch & Salehi, 2009)

Off the job training: “takes place in environment other than actual workplace” (Branch & Salehi, 2009)

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will present a synopsis of the research gathered to establish what information is relevant for training employees. Training and development become connected to the knowledge that is obtained from the employee. This includes skills and abilities needed to carry out the functions of their job (Milhem, Abushamsieh & Arostegui, 2014). Trainings can fall short when companies do not provide adequate training for new and current employees and their different learning styles. Education research has shown that learning styles vary between every person and that each person had one of many learning styles depending on their learning task (Bostrom, Olfman, Sein, 1990). Only receiving one of these methods does not prepare the employee for every day work situations. Regardless of method, all employees deserve to gain the tools and skill to be successful at your company and within their specific job.

Individuals have a good idea about how they learn best and which learning style works best for them. Because as individuals we all learn and think differently from others including co-workers. What is clear to worker A is probably not quite as clear to worker B. Typically, the training materials are tailored to meet the needs of the majority based on average or norms (Chew, 2016). However a skilled training coordinator should be knowledgeable regarding different learning styles, and have the flexibility to customize training programs to meet the companies' needs. A skilled training coordinator will also tailor training designs to assure that all-employees, no matter their position or learning style, will be successful. This is critical when working with staff who have unique learning and accommodation needs related to a disability. Accommodating these employees is not only cost-effective, but it is also in the spirit of the

Americans with Disability Act (1990) which specifically outlines equitable treatment for persons with disabilities and those actions that could be perceived as discriminatory.

According to the Experiential, learning model Kolb (Chew, 2016) there are four different learning styles. They have been titled: diverger, converger, accomidator and assimilator. Each learning style explains how individuals learn differently and what companies can train based off those differences to help employees retaining the training materials.

(1)The *diverger*; Represents a learner who needs to see the material and observe the task in different perspectives. This type of learner is more inclined to work with a group of individuals; this helps them create strong communication skills and opens the individual up for personal feedback.

(2) The *converger* learner; Someone who conceptualizes and finds practical ideas for the information they have learned. Because of this, they are capable at solving problems, setting goals and making decisions using their own experiences. This type of learner would rather deal with technical problems using facts to come up with solutions. They avoid learning situations that involve subject feedback and emotion.

(3)The *accommodator learner*; Someone who learns with concrete experiences and active participation. They do well in hand-on plan and task implementation activities. This type of learner does well when they have a challenge that requires making decisions based on logic.

(4) The *assimilator learner*; these types of learners like to learn from both conceptualizations and observations. They can plan, organize and analyze in a logical manner. This learner would prefer information to present in a well thought logical way (Chew, 2016).

*Figure 1* shows a side-by-side comparison of the four different learning styles.

Another way companies can identify learning styles is by surveying their employees on which is their best way to learn. Five different learning styles such as, visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic and individual versus group performance provide employees with a personalized training (Griffiths & Uncecay, 2016). Visual learning are individuals who like to learn by seeing the task; an example of this would be if your organization has a system on filing documents, providing a PowerPoint would help that employee learn the system. Lecturing information about the companies would be an example for those individuals who are auditory learners, they learn best when listening to the information that they can listen to. Tactile learners are those who need hands on experiences, this type of learner would do best if while training companies had them do it in real time. Kinesthetic learners retain information best when they can move around while being trained; an example of this would be if the trainings included walking around or having the freedom to move while they learn. Lastly, some individuals learn best when they can mix one or more of these learning styles together, this learner is an individual that preference versus group performance (Griffiths, & Incecay, 2016). While most employees cannot afford to custom fit every individuals learning style during training. They must remember that one style does not work for everyone and be willing to invest in training that incorporates multiple tasks reflecting multiple styles of learning.

Intensions for new and current employee training is to identify learning outcomes and to demonstrate their companies' strengths. Companies like to show their ability to work effectively, developing appropriate leadership skills, validating their knowledge and behaviors to manage time and problem solve (Wadoo, Shah, Sajjad & Fearnley, 2010). Since companies are relying on skillful employees to demonstrate their mission, vision goals, companies will use three different types of training methods to identify these traits within their employees and see where the

employee lacks these skill sets. Identifying these skill sets are essential to identify for future on-going trainings.

Just as there are different, learning styles there are also different training styles. There are three types of training formats typically encountered in today's labor market.

(1) On the job training (OJT) (Branch & Salehi, 2009) is ideally suited for visual, tactile and kinesthetic employees. Employees who prefer to learn in this way will be able to see, manipulate and move around while working. OJT allows the employee to learn their job while staff members are working. This can be a disadvantage, as employees will have to learn as they go, instead of being able to process the information before their first day of work (Smith, 1983).

(2) Off the job training. (OTJT) (Branch & Salehi, 2009) takes employees away for their regularly assigned work station to another location for training. These training are typically didactic seminars or webinars including lecture and discussion. This type of training works well with individuals who are auditory learners, they can listen to the information that is being presented without having to multitask (Smith, 1983).

Research tells us that most employees are not adequately prepared for their new positions, in fact; only 63.7% of individuals receive formal training when starting a new position (Bartel. A, 1995). If an employee cannot be trained adequately, it can lead to unethical work habits and behaviors in the company. Considering 70% of employees are not receiving a formal training from their company, leaves lots of room for error and frustration. "A deficiency in training has resulted in workers being frustrated and not being able to perform their assigned tasks. This has resulted in ineffective services, a lack of self-esteem customer frustration and chronic low productivity (Jain, 1999)" (Pulley. P).

Job satisfaction claims to be the most important for an employee; this is because the relationship between identifying the roles of the position, job satisfaction, and the employee's job training all influence on the employee's roles within their organization. This leads to employees feeling satisfied and that they have benefited from their job training. Organizations also find employees who receive ongoing training that identifies their clarify roles within the organization, and address issues that arise within their organization are stratified and have a clear vision of their role. (Jenkins, Chenneville & Salnaitis, 2018). The goal is that with training new employees and have ongoing training for current employees will help the company have less unethical work habits, behavioral issues within the company, less frustration, and be able to perform their assigned tasks.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

Along with companies considering different learning styles for their employees during trainings, companies can mirror different learning models for their trainings. Each model has their own take on what should go into a learning model. These differences work because, not every model will work for every company that provides training. The four models that will be explored through this section will be the ADDIE model, Merrill's principle of instructions, Gegne's nine events of instructions and Bloom's taxonomy.

ADDIE model is one of the first design models used and employers still use it today when conducting trainings. ADDIE stands for Analysis, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate, companies using this model need to go through the five steps that guide the individual to prepare for their employee training. The first step for the ADDIE model is analysis, the intentions for this step for the developer to ask why the training is needed and collecting information on what their target is for that specific training needed. This step is circuital; because employees will discover why training is important and will become the motivation throughout the next couple of stages. The second step to the ADDIE model is design, this stage is intended for the developer once they have identified and concluded what should be addressed and understood from the training. Design helps the designer pinpoint what strategies to follow, objectives that need to be discussed, and how to appropriately deliver the methods the third step for the developer would be to develop the training, this stage is used for identifying expectations for the training, what needs to be included including the materials that are needed for the training. Once the development of the training is agreed upon, the fourth step takes place. The fourth step implementation lets the developer rollout the training that they have made for their employees. The information that the

developer created is released to employees to learn during their training seminars. The fifth and final step for ADDIE implement the evaluation portion of the model, this is used for the developer to gain insight on what impact the training had on the employees, and provide feedback on what went well and what should be changed for future trainings (Culatta, 2019).

*Figure 2* shows the ADDIE model.

Another researcher David Merrill (Merrill, 2002) identified “effective and efficient instruction that are common across theories and models” (Tu & Snyder, 2017). These principles were developed to help individuals identify real-world whole tasks and develop the four phases of learning. Phases one has employees who are getting trained identify what it means to learn, meaning they start with real life problems. This is also known as problem-centered and individuals who are training with a company have to be able to relate to the problem or task at hand. Phase two incorporates existing knowledge also known as the activation principle. This phase helps employees make connections with their previous knowledge to the new information they are learning. Once the employee has gathered their preexisting knowledge, phase three is where the employee can demonstrate their knowledge. Merrill’s model (Merrill, 2002) outlines how employees can demonstrate this knowledge visually and through story telling because; it helps the brain retain the information longer. The fourth stage allows the employee to apply their new knowledge and practice it on their own. This phase also referred to as application principle and helps employees understand the new information and apply it to real world situations. Integration principle is the fifth and final phase to Merrill’s principles of instructions. Integration principle lets employees discuss and reflect on the new material they have learned during the training (Merrill, 2002). *Figure 3* shows a visualization of the Merrill principle.

An additional model that companies can use is the Gagne principle; this model has nine principles to his learning events (Strollings & Ferguson, 2015). This model generated in the 1960's and developed for military training. Although this model was intended for military professionals, teachers and trainers use the model to develop their education design. The first of Gagne's nine steps starts with gaining attention; the relation to this learning process is for the brain to become engaged in the material. This step is intended for the individual to gather ideas and ask provoking questions to the individual giving the presentation. The individual who is presenting the training would then proceed to step two, informing the learner of the objectives for the training. This will inform the individuals receiving the training about what they should expect from the training, and how they will be measured for the achievement they made during the training. After this is complete, stimulate recall meaning individuals will draw on their prior knowledge. This helps the individuals think about what they have already learned, before they are introduced to new knowledge. Once individuals recall on their prior knowledge, the fourth step will be introduced to them. The fourth step lets the individual presenting the training to present the content of the specific topic. This information should be presented in an easily and consumable manner, otherwise it can be hard to fully understand the information and the individuals could miss important content. During the learning portion of the training, the fifth step also known as providing learner guidance. Step five is in place to help the individuals through the training, this can be offered in the form of guiding with examples, case studies, and other supplement support. Once the training has been presented and the information was given guidance, the individuals will have a chance to recollect on the information that was displayed to them. Stage six or elicit performance engages the individuals with different activities to help recall, utilize, and evaluate knowledge. Stage seven lets the individual giving the training provide

feedback which reinforces knowledge with immediate feedback. Once the training is complete, presenters will use stage eight assess performance to test the individual's knowledge with conventional criteria. Having this information will also help the presenter identify what individuals gained from their training, and which areas needs more time going over. The ninth and final stage is enhance retention and transfer to the job, this stage uses content retention strategies. This can be construed with concept maps, rephrasing, summarizing etc. (Strollings & Ferguson, 2015). *Figure 4* shows a visualization of the Gagne's principle.

The last model that “had a large impact on teacher preparation programs, classroom pedagogy, small- and large-scale assessment programs, and educational research.” (Agarwal, 2010). Bloom's taxonomy reflects a shape of a triangle, which indicates that the steps on the bottom are the base for information that the individual learns throughout training. According to Ramirez “Bloom's concept of increased complexity fits well with the needs of teaching of personality assessment” (Ramirez, 2017). Knowledge is the base of Bloom's model, is contains memories, recollections, facts, and basic concepts/answers to information that is presented in trainings bases of the individuals prior knowledge. Comprehension is the next level, meaning the individual has an understanding of the facts and ideas that will be presented. The comprehension portion should incorporate translation, interpretation and extrapolation. Application also known as the next level is known for individuals using that knowledge to solve problems, and create new information and facts in a different way. Going up the ladder, analysis is the next stage to this model to examine and dissect information into new categories to create new connections. Synthesis complies that new information and stores it into different ways or patters so that the brain can find an alternative solution. Finally, evaluation occupies the last level in Bloom's

model. Evaluation allows the individual to inquire information and provide judgment in internal and external criteria (Ramirez, 2017). *Figure 5* shows a visualization of the Bloom's principle.

Referencing other models can give a great outline for planning a training for individuals who are working with students with disabilities. It is important to realize that some information from the models might not align with every companies training plan. It would be beneficial to customize your own model to fit the company's needs and goals for employees is not outside the scope of designing trainings. Keeping steps to keep track of what is going on during the training and not having employees feel as though they are repeating steps. By conducting training consisting of employees job responsibilities, duties that will be assigned to them and what a daily workday looks like.

For individuals working with students with disabilities, we decided it was in our company's best interest to design a model that reflected all of the models, but still keeping it tailored fit to employees and the population we serve. The fourth step model for the intended work place would start with design from ADDIE's training model. This will allow training developers to identify the objectives, and choose appropriate ways to demonstrate or administer the training given to employees. Next, task-centered principle from Merrill's theory helps make sure employees know what real world problems that may occur during the daily routine. Following step two, we go into learner guidance from Gagne's model where training designers, to help employees with putting their knowledge to the test. Training developers can provide this guidance with case studies, role-playing scenarios etc. so employees can use their newfound knowledge to use. As used in all the models, evaluation is the final step, and is used from Benjamin Bloom's model. This stage lets employees express their likes, dislikes, and concerns about the training that was provided to them. This helps the training designers for future

trainings, meaning they can add to it, take away unimportant information or go more in depth about a certain topic. *Figure 6* shows a visualization of the reflection model.

Looking at all of the different models presented, we can find some similarities and differences throughout their explanations. Every model has a stage where the individuals receiving the training is advised to recollect on their prior training and/ or experiences. Another stage that was congruent to the others was, learning the new information and applying it to the employee's workday. The final similarity usually the last stage in all the models. This stage is evaluating the new information that was presented to them, and reflecting how they can practice this through their organization. Every model was different in how they explained their information, and how each stage was strategically placed within their model. These models all work, because they have been carefully reviewed and used for many organizations and employees to follow.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

Individuals in leadership roles rely on strategic approaches to effectively administer training to incoming and current employees. These approaches are utilized in teaching settings where trainees obtain new information regarding policies, procedures, and the organization as a whole. This literature supports the notion that information on effective training methods for staff working with individuals with disabilities is substantially lacking. Designing the training approach is the part of the process that is most important when incorporating characteristics relative to disability competence. Despite the lack of data on this topic, it remains crucial for training programs to emphasize this sector of multicultural competence with trainees. Comprehension of implications attached to disability must be recognized in workplace settings that serve this population. This influences experience and adequacy in an employee's ability to best assist clients or consumers.

Adherence to standards of treatment helps benefits the organization because its employees are able to remain compliant with state and federal legislation and policy. These standards were put in place to confront organizations with histories of discrimination toward individuals with disabilities. Discrimination toward this population is rooted in a multitude of sources, but once recognized it pushed government entities to establish changes and additions to the law-making process. More specifically, this shift in legislation protecting this population works to eliminate discrimination against this population rather than give preferential treatment or special protections (Silvers & Francis, 2017). Because of laws such as the American with Disabilities Act, professionals that serve this population are better guided to address discriminatory practices as well as work toward being more accessible and accommodating.

Through the implementation of different training methods, organizations can maintain a professional environment where employees effectively work alongside individuals with disabilities. All organizations are capable of molding their staff to not only recognize their own multicultural incompetence's, but also rely on effective training strategies to improve their ability to work with this population.

Some recommendations for future researchers to address in their articles would be funding, laws, and the companies focus. Funding for positions, trainings, accessibility, and accommodations for employees or customers with disabilities. Funding is a center topic for many companies, and not having any information on what it would do to the company or what would have to change within the company to make those funding adjustments. When it comes to different laws within the ADA, they seems to be as updated as possible. Figuring out if companies are following these laws and when they are going into practice for the employee or customer are essential. Following the ADA guidelines ensures companies will not be found guilty of not providing appropriate accommodations for employees and customers. Lastly, research did not provide any indication on if organizations are focused on making their employees work well with people with disabilities. Before hiring, it would be recommended figuring out if employees are comfortable with working alongside or with people with disabilities. Employees could have fears, be unprofessional, or lack political correctness while at the work place.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY

The research for training and development to improve employee's knowledge, skills and abilities were reflected throughout this paper. The purpose of this research was to focus on best practices for employee skill development through the training curriculum. Taking a deeper looking into how training designs are made, and different models trainings are being based off. Historically, research has demonstrated that reliance on one method of training alone, will not prepare employee for the multiple demands that they will encounter in their work settings (deJong, 1991; Marsik, 1987). Based off the research above, there are more than one type of learning style and training model designs to mimic when designing trainings for employees.

This paper evaluated two different learning styles. The first type of learning style was presented with four different examples being, diverger, converger, accomidator and assimilator. Another type of learning style that is more commonly known in a school setting are visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic and individual versus group performance. Since everyone learns differently and not every training design can be costume fit for every employee or company, it is important for companies and training designers to keep this in mind. Adding activities to activate different learning styles throughout trainings can make sure every learning style can be represented and reflective of multiple learning styles.

Another attribute to keep in mind while designing trainings consist of learning models. These models help training designers follow a learning model and help guide training sessions for new and current employees. The four models that were explored through this research were the ADDIE model, Merrill's principle of instructions, Gegne's nine events of instructions and Bloom's taxonomy. After exploring these models there is also a reflection model that

demonstrates how to make a learning model based off the four models that were researched. The goal for presenting these models is intended for training designers to use when planning a training.

Going through the different learning styles and learning models proposes a goal for companies when training new and current employees. Having a training that is well thought out with different learners in mind can help companies when it comes to training and retaining employees. The goal is that with training new employees and have ongoing training for current employees will help the company have less unethical work habits, behavioral issues within the company, less frustration, and be able to perform their assigned tasks.

Although there was not much data on how this processes has worked in different types or organizations and companies. In addition, there is not enough information to determine if taking learning styles and models into account it will have a greater effect on employees working with people with disabilities. Despite the lack of information on those specific populations, the research does suggest that incorporating learning styles and models into training designs will help employees. This helps new and current employees because incorporating learning styles and models will increase job satisfaction, and ongoing training will address issues, have a clear vision of their roles within the office. It will also, help the company have less unethical work habits, behavioral issues within the company, less frustration, and be able to perform their assigned tasks.

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Major Professor: Jane L. Nichols