

white paper:

Records Management Training: A Needs Assessment Tool



Training and development professionals recognize that the key to developing a successful employee training program is to start with a needs assessment.

By starting with the broader objectives of the organization and then identifying the staff performance goals that will support those objectives, you set a solid foundation for developing effective training content and delivery methods.

But how do you pin down an organization's training objectives in the world of records management (RM), where every day you must juggle the often competing demands of compliance risk management, efficient information access, and cost savings? How do you settle on training delivery methods for an audience that ranges from full-time RM specialists to end users with little interest in the inner workings of an RM program?

Fortunately, you don't have to face those challenges alone. As an industry leader in the development of RM-specific training programs, TAB has prepared the following needs assessment tool.

The questions following provide a starting point for cutting through the complications and contradictions that cloud your organization's training objectives, putting you well on the road to addressing records management challenges, big and small.



1.0 Organizational Objectives

Take a look at your organization's strategic plan, corporate report, or risk management policies. From a broad corporate standpoint, what does the organization need to accomplish with the help of effective records management? What are some of the more overtly RM-oriented goals that support those broader objectives?

Use the following checklists to identify your organization's corporate priorities and RM-specific objectives. Once you've completed the table, you may wish to draw dotted lines across the columns in order to highlight linkages between organizational priorities and supporting RM program goals.

Notes:

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

<input type="radio"/>	Compliance with applicable statutes and regulations.
<input type="radio"/>	Management of legal liability and litigation risk.
<input type="radio"/>	Decreased risk to people and the environment.
<input type="radio"/>	More efficient business operations and/or service delivery.
<input type="radio"/>	Decreased expenditures on support resources.
<input type="radio"/>	Increased workplace satisfaction and employee retention.
<input type="radio"/>	Other (identify):

RM GOALS

<input type="radio"/>	Standardizing practices for handling records across their entire life cycle.
<input type="radio"/>	Faster, more reliable access to necessary business information.
<input type="radio"/>	Protecting records from damage, loss, unauthorized access.
<input type="radio"/>	More efficient business operations and/or service delivery.
<input type="radio"/>	Automating manual processes for organizing, accessing and managing documents.
<input type="radio"/>	Other (identify):

2.0 Participant Groups

No single course can meet the training needs of all individuals across your organization. You should therefore identify key groups of training participants based on different levels of responsibility for records. Perhaps those roles and responsibilities are already mandated in your organization's Information Management Policy and/or descriptions of individual positions. In identifying possible groups of participants for customized training programs, consider the following roles or their equivalent:



<input type="radio"/>	Executive or senior management sponsor
<input type="radio"/>	Corporate records manager
<input type="radio"/>	Records management support staff
<input type="radio"/>	Departmental super-user (manager and/or administrative support)
<input type="radio"/>	End users
<input type="radio"/>	Other (identify):

Notes:



3.0 Content and Performance Needs

The specific training needs of each role-based participant group will depend on two things:

- The basic tasks and/or competencies required to meet the responsibilities of each group
- Any performance challenges specific to the group, which might be discernible through recurring errors, complaints or incidents.

Working with departmental management, Human Resource professionals and incident response specialists (e.g. Information Security), use the following table to assess the training needs and performance challenges specific to each participant group:

GROUP	REQUIRED TASKS/ COMPETENCIES	PERFORMANCE CHALLENGES
Executive/senior management sponsor		
Corporate records manager		
Records management support staff		
Departmental super-user		
End users		
Other (identify):		

Notes:



4.0 Training Delivery Challenges

Effective training delivery methods will provide participants with access to content that will improve their performance. But the practical circumstances of those participants can have a profound impact on which mode of access will work best for them. As you examine your organization's overall training needs and consult with prospective participants, keep your eyes open for any challenges that might shape your choice of training delivery methods. The following checklist provides some examples of common training delivery challenges:

<input type="radio"/>	Limited availability of participants due to workload or frontline duties.
<input type="radio"/>	Travel costs for participants from different geographic locations.
<input type="radio"/>	Difficulty assembling participants due to work shifts and/or time zone differences.
<input type="radio"/>	Language differences across work settings.
<input type="radio"/>	Differences in individual learning styles and/or willingness to interact during training.
<input type="radio"/>	Difficulty tracking and enforcing completion of self-directed study options.
<input type="radio"/>	Variations in computer literacy and comfort levels with electronic media.
<input type="radio"/>	Limited availability of technology and other training resources at specific work locations.

Notes:

Applying Your Findings

Answering the above questions is just the beginning. By laying a solid foundation of methodical data gathering, you are now on your way to developing an RM training program that responds to your organization's loftiest goals and its most commonplace workday realities. Use your assessment findings as the basis for key training design and development tasks, such as:

- •Formally documenting training program objectives that address organizational priorities and corporate-level impacts of RM. At the same time, make sure these objectives are performance-based and centred on the training participants themselves.
- •Developing training content tailored to the specific roles, needs and performance challenges that you have identified. You know what you want people to take away from training. Now develop something for them to take away.
- •Designing training delivery methods appropriate to different roles and responsive to practical challenges. Depending on these roles and challenges, possible options include classroom training, self-study and e-learning.

Through our sessions your staff will:

- Enhance and expand records management knowledge
- Become leaders in RM
- Support business processes
- Gain competitive advantage
- Enhance professionalism
- Share industry best practices
- Team building
- Learn methodologies that can be applied in any situation
- Get documentation of knowledge and experience
- Gain confidence in solving records management problems

TAB Can Help

If you need records management training for your organization, we can provide a comprehensive program customized to your particular RM and business needs.

We have over ten years experience in this area and we can deliver training online or in the classroom, at your facility or ours.

Whether you need "upfront" training on the fundamentals from classification and retention through to TAB SMART, or want to provide training for a specific product initiative, we can help. We can conduct training on a one time basis or on an ongoing basis. We'll work with your existing training methodology and can "train the trainer".

Remember, the benefits of RM training go beyond teaching staff the basics and extend to cost cutting, risk management, compliance and increased program profile.

For more information, contact us!

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