SAP® Training Needs Analysis

Ensuring the right training, for the right staff, at the right time
Training Needs Analysis – what is it?

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is the first step in developing SAP training programmes specifically for your business. It entails identifying and defining the key gaps in skills and competency in relation to how your SAP system is used, and specifying the training required to bridge those gaps.

As well as identifying the relevant SAP user communities and the gaps in skills and competency, the TNA defines:

- The likely number and profile of users
- The range of courses to be delivered
- The individual training strategies required for different groups of users

Ultimately, it is user training that enables you to get the best out of your SAP system. Implementing the right training, for the right people, at the right times through the lifetime of the system, sustains its contribution to the performance of your business at peak level, thereby securing payback on your investment in SAP.

Absoft’s comprehensive TNA programme, carried out by a team that understands your business, your system and your people’s needs, can help you achieve this goal.

A formal TNA approach

You wouldn’t spend money on software or hardware without working out your system requirements, so why do it on training?

When an organisation has clear SAP competency issues, it is tempting to take immediate action and kick off the ‘obvious’ training. However, starting the training before the requirements are fully determined almost always results in training which is neither fully relevant nor completely effective in building competency.

Absoft’s goal is to improve business performance by identifying, deploying and reinforcing proper, effective use of SAP in support of business processes.

Advocating a formal TNA approach is consistent with that aim. Why?

A route to tailored training

Tailoring is the key element of Absoft’s training that helps you realise the true value of your investment in SAP.

Assessing the individual needs of both your organisation and staff through the TNA, allows us to tailor the training we deliver to your business.

Taking your budget further

Training produces better results when based on needs identified in your business, on your own SAP solution and on your processes. This means spending is more effective and your budget goes further.

Deeper and more sustainable learning

Absoft’s ‘learn by doing’ approach makes the knowledge go deep and stay deep. TNA supports this approach, by providing vital information from which to devise representative business scenarios and real-life exercises.

Better user motivation from Day 1

A formal TNA approach involves users right from the start of the process and an involved user is an empowered user.

“Absoft engaged with everyone from senior management down, and collected data at all levels. This, plus their SAP knowledge, gave us a much more complete picture of our training needs than we were expecting.”

Training Advisor, leading international oil company
Why Absoft for SAP Training Needs Analysis?

At the heart of Absoft’s approach to TNA is our strongly held ‘specify now or pay later’ philosophy. Only when a training programme is fully specified and approved do we set about designing and delivering the actual training.

Absoft’s ‘learn by doing’ approach means users have a strong track record of ‘getting it’ first time round. This eliminates the need for further rounds of training, which often prevails in other SAP training initiatives.

A key factor in Absoft’s success is that our trainers understand both SAP and the client’s business. Our TNA service is delivered by SAP experts with strong training credentials, rather than trainers who have become familiar with SAP. What you gain from this is a more thorough TNA, based on in-depth process and system understanding.

More than that, the courses we specify in our TNA reflect your own SAP environment. This could mean, for example, that we recommend making use of your test or training system, or designing training courses to incorporate your own data.

The result: maximum learning effectiveness.

Finally, Absoft’s exclusive focus on SAP means that SAP customers literally have our full attention.

“What's really worked for us is that Absoft's Training Needs Analysis not only looks at people's roles and competencies, but also takes account of their cultural traits and their attitudes towards using SAP.”

Derek Hammond - Materials & Logistics Manager, Marlin Offshore Services (Thailand) Ltd
TNA – the Absoft way

Absoft’s approach to TNA has three phases: Orient, Identify and Map.

Orient
We start with a rough prediction of what training is right for each person, based on their job functions. This gives us a fast start, and is especially useful for businesses with acute competency issues. At the same time we review your SAP training history, along with other pertinent factors such as:

• What coaching and monitoring takes place
• What learning format has been most effective in the past
• What training content and materials already exist

We then review a range of factors including:

• Organisational objectives and performance indicators
• Business strategy and values
• Views and evidence from your SAP support team
• Change blockers and pain points
• Key user information and training histories

Using this information we produce the detailed goals, scope, schedule and initial budget estimate for the required training programme. We also recommend the optimum set of members for the training focus team that will work with Absoft in the next phase – Identify.

Identify
The main objective of this phase is to produce a detailed skills/competency gap analysis, which in Absoft’s methodology comprises five key building blocks:

• User index: contact, training and competency details etc, for training programme candidates
• Role index: listing and details of all logical groupings of users who would normally receive the same training and similar system access privileges
• Course curricula: details of all courses that will be offered as part of the project scope
• Cross-reference between job titles and roles
• Cross-reference between roles and courses

In developing these building blocks, we take account of factors such as geographic spread of workforce, SAP environment and culture, and also establish the most appropriate and effective training methods for different groups within the organisation. (e.g. classroom training for payables clerks, but e-learning tutorials for managers utilising SAP for cost and budget reporting).

Absoft also works with the customer’s ‘power users’ at this stage to ensure the training offered is representative of the customer’s operational activity. We use storyboarding techniques and the business knowledge of the power users to define in detail the exercises that will underpin the learning experience.

Map
At this point the competency or training gap is already known. Conventionally this would be the end point of a TNA process but Absoft’s approach features an extra phase – Map. This provides valuable practical details such as:

• Numbers and types of courses to be run
• Provisional costs of training
• Costs versus benefits of closing the identified competency gaps

The final phase makes Absoft’s Training Needs Analysis a truly complete service.

Why? Because it gives you a finalised scope of work for a subsequent tendering process.

For further information about our services, please visit our website: www.absoft.co.uk or contact us directly for a no-obligation discussion by emailing us at info@absoft.co.uk or calling us on +44 (0)1224 707088.