Learning Needs Analysis

The power to **Bestow Power on Others**

A learning needs analysis digs into the details of what the people you are hoping to impact need to know, value, or be able to do. The following table suggests a few important areas of detail, and why you might want to pose these kinds of questions as you explore the learning needs angle.

Areas of inquiry	Reason for exploring this area during task analysis
▪ What are the behaviors and tasks that employees need to be able to perform? ▪ What is the goal of these tasks? ▪ What do people need to do differently from what they do now? ▪ What knowledge and skill is necessary for people to be able to perform those behaviors and tasks?	These questions get at the heart of the matter. Starting with these, you can explore detailed task steps, and what people need to know in order to make judgments and decisions in performing their tasks. From there, you can determine what may need to be included in a training and development effort.
▪ What do people already know and what are they already able to do that is related?	This question helps identify how to build on what people already know. It may also uncover knowledge and practices that must be "unlearned."
▪ What makes this task difficult? ▪ What are some of the common mistakes?	Difficult tasks and areas with mistake potential are elements you may really want to call out, spend instruction time on, and address with plenty of practice and hands-on learning.
▪ What are the decision points in this task and what is involved in making those decisions?	The answer to this question hints at the knowledge that is needed as a precursor to making a good decision.
▪ How often is this task performed?	Frequently performed tasks are the ones you want to help learners nail cold. In contrast, instruction on rare tasks might be better left to performance support on the job.
▪ What is the minimum people need to know to get started? ▪ What role does on-the-job learning and learning through experience play in the development of this knowledge base or skill?	These questions help inform decisions about where to concentrate energy, or aspects of the knowledge set or skill building that can be left for follow-up training or resources.
▪ What performance support resources are available to guide behaviors and tasks?	This question may reveal what should be leveraged during the training, so that instruction focuses on *using* the performance support, rather than duplicating its function. Additionally, it may reveal an opportunity to modify or add to the resources.