What is adventure training?

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Adventure Training or Adventure-based Training is a form of experiential training to bring about beneficial organizational development. Adventure training is also known as Corporate Adventure Training, Experience-based Training and Development, Outdoor Experiential Training and Outdoor Management Development. All of these refer to training that utilizes adventure training activities, whether in an indoor or outdoor setting, to enable positive development to organizations.

These adventure training activities can be classified under five distinct categories of socialization games, group initiatives, ropes course, outdoor pursuits and other adventures (Priest, 1996). Socialization games refer to ice breakers which allow participants to get to know each other; group initiatives are tasks that require active team participation to complete, rope courses involve a form of rope obstacle course that needs to be navigated by the participants; outdoor pursuits are activities that are conducted in an outdoor or unique setting and other adventures refer to non-traditional activities that are associated with the nature of the work setting.

Benefits to organizations through the participation of these adventure training activities can occur at different levels such as benefits to individual employees, benefits to management work units and benefits to the organization. Some of the typical areas that can be improved through such activities are in areas such as trust development, conflict management, leadership development and team building.

The benefits can help to facilitate changes for the participants to utilize within the workplace to enable better outcomes in work performance. Priest (1996) classifies the programs that facilitate these changes into four distinct categories: Recreation, Education, Development and Therapy. Recreation programs enable participants to change the way they feel through enjoyment and fun; Education programs teach participants new knowledge and imparts new understanding on a topic to change the way they think and feel; development programs imparts new functional behaviours to participants so as to change the way they act, think and feel; therapeutic programs helps participants raise their awareness regarding dysfunctional behaviours and teaching them alternative appropriate

behaviours to change the way they cope, act, think and feel. These programs can utilize a single approach or a combination of approaches to facilitate the specific needs of the organization.

Priest, S. (1996). A Research Summary for Corporate Adventure Training (CAT) and Experience-Based Training and Development (EBTD). Paper presented at the Coalition for Education in the Outdoors Research Symposium Proceedings, Bradford Woods, Indiana.