



Journal Homepage: - www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/7389
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/7389>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF STAFF TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES' WORK ATTITUDE.

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 11 May 2018
 Final Accepted: 13 June 2018
 Published: July 2018

Keywords:-

Employee training, competence, job attitude, skills, competitive advantage, workforce.

Abstract

Training employees is an important activity for any organization. It instills workforce competence in the organization and boosts employee's level of effectiveness in carrying out their responsibilities. There is evidence in the literature that shows that employee training increases an organization's productivity levels and competitive advantage because it leads to greater retention and effective task completion. The study sought to provide empirical evidence of change in employees' attitude towards their jobs and employer after carrying out job training. The study was carried out at Star Times offices in Lagos Nigeria, where 20 employees (9 males, 11 females) of the company from the Sales and Marketing department were selected for the study. The company carried a massive training of her employees in the department, which provided an opportunity to check the change in their attitudes. The study showed that women (72.3, n=8) realized the greater change in their attitudes towards their jobs compared to their male counterparts (66.7%, n=6). The result ($\chi^2 = 6.492$, df = 2, p < 0.5). There was a marked increase in job satisfaction (50% to 80%), teamwork (50% to 85%), feeling of competency (60% to 80%), and organizational commitment (65% to 80%). The study concludes that job training affects employees' attitude towards their jobs and employers positively.

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Introduction:-

Employees are the biggest asset an organization can ever have because their performance and input have a significant effect on the output of the organization. Having a well-functioning workforce is a requirement for any growing or established organization or company because an efficient workforce provides a competitive advantage over other companies (Elhaga & Imran, 2013). This is because the workforce is responsible for ensuring the organization accomplishes optimum customer satisfaction through provision of quality services and meeting all aspects of customer demands regarding products or services (Obisi, 2011). Customers will be willing to work with a business whose employees are responsive and friendly.

Employee training involves providing the workforce with the required skills to suit them in accomplishing specific tasks (Asfaw, Argaw, & Bayissa, 2015). Employee training may be part of employee development initiative, which usually takes a long time and results in the enhancement of one's skills through unconscious and conscious learning processes (Asfaw et al., 2015). Employee training is imperative in improving the competency of the workforce so

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that the organization can be able to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of its human capital (Shiryan, Shee, & Stewart, 2012). Chidambaram and Ramachandran (2012) state that skill and knowledge development enables employees to become flexible and effective, which enables them to exert themselves more in their roles and accomplish their tasks effectively.

Employee training is a human resource management initiative aimed at improving the morale and innovativeness of the workforce, so that they may be able to perform better (Asfaw et al., 2015). Therefore, employee training is not an issue any organization can avoid, as the employees need to be abreast of social and economic issues that are relevant to their work and in service provision to their customers. The factors that affect the level and number of employee training include internal and external changes, need to motivate the workforce, and the availability of required skills within the workforce (Shiryan et al., 2012). Organizations need to first identify the training needs within their workforce, organize the training, and evaluate the effectiveness of the training on the short and long-term productivity of the employees (Obisi, 2011). This means an organization needs to take an organized approach to employee training in order to realize benefits from the program.

This research uses a conceptual management framework to determine the importance of training on employee performance in the short and the long run. The hypothesis revolves around employee training and the effect it brings to the performance of the staff of an organization. The research focuses on the workforce in Nigeria and the importance the acquisition of appropriate skills can provide to enable the country meet its growth agenda in the next 20 years. The research shall investigate the change in work attitude among employees in a business enterprise in Nigeria after they underwent training in their specific job areas.

Background Literature:-

Reasons for employee training:-

The main reason companies carry out employee training is to equip them with the necessary skills to carry out their tasks effectively among other benefits (Nassazi, 2013). Researchers have noted that employee training brings a number of benefits to the workforce such as high morale among workers, reduction in the cost of production because of the proper use of resources, low turnover due to low absenteeism and improvement in the quality of the staff available among other benefits (Truitt, 2011). Researchers note that failure to provide training and development to employees result in a number of conflicts within the workforce and the management, as the employees feel most of their needs are not being met (Truitt 2011). According to Dash and Mahapatra (2016), several sources of conflicts may arise such as job insecurity, unpleasant employees, conflicting ideas, and unrealistic expectations, which employees encounter when they do not have a clear vision of the company or organizational direction. Job training allows the employees to feel they are valued, understand the expectations, and work together as a team to accomplish the goals of their organization.

Nassazi (2013) states that employee training arises on the need to resolve problems in the company related to the performance of the employees, change the company's situation due to external changes such as innovation or technology changes, and need to improve specific work-related practices. This process involves identification of the specific skills and knowledge that the employees may require which the training is supposed to provide. Training may occur at the strategic, tactical, and operational level of the organization (Nassazi, 2013). At the strategic level, the organizational management determines the needs to fix problems, strategies, goals, and missions by training employees to align themselves with these needs (Githinji, 2014). At the tactical level, the middle management determines the need to encourage coordination and cooperation between different units in the organization. In the operational level, employees and lower management determine the problems related to the overall operation of the departments such as employee performances (Nassazi, 2013). Identification of the needs in each level allows the management to develop a training initiative that captures these needs and ensures employees remain competitive.

Employee engagement:-

The human resource (HR) management of any organization has to carry out training of employees on a regular basis to align them with the organization's objectives and goals (Mohamud, 2014). The HR initiatives help in influencing the employees' behavior in order to incorporate the goals, visions, mission, objectives, and initiatives of the organization into the operational side of the company. Training and development is an initiative to improve the employee focus and commitment to their jobs, which enables them to meet the organization's goals as they remain motivated and engaged (Ahmed, Phulpoto, Umrani, & Abbas, 2015). Lack of commitment and engagement by the

employees leads to poor results, which makes the company less competitive in the market. This leads to poor results as the organization does not deliver quality services to her customers.

Several factors drive employee engagement in their jobs. These include the provision of feedback, autonomy, personal support such as optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy, and supervisor's support (Ahmed et al., 2015). Individual factors such as burnout, sickness absenteeism, job satisfaction, and work enjoyment are aspects of work engagement, which the human resource needs to spend resources to meet (Khan, Khan, & Khan, 2011). When these aspects take a toll on employees without any initiative to prevent them from escalating, it can lower an employee's job morale and subsequently affect their job engagement. The difference between the skill expectation to perform a certain task and the available set of skills owned by employees affect their job satisfaction and turnover (Truitt, 2011). When this difference is too big, the employees feel a high demand on their jobs, which leads to low satisfaction, as they do not enjoy their work, causing them to leave for a job of a lesser extent or where they can get opportunities to get more skills. Therefore, training enables employees to get the required skills to get them more engaged in their roles.

Employee work attitude:-

Githinji (2014) states that training employees is part of a change process instigated by the management as a way to shake up the workforce and have them see the company's goals and vision in a new perspective. Training enables employees to be more innovative, as it equips them to perform their jobs more efficiently while allowing them the independence to use their creativities and abilities to develop new products and services (Githinji, 2014). Training enables employees to view their jobs in a different perspective, not just accomplishing roles, but working towards a specific direction. Chidambaram and Ramachandran (2012) state that training brings a team spirit among employees while enabling them to be more dynamic to the internal and external changes in their specific areas of specialization.

Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu, and Cai (2012) mention that employee training is beneficial to reducing turnover rates, which arises from dissatisfaction among some employees due to lack of growth opportunities in their areas of work. Quartey (2012) states that employees perceive organizations that provide training opportunities as those that value their development, which makes them commit to such organizations, leading to lower turnovers. When an organization provides training opportunities that help in bridging the knowledge gap between skill requirements and the abilities employees have, it causes them to reciprocate the availability of this opportunity on their workplaces by working harder to improve job performance (Chidambaram & Ramachandran, 2012). When employees receive a lot of training, they become more educated, understand the organization's mission further, and are more acquainted with their jobs than before.

All job training apart from the provision of the necessary skills to the workforce, aim at changing the attitude of the employees towards their organization and subsequently to their roles (Truitt, 2011). Work attitude is usually characteristics of employees emanating from the performance of their jobs, or how the management treats them. These include job satisfaction, the feeling of importance, organization commitment, feeling of being proficient, commitment to quality, accountability, and job involvement. Adongo (2013) states that employees usually have a lot of responsibility for their roles, which can be affected by their feelings or attitude they have towards their jobs. Truitt (2011) reiterates the importance of keeping employees' attitude towards their jobs positive at all times, as it is key towards maintaining a competitive advantage and ensuring the company remains profitable. When the management allows employees' attitude to deteriorate, it leads to high turnover, high level of dissatisfaction, and poor service provision, which may affect the company's image (Falola, Osibanjo, & Ojo, 2014). Job training, apart from other benefits such as incentive programs and good pay, enables employees to remain focused on their jobs and deliver quality services in the end.

Training:-

An organization can carry out employee training for different purposes such as enhancing the skills and expertise of employees, providing knowledge on contemporary issues, or aligning new employees with the organizational practices (Degraft-Otoo, 2012). Ahmed et al. (2015) state that an organization has to align training with employee needs in order to have a successful training session; otherwise, it would be a waste of time and resources. Training facilitates employees to acquire proper reasoning and behavior that will enable them to accomplish their roles by gaining important competencies and communication (Truitt, 2011). It is therefore imperative that the employees

become involved in the training schedule to be able to provide their views on what the organization needs to do to meet their skills gaps.

Training usually consists of on-the-job training or off-the-job training. On-the-job training involves managers, supervisors, mentors, and colleagues providing workers with new skills and helping them adjust to their jobs (Obisi, 2011). This kind of training is disadvantageous as the learner may get distracted, may have inadequate training due to the incompetence of the trainers, or find it hard to acquire important skills due to environmental distractions (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Off-the-job training may include simulations, seminars, conferences, vestibule training, lectures, role-playing, discussion, and case study among others (Obisi, 2011). This training allows employees get required knowledge from experts and professionals in the industry, which makes it possible for them to ground themselves in their professional development. Organizations should not only strive to train employees but develop them by incorporating and tracking the growth of their workforce over time.

Purpose of the Study:-

There is enough evidence in the literature to show that there is a relationship between job training and employee performance. This is because job training enables employees to gather the required skills, knowledge, and expertise to accomplish their roles effectively (Manuel, 2014). Job training is an imperative role of the HR and any new employee and current workforce require constant development on their areas of expertise for the organization to remain competitive (Falola et al., 2014). There is, however, little empirical evidence to suggest job training improves or changes employees' attitude towards their jobs and organization. This study explored the relationship between job training and employee attitude towards their jobs and organization apart from performance proficiencies. This is because employees' attitude towards work and organization greatly determines their actions, work commitment, and turnover rates (Truitt, 2011). The study explored the attitude of the participants before and after job training on a pay per view Television Company known as StarTimes in Lagos, Nigeria. The study examined the change in employees' attitude towards their jobs, their employer, and their skill levels before and after the job training.

Hypotheses:-

There were several assumptions used to determine the outcome of the study regarding the attitudes of the employees before and after they underwent the job training. The hypotheses include:

H1: The employees of the firm will display a positive attitude towards their work after undergoing the work training.

H2: The employees will have a positive outlook on their employer and future prospects of working at the company.

Materials and Methods:-

Design:-

The study was a quantitative study with an experimental design, where the analysis of change in employees' attitude before and after job training was analyzed. The study aimed to analyze the result of the phenomenon after the implementation of the intervention in whether there would be a change in employees' attitudes towards their jobs. The analysis of the change in attitude by carrying out tests before and after implementation of the intervention was the right way of testing whether the training had an effect on the employees.

Participants and sampling technique:-

The study was conducted in Lagos Nigeria among the Sales and Marketing staff of Startimes. Startimes is a low-cost pay-TV firm in Africa and is present in many African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Madagascar, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Guinea among others. The company had plans of training her employees in early April 2018 to enable her to penetrate the Nigerian market dominated by other competitors. There were 20 participants recruited for the study (9 males, 11 females), all of whom were living in the city of Lagos. The research used a random sampling technique to recruit participants, whereby the inclusion criteria did not depend on any other factor apart from working with Startimes and being among the employees who were to undergo training. The same employees were used to provide data after the training to capture the developments of their attitudes with the training.

Research Instruments:-

The study utilized closed-ended questionnaire to query workers on their attitudes and perceptions of their jobs and company after the training. The questionnaire had 10 questions with some questions requiring participants to answer

a 'Yes' or 'No', provide ratings or just provide feedback. The questionnaires helped to capture important data points needed to prove or refute the hypotheses meant for the study.

Data collection method:-

Two questionnaires were created for the study, one to capture data before the training and one after (see APPENDIX). The employees were issued with the first set of questionnaire two weeks before the training began and the other set two weeks after the training. The second questionnaire was similar to the first, seeking to provide the change in worker's attitude towards their jobs and employer. The employees required a maximum of 10 minutes to fill the questionnaires, which were used to evaluate the outcomes.

Statistical treatment of data:-

Before data collection, the human resource manager at the company helped to validate the reliability of the data collection instruments. The HR and the management agreed that the questionnaire clearly captured the required data from the survey that could show whether there was a change in employees' attitude after training. The statistical software Minitab was used to perform most statistical processes in the study. A reliability test on the items of the questionnaires was done using Cronbach's alpha test. The test provided the internal reliability of the scaled questions, which was .90, way above the recommended value of .70 by Truitt (2011). The changes in data were tracked by calculating the percentage change in responses from participants since the questionnaires were almost similar in capturing data before and after the training.

Statement of ethical principles:-

The research study sought to investigate the phenomenon without interfering with the attitudes and values of participants in any way. The consent to carry out the study was sought from the company management upon realizing they were to carry out staff training, which would be appropriate for the study. Consent letters were sent to individual staff members, who agreed to provide their unbiased opinions before and after the training. The data capture instruments concentrated in gathering the view of the participants, their gender, and age, without disclosing them to anyone as they were truly confidential. We upheld high ethical and cultural principles in considering the views of the participants by respecting them as personal opinions given in good faith.

Results:-

The number of participants for the study was 20. The same participants were involved in the study by taking the survey before and after the training. This was imperative to track their change in attitude towards their job and employer. The participants comprised of 45% men (n=9) and 55% women (n=11), while 70% (n=14) of the participants were aged between 24 and 40 years, the oldest being 51 years. All the employees were part of the sales and marketing team for the company in Lagos, Nigeria.

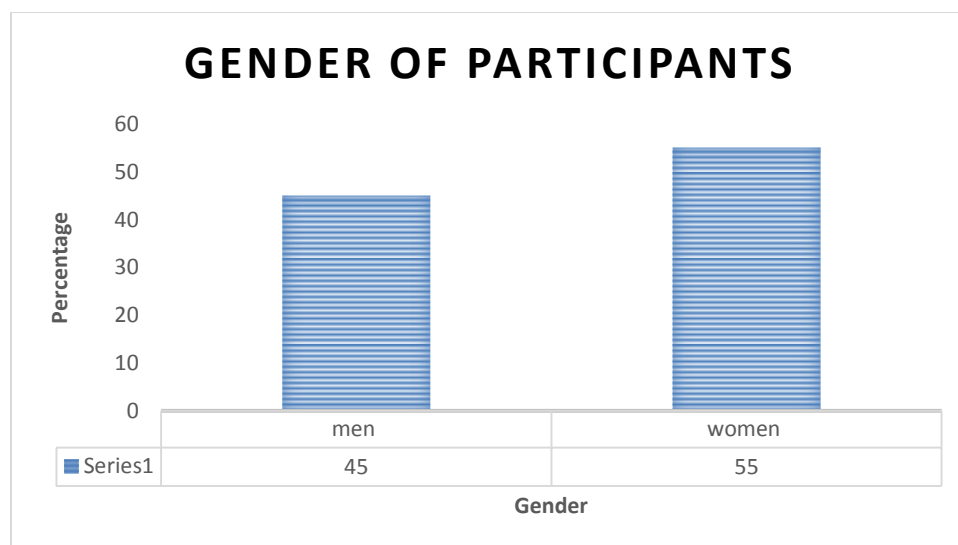


Figure 1:-Gender of Participants

All the participants (100%) agreed that having the opportunity to undergo job training provided by the company would improve their job competency. The same number agreed after the training that they have gained more knowledge to realize improvement in their job competencies. This was the questions which the employees provided the most positive response, showing they had a positive attitude towards training. Two weeks after the training, the employees provided their general attitude towards their jobs.

	Job Attitude After Training			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Total
Male				
Number	6	2	1	9
% within gender	66.7	22.2	11.1	100
a) Female				
Number	8	3	0	11
% within gender	72.3	27.3		100
b) Total				
Number	14	5	1	20
% within gender	70	25	5	100
$\chi^2 = 6.492$, df = 2, $p < 0.5$				

Table 1:-Participants attitude towards their jobs after training

The result of the study showed that the women (72.3, n=8) realized the greater change in their attitudes towards their jobs compared to their male counterparts (66.7%, n=6). The result ($\chi^2 = 6.492$, df = 2, $p < 0.5$) shows that the difference was significant in terms of attitude towards jobs after training between the male and female genders. There were other significant improvements in the views of the employees after the job training. The number of employees who at least agreed to have a positive relationship with their colleagues and seniors increased from 16 (80%) to 19 (95%).

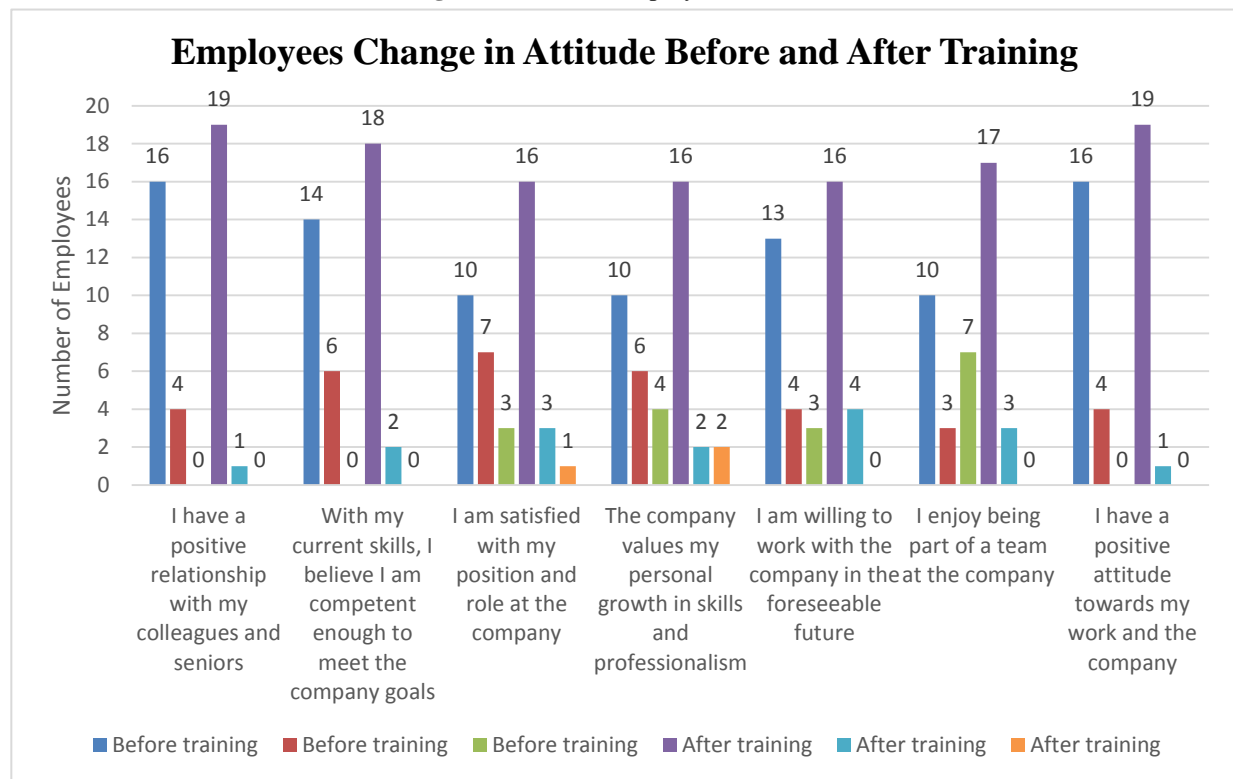
		Before training			After training		
		Strongly agree or agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree or disagree	Strongly agree or agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree or disagree
4	I have a positive relationship with my colleagues and seniors	16	4	0	19	1	0
5	With my current skills, I believe I am competent enough to meet the company goals	14	6	0	18	2	0
6	I am satisfied with my position and role at the company	10	7	3	16	3	1
7	The company values my personal growth in skills and professionalism	10	6	4	16	2	2
8	I am willing to work with the company in the foreseeable future	13	4	3	16	4	0
9	I enjoy being part of a team at the company	10	3	7	17	3	0
10	I have a positive attitude towards my work and the company	16	4	0	19	1	0

Table 2:-Change in employees' attitude after job training

The most significant change realized was that the number of employees who were satisfied with their roles and position at the company rose from 50% (n=10) to 80% (n=16). Those who perceived the company valued their

growth increased to 80% from 50%, while most employees (85%, n=17) felt they enjoyed being part of a team as compared to before the training (50%, n=10).

Figure 2:-Data on Employees' Attitude



Discussion:-

There was evidence of change in employees' attitude towards their work and employer after the implementation of the training program. The number of employees who exuded confidence in their skills and proficiency increased from 70% to 90% (14 to 18) after the training, which showed that many employees believed the training program enabled them to acquire more skills that would make them more competent. This also correlated with 80% (n=16) of the employees stating they were satisfied with their jobs after the training compared to only 50% (n=10) before the study. This marked increase in job satisfaction comes out of increment in awareness of roles and responsibilities after the training.

The employees' attitude towards their employer also seemed to have increased after the training compared to the time before. Those who believed the company valued their professional growth increased from 10 (50%) to 16 (80%), which showed that they believed the company showed it cared about their development and career growth. This correlates with 85% of the employees (compared to 50%) and 80% (compared to 65%) who agreed they enjoyed teamwork and were willing to stay longer at the company after they underwent the training. The training, therefore, seems to have changed the employees' perception of the company and how it valued their growth.

Elnaga and Imran (2013) in their study discovered that employees choose to join or leave a company depending on the existence of support for professional growth in the organization. Companies that promote career growth of their employees have an advantage in that employees will choose to stay because they see an opportunity of scaling their career ladder easier at such a place. High turnover rates, however, are common in companies that do not support career growth of their employees (Truitt, 2011). Al-Mzary, Al-rifai, and Al-Momany (2015) state that job training is a tool that helps in changing employees' attitude towards their employer and their jobs as well. Their study shows that employees perform better at their roles after training because the additional knowledge and skills provided brings confidence in carrying out duties effectively.

A study by Bulut and Culha (2010) shows that employees are more open to committing their professional lives in organizations that value them and enhance their development. Training is one way an organization communicates to her employees that it requires their competency to remain competitive. Newman, Thanacoody, and Hui (2011) state that employees prefer to stay in organizations that are constantly seeking to be ahead of the competitors, simply because they benefit through bonuses, training and developments as the organization keeps inspiring the employees to give their best. The employees are also able to get opportunities to be autonomous, hence innovative by using their creativities and skills (Newman et al., 2011). Therefore, training and developing employees affects the productivity of the workforce, their turnover rates, job satisfaction, and innovation. Companies that invest in this area are able to maintain their competitive advantage due to the presence of a competent workforce.

Conclusion:-

Job training is an important initiative by an organization to improve the skills and knowledge of the employees. This enables them to be more proficient and competent enough to carry out their responsibilities with more efficiency. Employees' performance is affected by their skill level and attitude towards their jobs and employer, which may make them either commit their careers in the same place or not. The study proves that employee's attitude changes whenever they undergo training, as it communicates many messages to them. They perceive the organization as supportive of their professional growth, feel valued, feel part of a team, more confident with their roles, and are willing to stay longer at the organization. Training can help organizations be more competitive as it changes employees' job attitude, making them more productive.

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