TRAIN THE TRAINER
VOLUME 4

td at work

TIPS, TOOLS & INTELLIGENCE FOR DEVELOPING TALENT

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION:

ESSENTIALS FOR MEASURING TRAINING SUCCESS

atd
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

TRAIN THE TRAINER

VOLUME 4

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION:

ESSENTIALS FOR MEASURING TRAINING SUCCESS

atd
PRESS

18 17 16 15 1 2 3 4 5

ATD Press is an internationally renowned source of insightful and practical information on talent development, training, and professional development.

ATD Press
1640 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA

Ordering information: Books published by ATD Press can be purchased by visiting ATD's website at www.td.org/books or by calling 800.628.2783 or 703.683.8100.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015956186

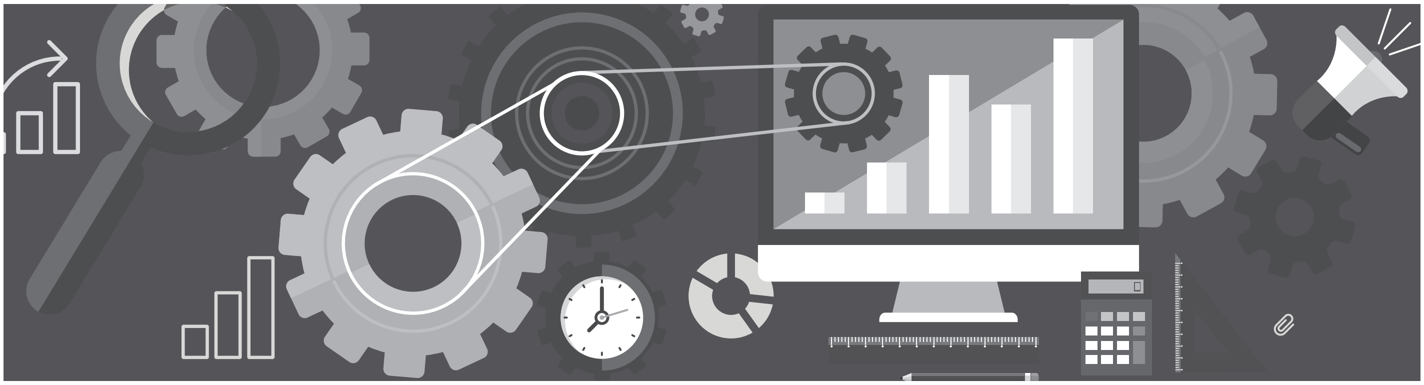
ISBN-10: 1-60728-177-5
ISBN-13: 978-1-60728-177-1
e-ISBN: 978-1-60728-178-8

ATD Press Editorial Staff
Director: Kristine Luecker
Manager: Christian Green
Community of Practice Manager, Learning & Development: Amanda Smith
Editor, *TD at Work:* Patty Gaul
Associate Editor: Caroline Coppel
Text and Cover Design: Iris Sanchez

Printed by Data Reproductions, Auburn Hills, MI

TRAIN THE TRAINER: VOLUME 4

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION: ESSENTIALS FOR MEASURING TRAINING SUCCESS



ESSENTIALS FOR EVALUATION 1

EVALUATION DATA: PLANNING AND USE 19

THE FOUR LEVELS OF EVALUATION—AN UPDATE 37

DEMYSTIFYING MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION 59

10 TACTICS FOR A SUSTAINABLE EVALUATION PROCESS 85

USING THE EXPERIENCE API TO TRACK LEARNING 103

DEVELOP VALID ASSESSMENTS 121

ENABLING SUCCESS THROUGH LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING 139

MAKING THE FINANCIAL CASE FOR PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT 157

HOW TO COLLECT DATA 175

HOW TO DEVELOP TRAINING QUALITY STANDARDS 193

HOW TO EVALUATE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS 211

BLENDED LEARNING THAT WORKS 229

DATA COLLECTION FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT 247

CREATING AN INTERNAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM 265

PRESS

Essentials for Evaluation

Essentials for Evaluation

AUTHOR

Alice K. Waagen, Ph.D.
Workforce Learning
1557 Hiddenbrook Drive
Herndon, VA 20170-2817
Tel. 703.834.7580
Email: WorkLearn@aol.com

Alice Waagen has more than 18 years experience in designing and implementing corporate training. She has developed full systems of training measurement and evaluation, including cost of training, training volume and activity, training customer satisfaction, and ROI. She holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in education.

Editor
Cat Sharpe

Associate Editor
Patrick McHugh

Designer
Steven M. Blackwood

Copy Editor
Kay Larson

ASTD Internal Consultant
Dr. Walter Gray

Essentials for Evaluation 3

Benefits of Evaluation 3

Evaluation of Training 4

Participant Reaction Surveys 4

What Have Participants Learned? 5

On-the-Job Behavior Evaluation 7

Evaluation Checklist 8

Evaluation of Organizational Results 9

Choosing the Right Format for Questions 10

Testing Methods 11

Evaluation Tips 12

Follow-Up Evaluations 13

Evaluation Methods 14

Essential Corporate Partners 15

References & Resources 16

Job Aid 18

Essentials for Evaluation

We all know the lingo: reengineering, downsizing, rightsizing, competition, globalization—the list seems endless. What all the "ations" and "isms" represent is the accelerated climate of change in corporate organizations today. Faced with maturing markets and global competition, corporate leadership has become extremely critical in its analysis of existing business processes and procedures.

One aspect of this introspection is the desire to eliminate waste and redundancy. Corporate overhead—or those support functions not directly responsible for generating revenue—has come under great scrutiny. The support functions that have survived this scrutiny best are those that, early on, learned how to operate like independent businesses themselves—providing optimal customer service while emphasizing value for the dollars spent.

Leading-edge training and development organizations, whether internal staff or contractors providing services to many corporations, know that the success of their businesses depends on demonstrating the value of training investment. The simplest way to prove training's value to a client is to document that the training has achieved its desired outcome.

Herein lies the fundamental secret to evaluating training: The evaluation process and procedure must be incorporated at the start; it must be an integral part of any program development process. If program development follows the classic steps of assessing needs and generating objectives, the evaluation criteria that follow are then based on measuring how well the program components—students, instructors, and materials—have met these objectives and answered the needs.

For more information on needs analysis and objectives refer to the following *Info-lines*: No. 8502, "Be a Better Needs Analyst"; No. 9808, "Task Analysis"; No. 8505, "Write Better Behavioral Objectives"; No. 9611, "Conducting a Mini-Needs Assessment"; No. 9401, "Needs Assessment by Focus Group"; No. 9712, "Instructional Objectives"; and No. 9713, "The Role of the Performance Needs Analyst."

A broad range of methods and tools is available for every evaluation approach. Options include direct observation, comparisons of tests taken before and after training, interviews, reports, follow-up testing, questionnaires, and surveys. The most effective approach includes combinations of the aforementioned methods. Depending on your objectives, the nature of the training, and focus of the evaluation, some methods are more appropriate than others. For example, the best choice for measuring machine repair skills is direct observation, the worst evaluation tool is a survey.

This issue of *Info-line* outlines the basics of training program evaluation. Different methods of evaluation will be discussed and matched to assorted training program designs. You will learn the advantages and disadvantages of the various types of evaluation. And finally, the emphasis on reporting results to management will be discussed, as well as keeping the evaluation process *client focused* and closely tied to business results.

Benefits of Evaluation

Evaluation methods help determine whether training achieves its objectives. Programs that are structured and designed properly have objectives or elements that specify what the training must accomplish and in what time period these accomplishments must be realized.

A sound system of evaluating training provides valuable information for the client, training management, and senior corporate management. The information elicited from training evaluations should be the final instrument upon which training decisions such as program additions, changes, or deletions should be made. Good evaluations document results of training programs, which subsequently can be used to prioritize training needs at the corporate level. Then, financial and other resources can be shifted from training that has less impact on corporate goals to those objectives that have the most favorable cost-benefit ratio.

Some specific benefits of evaluation are:

- a tool to assess the value of courses, seminars, and workshops
- built-in quality control of training programs that documents whether or not course objectives have been met
- a method for identifying programs that need improvement
- a basis upon which decisions to continue or eliminate a program can be made
- a way to identify the proper audience for future programs
- a method for managing training programs
- a mechanism to review and reinforce essential program points
- a way to get top management and participants to buy in to the program

When structured to elicit open-ended comments, training evaluations can serve two purposes: first, as a demonstrator of present-day benefits, and second, as an indicator of future training program needs.

Finally, summary or "macro" evaluation information can be proffered to senior management or key clients on a regular basis. This educates them as to the value of the training enterprise. Good evaluation reports should also document, in both statistical and qualitative terms, how training has helped the organization meet its goals.

Evaluation of Training

There are a number of ways to evaluate training and each method is designed to elicit different information. These various methodologies are often described as "levels" of information, from the simplest that obtain and quantify (reaction surveys), to the more complex and detailed (corporate results).

There are several levels of program evaluation criteria based on participants' reactions: what they've learned, their skills performance, their on-the-job behavior, and the effects and results the training has had on the entire organization.

The main evaluation methods will be discussed in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. Rather than thinking of these methods as a hierarchy from least valuable to most valuable, think of them all as useful tools in your training tool kit. If your client is most interested in seeing reaction data, this is a perfectly acceptable and useful form of evaluation; it should not be passed over for something more complex.

Following is a breakdown of how each level can be applied to help you develop a systematic approach to evaluating what your programs have accomplished.

Participant Reaction Surveys

Participant reaction surveys or "smile sheets" are questionnaires that are typically distributed at the end of each training program. They ask students to rate their perceptions about the quality and impact of the specific program. These questionnaires can range from a simple handful of questions regarding program design, instruction methods, and facilities to elaborate multipage forms for students to rate all facets of the program and provide input on future programs. This evaluation tool can serve as a valuable measure of attendee satisfaction and is relatively easy to administer, tabulate, and summarize in a results report.

Guidelines for Designing Reaction Surveys

Reaction surveys can provide quantifiable customer service data, giving you direct information from your program consumers. When designed with uniform overall questions, these surveys produce data that can be used to make comparisons between courses and participants. This allows program design decisions to be based on a broad range of perceptions, not just the responses of a few disappointed or disgruntled participants.

Reaction surveys provide the following results:

- Protection against making decisions based on a limited number of either satisfied or disappointed participants.
- Clues for improving programs, but no indication of how the training will affect job performance or organizational results.

Steps for Evaluating Reactions

The best instruments for reaction evaluations focus on points that are most important to the evaluator. They are straightforward and simple to fill out.

Evaluate reactions by using the following steps:

1. Determine what you want to know. Concentrate on specific areas such as methods, facilities, materials, and so on.
2. Design a comment sheet for tabulating and quantifying reactions. Experts suggest using a form designed for the particular program rather than a standardized or generic form.
3. Include sufficient space for questions and comments that cannot be quantified or tabulated.
4. Do not require participants to sign their evaluation forms. If participants are forced to identify themselves, they may feel obligated to be overly positive.
5. Keep the form simple and make sure it takes only a short time to complete. If you are interested in reactions, design sheets focusing on program content, not administration, for example.
6. Use a final comment sheet to gather additional or follow-up information. If you have already collected two or more previous evaluations, use a final one to clarify and complete information.
7. Establish standards of performance by converting reactions to numerical ratings. An example of this is a scale with numbers representing grades of quality: 1 poor, 2 adequate, 3 good, 4 very good, 5 excellent.

What Have Participants Learned?

A number of different tools can be designed to measure what participants have learned in the training program. Paper and pencil tests, administered before and after training, can be used to measure acquisition of knowledge and information. Skills can be evaluated concurrently with the training through simulations or in-class activities, which allow students to demonstrate instructed skills. Regardless of the assessment method used, all of these tests must be designed to relate directly to the course objectives.

Participant learning evaluations are difficult and more time consuming to develop and administer, but they are essential if the nature of the training requires that the learning be demonstrated and documented. Learning assessments are most commonly used in training programs that lead to licensing, certification, or involve skills that contain elements of risk. Computerized simulators, used for airplane pilot and locomotive engineer training, are examples of learning assessment tools. One reason learning evaluations are difficult to design is that they must be customized for every instructional program and *must* reflect the conditions of the specific job.

It is important to remember that learning evaluations accurately measure the amount of knowledge and skills acquired *at the time the test is administered*. In no way do these tests indicate long-term knowledge or skill retention, nor are they an indicator of how knowledge and skills are applied to the job. They simply serve as a snapshot in time denoting that students have mastered the course objectives at the time the instruction was offered.

Evaluation Data: Planning and Use

Issue 0304

Evaluation Data: Planning and Use

AUTHORS

Patricia Pulliam Phillips
The Chelsea Group
350 Crossbrook Drive
Chelsea, AL 35043
Tel: 205.678.0176
Fax: 205.678.0177
Email: thechelseagroup@aol.com

Cyndi Gaudet, PhD
The University of Southern Mississippi
School of Engineering Technology
Box 5137
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5137
Tel: 601.266.6181
Fax: 601.266.5717
Email: cyndi.gaudet@usm.edu

Jack J. Phillips, PhD
The Jack Phillips Center for Research, a division of Franklin Covey Company
350 Crossbrook Drive
Chelsea, AL 35043
Tel: 205.678.0176
Fax: 205.678.0177
Email: roiresearch@mindspring.com

Managing Editor
Mark Morrow

Editor
Tora Estep

Copy Editor
Ann Bruen

Production Design
Kathleen Schaner

Planning Is Key 21

Eight-Step Planning Model 21

Evaluation Implementation 32

References & Resources 34

Job Aid

Communication Planning Tools 35

Planning Is Key

Training and development professionals use evaluation data to ensure that their training or performance improvement programs meet the needs of learners and client organizations. Yet much of this valuable evaluation data is never used in any significant way to enhance the performance of learners or organizations. Focusing attention on the planning phase of the evaluation process and defining the future use of the data you collect will prevent this oversight and yield significant training and organizational benefits.

The expression, "plan your work, work your plan," is appropriate for evaluating training. A comprehensive plan defines the what, why, how, and who of the evaluation planning and implementation process. You can count on the following four outcomes if you develop a comprehensive evaluation plan. You will:

■ ***Save Money and Time***
Make final decisions up front about data collection methods, sources of data, and timing of data collection to save yourself costly and time-wasting headaches. A complete plan of the data collection process enables you to easily implement data collection once the data collection instrument has been designed and tested, while early planning of data analysis allows immediate analysis and report development. In planning data analysis, choose from the outset statistical procedures, methods to isolate the effects of the program, and methods to convert data to a monetary value. Finally, having a plan for the client to sign off on further reduces problems after data collection begins.

■ ***Improve the Quality and Quantity of Data***
Unnecessary, inappropriate, or insufficient data is useless and ultimately tarnishes the credibility of your evaluation efforts. Identifying the quantity and quality of data that is sufficient to describe the outcomes of your program is critical to evaluation success and further reduces costs and time.

■ ***Ensure Stakeholders Needs Are Addressed***
Planning allows you to carry out your evaluation with the right end in mind. Stakeholder needs typically determine the end: Executive management may be interested in cost-benefit comparisons to determine the organizational benefit of the program; training staff may need participant reaction and learning data to know how to improve the program; and line management may want to know the extent to which learning has transferred to the job and, more important, whether or not the training improved the intended key measures.

■ ***Prioritize Budgeting***
Planning enables you to fine-tune your project budgeting. Specify methods of data collection, sources of data, responsibilities for data collection, and timing of data collection to streamline allocation of the project budget. Improve management of the budget by itemizing costs for conducting the evaluation.

This *Infoline* presents an eight-step model as well as tips and tools to help you create a comprehensive evaluation plan. The last section of this chapter will show you how to plan the implementation of your evaluation. Use of the planning guidelines laid out in this *Infoline* will enable you to:

- develop comprehensive data collection and analysis plans
- develop a detailed communication strategy
- implement a comprehensive training evaluation without missing a step.

Eight-Step Planning Model

Evaluation planning delineates the parameters of data collection and lays out a clear path to data analysis and reporting. Ideally, you should carry out the evaluation planning process prior to the launch of a new training or performance improvement program to ensure that the need for the program, the objectives of the program, and the evaluation are in alignment. However, barring an ideal situation, develop the evaluation plan long before the evaluation actually begins.

Step 1: Determine Purpose

In a broad sense, evaluation is undertaken to improve training and development processes. However, specific purposes for evaluating training programs often define the scope of the evaluation process, including the type of data collected and the method of data analysis. Identify specific purposes for every level of evaluation. For example, when evaluation of the return-on-investment (ROI) of the program is planned, one of the purposes is

Why Evaluate Training?

The following list presents some specific purposes of training evaluation. Use training evaluations to:

- determine if the program accomplished its objectives
- determine the cost-benefit ratio of the program
- establish greater credibility for training practices
- identify future program participants
- demonstrate value
- track participant progress in applying skills or knowledge learned
- determine the strengths and weaknesses of the training process overall
- improve accountability and efficiency
- gain stronger commitment to the training function from key stakeholders
- gather data to assist in marketing new programs.

to compare the costs and benefits of the program. This has implications for the type of data collected, the data collection method, the details of analysis, and the medium used to communicate results. The sidebar *Why Evaluate Training?* at left presents some common reasons to evaluate training.

Remember that evaluations may have multiple purposes. As noted before, line managers may be interested to know the extent to which learning has transferred to the workplace and improved key measures, while different data necessary for improving the program is important to other stakeholders. Pinpoint the objectives of the evaluation to choose the right data to collect and to identify the right audience for the final report.

Step 2: Determine Stakeholders

The needs of critical stakeholders typically drive the purpose of the evaluation. Consider the following definitions of four stakeholder groups to identify important stakeholders in the evaluation process. These definitions describe the specific needs of each group and indicate how you may need to adjust the design of your evaluation to account for these needs.

■ ***Decision Makers***
Decision makers are responsible for deciding whether a training or performance program will be implemented, continued, discontinued, or restructured. They include a wide variety of individuals in executive management or even the board of directors. For this group of stakeholders, evaluation results must demonstrate a contribution to the organization's overall goals and its key business measures. This group of stakeholders will be most interested in ROI evaluation results.

■ ***Program Sponsors or Clients***
Sponsor and clients initiate and fund programs and are often decision makers also. Generally, program sponsors are line managers with budgetary discretion who are interested not only in issues such as teamwork, morale, and job skill development, but also in ensuring that changes in these areas lead to greater productivity, increased customer satisfaction, reduced turnover, and so forth. They also want to know if the benefits of sending their employees to training outweigh the costs. They want to see data on learning, application, and business impact.

■ ***Program Participants***
Participants are the target of training and a critical source of data. They provide immediate feedback on the program. They also provide data on the extent to which newly acquired skills and knowledge are applied on the job, and they can elucidate the degree to which the program affects critical business measures. Participants are typically interested in the immediate results of the program, including the group's general reaction and level of learning, as well as the longer-term effects on the entire organization. To account for this stakeholder group's needs, gather reaction, satisfaction, and planned action data. These stakeholders also would be interested to see data on business impact.

■ ***Training Providers***
Training providers include the training manager overseeing the entire training process as well as training facilitators, designers, and developers. This group also includes external training providers. Training providers want to know how well the program works. These stakeholders make the improvements in programs; thus, immediate feedback from participants on how well the program works, including its relevance and importance to the job and whether participants learn and apply the intended skills and knowledge, is critical. For this reason, keep training providers in the communication loop at all times during the evaluation. Training providers also are responsible for justifying existing programs, gaining funding for new programs, and marketing programs to future participants. Therefore, training providers need to understand the effect a program has on the organization, including the ROI. They are interested in all levels of evaluation.

Step 3: Determine Level

The sidebar *Evaluation Levels* at right briefly describes five levels of evaluation. Nearly all training programs are evaluated at Level 1, which addresses reaction, satisfaction, and planned action. At this level, the degree to which program objectives were met is measured, which is critical baseline data for all other levels of evaluation. Use this level of evaluation to gain immediate feedback on changes that may need to be made to the design and delivery of the program. Level 1 data is easy to collect, and, in many cases, program participants anticipate an end-of-course questionnaire; thus, resistance to providing data is minimal.

Evaluation Levels

Five levels of evaluation are described below. They follow the four levels of evaluation described by Donald Kirkpatrick, with the addition of a fifth level that measures ROI.

Level 1: Reaction, Satisfaction, and Planned Action

This level of measurement captures the participants' immediate response and satisfaction with the program and identifies actions planned as a result of participating in the program. Participants usually indicate the program's strengths and weaknesses with a generic end-of-program questionnaire.

Level 2: Learning

At this level, practitioners collect data on improvement in knowledge and skills, as well as confidence in using them on the job. You can use a variety of methods to assess learning gains, which include self-assessments, facilitator assessments, simulations, case studies, and exercises.

Level 3: Application

At this level, the extent to which participants actually apply what they learned on the job is measured. A Level 3 evaluation takes additional time, adds costs, and can be disruptive. However, you can conduct this level of evaluation in many ways, including follow-up questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. The challenge is to select the method that best fits your culture, budget, and time constraints.

Level 4: Business Impact

This measures the consequences of the application of skills and knowledge in terms of increased revenues, improved quality, reduced response times, or enhanced efficiency.

Level 5: ROI

ROI compares monetary benefits of the program with its costs.

The Four Levels of Evaluation—an Update

VOL. 32 • ISSUE 1502 • FEBRUARY 2015

THE FOUR LEVELS OF EVALUATION—AN UPDATE

AUTHORS

Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick
Jim and Wendy Kirkpatrick own and operate Kirkpatrick Partners. They are proud to carry on the work of the late Dr. Don Kirkpatrick, who created the Kirkpatrick Model more than 55 years ago. Together they created the New World Kirkpatrick Model to illustrate how the four levels are as relevant and practical as ever.

Jim and Wendy have written three books, including *Training on Trial*, and served as the subject matter experts for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's *Training Evaluation Field Guide*.

For more information about Kirkpatrick Partners, go to Kirkpatrickpartners.com.

Community Manager, Learning and Development
Amanda Smith

Editor, *TD at Work*
Patty Gaul

Associate Editor
Caroline Coppel

Production Design
Maggie Hyde

WHY EVALUATE? 39
THE FOUR LEVELS—UPDATED FOR THE NEW WORLD 40
A PURPOSEFUL APPROACH TO TRAINING EVALUATION 43
HOW TO ANALYZE EVALUATION DATA 47
HOW TO SHARE YOUR STORY OF VALUE 48
CONCLUSION: A CALL TO ACTION 48
REFERENCES & RESOURCES 51

JOB AIDS

Quiz 53
Quiz Answer Key 55
Post-Program Hybrid Evaluation Form Example 56

Printed in the United States of America.

For help or inquiries about your subscription, please contact Customer Care at 1.800.628.2783/1.703.683.8100 (international).

TD at Work (ISSN 2373-5570, Electronic ISSN 2373-5589, ISBN 978-1-56286-978-6, Electronic ISBN 978-160728-238-9) is published monthly by the Association for Talent Development, 1640 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. *TD at Work* is available for subscription in print or digitally. The subscription rate for 12 issues is $99 (for ATD national members) and $139 (for nonmembers). Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, Virginia, and additional entries. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *TD at Work,* 1640 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Claims for replacement of subscription issues not received must be made within three months of the issue date.

Around the world, training and development is in a state of crisis. Training budgets are among the first to be cut when economic times get tough. Whether you're one of the in-house survivors or a struggling consultant, you can no longer coast on lofty notions about continuous learning and employee development. You need to provide compelling evidence that training delivers bottom-line results and contributes to mission accomplishment.

Training must reinvent itself and transcend the classroom to earn its budget and maintain its existence. Savvy business professionals and enlightened organizations know that training has no value unless what is learned gets applied on the job, and the subsequent on-the-job performance contributes to key organizational outcomes.

This issue of *TD at Work* will show you how to create an effective training evaluation plan for any program so that you can show the organizational value of your work. At the same time, an effective plan will ensure that your valuable, limited resources are dedicated to the programs that will create the most impact.

Employing these principles in your work will earn you a seat at the proverbial table with business executives and secure your future as a valuable resource and key partner in accomplishing organizational results.

Specifically, this issue of *TD at Work* will answer these questions:

- Why evaluate?
- What is new about the Four Levels of Evaluation?
- How can I prove my value as a trainer?
- How can I share my story of value?

WHY EVALUATE?

There are three major reasons to evaluate training programs:

- to improve the program
- to maximize transfer of learning to behavior and subsequent organizational results
- to demonstrate the value of training to the organization.

Most training professionals are accustomed to evaluating training programs for the purpose of improving the program. Using formative (during the program) and summative (after the program) methods, which are used in formative and summative evaluation, they ask questions related to how participants enjoyed the program, whether they learned key information, and how the program might be improved for future sessions. This type of information is useful to learning and performance professionals to gauge the quality of their training programs, materials, and presenters. If evaluation of the training program shows that the program was well received and key information was learned, then the program can be called effective training.

More savvy training professionals realize that even the most well-designed and well-received training programs are of little use unless what is learned in training gets implemented on the job. This is often called the transfer of learning to behavior. If what was learned translates into improved job performance, then it is possible for better organizational results to be achieved. If training evaluation shows that on-the-job performance increased and results improved, then training effectiveness has occurred.

Finally, learning and performance professionals must be able to show the organizational value of their training. Like any other department in an organization, training is not exempt from showing how the resources allocated to them have been put to use. By gathering data related to effective training and training effectiveness, learning and performance professionals can credibly show the value that training has brought to the organization.

EVEN THE MOST WELL-DESIGNED AND WELL-RECEIVED TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE OF LITTLE USE UNLESS WHAT IS LEARNED IN TRAINING GETS IMPLEMENTED ON THE JOB.

THE FOUR LEVELS—UPDATED FOR THE NEW WORLD

Simple, isn't it? All you need to do is show that your training is effective and that it has created training effectiveness. How can this be done, especially with limited time, money, and resources? A simple and time-tested model for accomplishing this is the Kirkpatrick Model, or the four levels.

Level 4: Results

Level 4 holds the distinction of being the most misunderstood of the four levels. It is the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the learning event(s) and subsequent reinforcement.

A common misapplication occurs when professionals or functional departments define results in terms of their small, individual area of the organization instead of for the entire company. This creates silos and fiefdoms that are counterproductive to organizational effectiveness. The resulting misalignment causes layers upon layers of dysfunction and waste.

Clarity regarding the true Level 4 result of an organization is critical. By definition, it is some combination of the organizational purpose and mission. In a for-profit company, it means profitably delivering the product or service to the marketplace. In a not-for-profit, government, or military organization, it means accomplishing the mission.

Every organization has just one Level 4 result. A good test of whether or not the correct Level 4 result has been identified is a positive answer to the question, "Is this what the organization exists to do, deliver, or contribute?"

While this definition of results is straightforward, frustration with the seeming inability to relate a single training class to a high-level organizational mission is common.

Business results are broad and long term. They are created through the culmination of countless efforts of people, departments, and environmental factors. They can take months or years to manifest.

Leading Indicators

Leading indicators help to bridge the gap between individual initiatives and efforts and organizational results. They are defined as short-term observations and measurements that suggest that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on the desired results. Organizations will have a number of leading indicators that encompass departmental and individual goals, each contributing to the accomplishment of the highest-level results.

Common leading indicators include:

- customer satisfaction
- employee engagement
- sales volume
- cost containment
- quality
- market share.

While leading indicators are important measurements, they must be balanced with a focus on the highest-level result. For example, a company with excellent customer satisfaction scores could go out of business if it does not maintain profitability, comply with laws and regulations, and keep its employees reasonably happy.

WHERE THE FOUR LEVELS CAME FROM

The Kirkpatrick Model was developed by Dr. Donald Kirkpatrick (1924-2014) in the mid-1950s as he was writing his doctoral dissertation. His goal was to effectively measure the impact of the management development programs he was teaching at the University of Wisconsin Management Institute.

Dr. Kirkpatrick Sr.'s work became known and later published by a trade journal in the late 1950s. During the following 50 years, worldwide use grew organically. Today, the Kirkpatrick Model, illustrated in the four levels sidebar, is the most highly recognized, used, and regarded method of evaluating the effectiveness of training programs.

Note that customer satisfaction is an example of a goal that does not provide an affirmative answer to the question, "Is this what the organization exists to contribute?" No organization exists to deliver customer service alone.

Level 3: Behavior

Level 3 is the degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job. The New World Level 3 behavior consists of critical behaviors, required drivers, and on-the-job learning.

Critical Behaviors

Critical behaviors are the few specific actions that, if performed consistently on the job, will have the biggest impact on the desired results.

There are perhaps thousands of behaviors a given employee might perform on the job; critical behaviors are those that have been identified as the most important to achieving organizational success. Examples of critical behaviors include conducting weekly team meetings that include all direct reports to document project status and required actions, or completing all specified safety tests to standard.

Required Drivers

The New World Kirkpatrick Model adds required drivers to Level 3. Required drivers are processes and systems that reinforce, monitor, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job. Common examples of required drivers include job aids, coaching, work review, pay-for-performance systems, and recognition for a job well done.

Required drivers are the key to accomplishing the desired on-the-job application of what is learned during training. They decrease the likelihood of people falling through the cracks, or deliberately crawling through the cracks if they are not interested in performing the required behaviors.

Organizations that reinforce the knowledge and skills learned during training with accountability and support systems can expect as much as 85 percent application on the job. Conversely, companies that rely primarily on training events alone to create good job performance achieve around a 15 percent success rate, according to Robert Brinkerhoff in *Telling Training's Story*.

Active execution and monitoring of required drivers is perhaps the biggest indicator of program success for any initiative.

EXAMPLES OF REQUIRED DRIVERS

SUPPORT	
Reinforce	**Encourage**
Follow-up modules	Coaching
Work review checklist	Mentoring
On-the-job training	
Self-directed learning	**Reward**
Refreshers	Recognition
Job aids	Pay for performance
Reminders	
Executive modeling	
ACCOUNTABILITY	
Monitor	
Action learning	Action plan monitoring
Interviews	Dashboard
Observation	Work review
Self-monitoring	Survey
Key performance indicators	Touchbases/meetings

Source: Kirkpatrick Partners. Used with permission.

On-the-Job Learning

On-the-job learning is part of the New World Level 3 in recognition of two facts of the modern workplace:

- Up to 70 percent of all learning takes place on the job.
- Personal responsibility and motivation are key partners in external support and reinforcement efforts for optimal performance.