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## **TRAINING EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEES**

*Abstract:*

*Assessment of effectiveness, otherwise known as an evaluation of training can be carried out by two aspects. The first one is aspect of trainers or training organization and the another one is aspect of training user, client organization and employees themselves.*

*Necessary data for evaluation are not always easily accessible neither by the organization nor by trainer. Good communication and exchanging of information between training organization and organization them self could be useful for both parties. This follow up information will help training organization in training development, through development of specific knowledge and skills of its trainers. For training user organization exchanging information will help in better and effective implementation of getting knowledge and skills of their trained employees.*

*In this paper we have presented different methods of training evaluation. Some of them are formally recognized by The National Training Evaluation Program (NTEP).*

**Keywords:** *training, evaluation, effectiveness, organization, follow-up, ROI*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Why evaluate training? According to some research of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) most of corporation have spent between 2% and 4% of their annual revenues . This percentage is almost the same all over the world.

To provide continuous improvement of organization we need to crate "Learning Organization", organization which learning builds into strategy and understands, quite good, relationships between training and learning and success.

For the reasons mentioned above standard ISO 9001:2000 in the article 6.2.2.c) requires evaluation of effectiveness of training and other provided action by the organization, to satisfy needs for competences of its employee.

### **2. TRAINING EVALUATION APPROACH**

#### **2.1. Why organization does not perform adequate evaluation of training?**

Organization doesn't think about requirements of standards ISO 9001:2000 and certification problems nor does it think about the creation of "The Learning Organization". Considering the size of the expense of trainings it is very interesting that the most of organization do not value effectiveness and return on investment of this money.

Survey of ASTD shows that only 40% of organization in USA conduct evaluation of trainee's learning and less than 10% perform evaluation of job training improvement and its business impact.

There are two main reasons:

1. Training evaluation is complex techniques
2. Organization training strategy and its evaluation is not well formed and managed.

Training evaluation techniques are from the field of social science research, which required good choice of research, design and the data analysis. Usually, these types of experts are not available in the organization. Also, different types of training sometimes need different type of evaluation.

If we look carefully in the training plans in the organization or in the provided trainings we will be able to conclude easily, that trainings have no alignment with the business objectives. Trainings are usually determined and evaluated, if it is evaluated, by managers "feelings" about what should be trained and how well it was.

Training and training evaluation have to be in alignment to critical business needs, but also according to available resources – time, people and money, to do so.

## **2.2. Who needs to be responsible for the evaluation processes?**

Usual thinking about training, evaluation and assessment, is that this has been "job of trainers". But, the evaluation training process has to include everyone who has some responsibility in any phase of training process (see Figure 1.).

Persons who have to be involved in evaluation process are:

- Senior management
- Line management
- Person in charge for trainings (the training manager, HR manager or person in charge for ensuring quality management system)
- The trainee and
- The trainer

What are their responsibilities?

Senior management has following training evaluation responsibility:

- to create training policy and strategy in the organization and awareness of the need and value of trainings,
- supporting training plans,
- providing active participation in trainings,
- require summary training evaluation reports and
- to validate ROI (return of investments) in trainings.

Responsibilities of line management are:

- Identification of work and people training needs.
- Active involvement and evaluation and/or creating training programme

- Supporting and insisting on pre-training preparation in accordance to the briefings and meetings that were held with the trainee
- Contact with the trainer and analyzing training reports (happy shifts with actions planes, test reports, ect.)
- Valuation and supporting the proposed action plan of trainee
- Reviewing the progress of learning implementation

Person in charged for trainings (the training manager, HR manager or person in charged for ensuring quality management system) is responsible for crating training planes, following training process, collecting and analyzing all relevant information about trainings, trainings follow-up including ROI.

Trainees should identify their training working needs and training interests. They should also take active part in planning training program through discussion with their line manager. His/her responsibility is to be cooperative and to take active part in all training activities (pre-training preparation, during the trainings and implementation of training skills and knowledge on return to work environment), as well as to support the training evaluation process.

For the organization and its training evaluation it will be more then useful the help which can provided by training organization or trainers. Good base for the training evaluation can be assessment of pre-trained and post-trained ability. Some of the training company and trainers, as a part of “happy shit” or conclusion exercise ask the trainee to create action plan in its working place. Close relation between the organization and the trainers and active involvement in crating training programme could help the organization in realization of evaluation training process and it will reduce necessary time, persons and money for training evaluation.

### **2.3. Training environment and workplace**

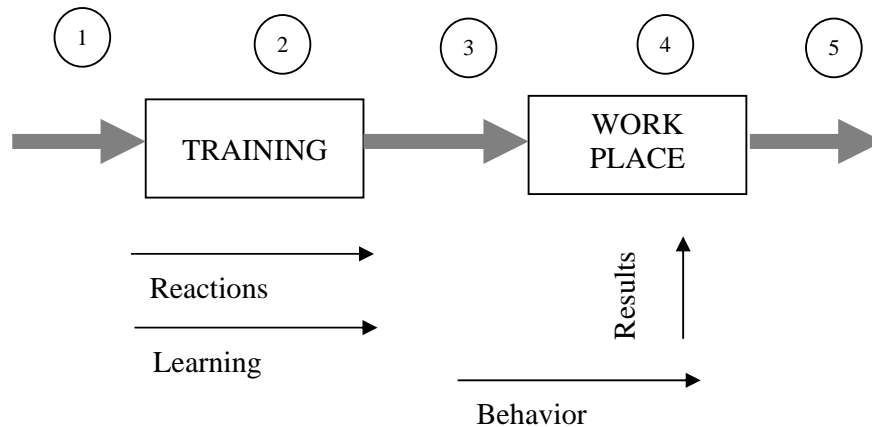
Where, how and whom to provide trainings? It is usually question for the organization.

Training cost has drastically appraisal if the training is provided out of the organization. But, a lot of researches show that pleasant training environment has positive influence on receiving knowledge and skills by the dislocated from the work place trainee.

Also, trainer’s knowledge, skills and behaviour have primary role in successful acceptance of training programme by the trainees.

Figure 1. identifies five basic points where it is possible to take measurements, conduct assessment, or reach judgments. These five points, indicated in the Figure 1 by the number 1 to 5, are:

1. Before Training (planning, chose trainers, ect.)
2. During Training
3. After Training or Before Entry (Reentry)
4. In The Workplace
5. Upon Existing The Workplace



*Figure 1. The Structure of the Training Evaluation Problem [1]*

It is important to underline that in the first three points centre role have the trainees, fourth point depends much more from the organization and its climate and culture environments and the fifth point needs to be evaluated on the base of training type, which will be described later on.

#### **2.4. Training evaluation options**

Level of the training evaluation has to be in accordance to available resources in the organization, as well as in accordance to learning and organisation strategy and objectives.

For providing training evaluation process we have to be rational. In some circumstances it is quite justifiable not to provide training evaluation. Such situation are:

- When trainer has a solid process for training evaluation or
- the training is planed in the manner to meet concretely training need of the organization
- If the cost and other engaged resources will exceed reasonable level

In this situation it would be good that senior management makes a global review of training plans and its realization. This could be provided in the management regularly meeting review.

Basic training evaluation should be in some forms that will fulfil the trainee. This forms should content programme information, personal evaluation of completing pre-training expectations and needs of the trainee, proposed action plan, what he/her has intend to implement on his/hers return to work. This form should be delivered to the line management.

Soon after the trainee's return to work line manager should hold debriefing meeting with the trainee particularly discussing and agreeing with the action plan and arranging support to the trainee in its implementation. Supervision of line

management activities especially in the evaluation of proposed action plan should be responsibility of person in charged for trainings (the training manager, HR manager or person in charged for ensuring quality management system) as a part of senior management.

Agreed action plan is object of continuously reviewing of implementation progress. For the purpose of the training evaluation the organization should have a questioner and involved only line manager.

Depending on the training type, if the training is provided for the first time or not, and available time and other resources this questioner could be more complex, with more detailed action plan (necessary recourses for realization, possible obstacles etc.)

Fully or total process evaluation of training, according to Leslie Rae [2], cover aspects summarized below:

- Training needs identification and setting of objectives by the organization
- Planning, design and preparation of the training programs against the objectives
- Pre-course identification of people with needs and completion of the preparation required by the training program
- Provision of the agreed training programs
- Pre-course briefing meeting between learner and line manager
- Pre-course or start of program identification of learners' existing knowledge, skills and attitudes,
- Interim validation as program proceeds
- Assessment of terminal knowledge, skills, etc., and completion of perceptions/change assessment
- Completion of end-of-program reactionaries
- Completion of end-of-program Learning Questionnaire or Key Objectives Learning Questionnaire
- Completion of Action Plan
- Post-course debriefing meeting between learner and line manager
- Line manager observation of implementation progress
- Review meetings to discuss progress of implementation
- Final implementation review meeting
- Assessment of ROI

In any of these cases universal way for the training evaluation, that will be cost effective and efficient for the organization, dos not exist. However the organization should be pragmatic. First training program should be accepted according to it's value for level of the training evaluation and adequate techniques.

## **2.5. Techniques for Gathering Data**

There are many ways to gather information and each has its own good and bad sides and neither of them is convenient in every situation.

**Questionnaires** – gathering data from the large group of trainees quickly, but people are not always honest or accurate and it is possible to misunderstand questions or ways for fulfilling instruction.

**Interviews** – possibility for gathering more information and for overtaking misunderstandings, but it is usually not time effective, neither for gathering data neither nor analyzing the gathered data.

**Expression of facilitate** – it is quick way, but could be only personal expression.

**Performance test** - Measuring worker's skills in a real or a simulated work environment. It can be difficult to provide.

**Written test** – is often standardized and validated, but sometimes do not provide adequate results (fear, test environment, limiting time etc.)

**Group discussion** – exchanging information about trainings and create more objectivities personal training evaluations. Personal attitude could disguise group opinions and other information.

Way of gathering information could be formal and informal too and in this process it is very important that we do not reject any information resources and ways. In the small company it is much easier and festally to gather information in the informal way, through direct contact of the trainee with all management levels.

### **3. EVALUATION OF THE ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE**

#### **3.1. Increase the performance of trainee**

The purpose of training evaluation is to provide that the trainee performance is more effective after return to the job. The evaluation of job performance measured a lot of different aspect that do not reflect only the part of the job performance that were included in trainings. In the training evaluation measuring job performance must be focused on the use of trained skills and knowledge.

In some occasion “happy sheets” is acceptable way of follow – up. Measurable results of increasing job performance could be short-term and long-term effective.

The main goals of trainings in the individual level in the organization are to understanding personal strengths and weaknesses and to connect with the training process. These information can be collected by the Employee Portfolio, based on management reviewing of the demonstration of the implementation of trained knowledge and skills, or through Skills Gap Analysis, which is used when employee has lower level of skills then is required by his/her position. This skills gap analysis should be used only to track skills development of employers over time.

#### **3.2. Increasing business performance**

The main valuation of the business performance is ROI (return of investments). ROI is calculation of making estimation of cost and benefits from realized training program. This measure of ROI in training is not so easy to calculate. It has some short-term and usually more long-term value.

The CIDP model [3] recognized the four main purposes for evaluation which are:

Relatively 'hard' metrics	Relatively 'soft' measures
<p><b>Proving</b> – relating training to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• data about reduced production and process costs (or times)</li> <li>• increased sales, market share, numbers of new customers etc</li> <li>• increased service quality, stakeholder satisfaction etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improving</b> – relating training to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indications of greater harnessing of other available learning and development processes</li> </ul> <p>more courses perceived to be effective, valuable, truly tailored, organisationally-focused etc</p>
<p><b>Controlling</b> – relating training to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduced problems – for example accidents following health and safety training, grievances following employee relations training</li> <li>• shorter, 'smarter' courses</li> </ul> <p>more comprehensive / equitable training - for example, covering all staff, access to prestigious events for those truly in need/able to apply the learning etc</p>	<p><b>Learning (reinforcing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ continually-improving skills/competencies – for example, better analysis, problem solving and decision making</li> </ul> <p>evidence that people are deriving a multiplicative effect from combining courses with learning on the job, coaching, personal development plans etc</p>

Organization that set up good business measures is in favourable position to determine the business impact of trainings. This approach is based on statistic technique and gathered data.

### 3. CONCLUSION

If we take into consideration all aspect mentioned above we can simply conclude that there is no “universal prescription” approach to the evaluation of training in the organization.

The training evaluation has to be suitable for training purpose, training evaluation resources and clime and culture of the organization. Only general suggestion is that training evaluation has to start immediately after providing trainings, but training evaluation can not be finished by that.

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