



## Training and Evaluation: It's Advantages

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### **Abstract**

*Evaluation involves the assessment of the effectiveness of the training programs. This assessment is done by collecting data on whether the participants were satisfied with the deliverables of the training program, whether they learned something from the training and are able to apply those skills at their workplace. There are different tools for assessment of a training program depending upon the kind of training conducted. Since organisations spend a large amount of money, it is therefore important for them to understand the usefulness of the same. For example, if a certain technical training was conducted, the organisation would be interested in knowing whether the new skills are being put to use at the workplace or in other words whether the effectiveness of the worker is enhanced. Similarly in case of behavioural training, the same would be evaluated on whether there is change in the behaviour, attitude and learning ability of the participants.*

**Keywords:** Training, Evaluation, Learning, Behaviour, Trainers.

### **Introduction :**

*Evaluation involves the assessment of the effectiveness of the training programs. This assessment is done by collecting data on whether the participants were satisfied with the deliverables of the training program, whether they learned something from the training and are able to apply those skills at their workplace. There are different tools for assessment of a training program depending upon the kind of training conducted.*

### **Benefits of Training Evaluation**

Evaluation acts as a check to ensure that the training is able to fill the competency gaps within the organisation in a cost effective way. This is specially very important in wake of the fact the organisations are trying to cut costs and increase globally. Some of the benefits of the training evaluation are as under:

• **Evaluation ensures accountability** - Training evaluation ensures that training

programs comply with the competency gaps and that the deliverables are not compromised upon.

• **Check the Cost** - Evaluation ensures that the training programs are effective in improving the work quality, employee behaviour, attitude and development of new skills within the employee within a certain budget. Since globally companies are trying to cut their costs without compromising upon the quality, evaluation just aims at achieving the same with training.

• **Feedback to the Trainer / Training** - Evaluation also acts as a feedback to the trainer or the facilitator and the entire training process. Since evaluation accesses individuals at the level of their work, it gets easier to understand the loopholes of the training and the changes required in the training methodology. Not many organisations believe in the process of evaluation or at least do not



have an evaluation system in place. Many organisations conduct training programs year after year only as a matter of faith and not many have a firm evaluation mechanism in place. Organisations like IBM, Motorola only, it was found out, have a firm evaluation mechanism in place.

**The Way Forward**

There are many methods and tools available for evaluating the effectiveness of training programs. Their usability depends on the kind of training program that is under evaluation. Generally most of the organisations use the Kirk Patrick model for training evaluations which evaluates training at four levels - reactions, learning, behaviour and results. After it was found out that training costs organisations a lot of money and no evaluation measures the return on investment for training, the fifth level for training evaluation was added to the training evaluation model by Kirk Patrick which is called as the ROI.

Most of the evaluations contain themselves to the reaction data, only few collected the learning data, still lesser measured and analysed the change in behaviour and very few took it to the level of any training. This model is arguably the most widespread for evaluation in use. It is simple, very flexible and complete. The four levels as described by Kirkpatrick are as follows:

1. **Reaction of the Trainee** - thoughts and feelings of the participants about the training
2. **Learning** - the increase in knowledge or understanding as a result of the training
3. **Behaviour** - extent of change in behaviour, attitude or capability

**4. Results** - the effect on the bottom line of the company as a result of the training. The fifth level which is the ROI has been recently added which is not but a part of the original model. The graphic description is as follows:

Level 4 – Results: Was it worth it ?
Level 3 - Behaviour KSA's being used on the Job ?
Level 2 - Knowledge Did they learn anything?
Level 1 - Reaction Was the environment suitable ?

The beauty of the model is that each level can only be predicted when the lower level prediction is complete. Thus evaluation at the level of behaviour may not be useful unless evaluation at the knowledge has been completed.

**Reaction**

Reaction implies how favourably the participants have responded to the training. This evaluation is primarily quantitative in nature and is a feedback to the training and the trainer. The most common collection tool is the questionnaire that analyses the content, methodology, facilities and the course content.

**Learning**

At the level of learning the evaluation is done on the basis of change in the ASK (Attitudes, skills and knowledge) of the trainees. The evaluation involves observation and analysis of the voice, behaviour, text. Other tools used apart from the observation are interviews, surveys, pre and post tests etc.

**Behaviour**

Behaviour evaluation analyses the transfer of learning from the training session to the work place. Here the



primary tool for evaluation is predominantly the observation. Apart from the observation, a combination of questionnaires and 360 feedbacks are also used.

### Results

The results stage makes evaluations towards the bottom line of the organization. Here the definition of the results depends upon the goal of the training program. The evaluation is done by using a control group allowing certain time for the results to be achieved. There are many other models that are unique in their own ways, but as mentioned earlier Kirkpatrick's Model is the one that is accepted and used widely across all industries and with wider applications.

### Train the Trainers - Need for Training the Trainers

Train the trainer refers to upgrading existing knowledge and honing skills of individuals who further train people. Remember, there is no end to learning. No one is perfect and there is always a scope for improvement. Training people is no cake walk and you really need to be absolutely prepared to handle even the minutest queries and provide relevant solutions to their problems. It is necessary for the trainers to keep themselves abreast with the changes or latest developments in their respective genres. Trainers need to keep pace with the ever changing technology and thus it is crucial for them to sit and incorporate necessary changes in their training style or course module under the expert guidance of an individual.

### What is the need of training the trainers ?

**Training the trainers is important as it helps them impart their respective trainings more efficiently and effectively.**

It actually gives them an opportunity to work on their skills and core competencies and come out with something more exciting, innovative and unique, eventually benefitting the end - users. Trust me; not every training can create the same impact. There are trainings where people sitting on the last bench are either yawning or fiddling with their cell phones. Do you think such trainings solve any purpose? Absolutely NO. They are nothing but a mere waste of time and energy. It is essential for us to understand the purpose of training programs.

**Trainers, first and foremost, need to be trained on how to deliver an exciting session where each one irrespective of the time duration listens with rapt attention.**

Every trainer has more or less the same content but what actually makes the difference is the style of delivering the same. Trainers need to be trained to be confident so that they create an everlasting impression on the audience. Very few trainers lay emphasis on their overall behaviour and how they conduct themselves. The role of a trainer is just not to read out slides but actually motivate the audience to incorporate the learning in their day to day life. Trainers need to be patient and their personalities need to speak for themselves. It is essential to train the trainers on what they should wear during trainings and what should be avoided. Dressing plays an important role in creating the desired impact. Trainers, under no circumstances should reach late for sessions.

Training modules of even the most experienced trainers need to be evaluated so that nothing but the best goes to the audience. Make sure the content is relevant and would actually benefit the



audience. Ask the trainers to give their presentations in front of a panel of seasoned professionals who can not only judge their performance but also suggest changes (if required) for the desired impact. Trainers need to be told about the correct pitch and tone so that they are neither too soft nor too loud. Trainers need to be trained to develop a positive attitude. One may be an excellent trainer but if he/she finds faults in every small thing, he/she would never be able to earn a name in the field of training. One needs to know how to handle his audience. It is the responsibility of the trainer to ensure that people do not lose attention mid-way and stay glued to the session till the end. Trust me, the success and failure of a training program largely depends on the speaker. Some trainers also need to be guided on how to make an effective power-point presentation. Presentation should not have long stories but only bullet points making it crisp and clear. Supporting the content with case studies and examples make it all the more interesting.

### Conclusion

The role of a trainer is just not to read out slides but actually motivate the audience to incorporate the learning in their day to day life. Trainers need to be patient and their personalities need to speak for themselves. It is essential to train the trainers on what they should wear during trainings and what should be avoided. Dressing plays an important role in creating the desired impact. Trainers, under no circumstances should reach late for sessions.

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