

COURSE: RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

LECTURE 12: EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS AND ADVANTAGES OF TRAINING

LECTURER: DR LUCY KARIMI KIRIMA

Lecture learning outcomes:

At the end of the lecture you will be able to:

- i. Discuss and understand evaluation of training programs**
- ii. Determine the importance of evaluation**

EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS AND ADVANTAGES OF TRAINING

Training is essential because technology is developing at a fast rate. The objective of the organizational policies process and programmes for the delivery of training is to achieve its HRD strategies by ensuring the availability of skilled and competent employees to meet its present and future requirements. Training and development is essential to remove performance deficiencies. There are two ways in which training and development influences performance. First, they improve the skills of the people for specific job requirement and secondly they add to the job satisfaction.

Training positively influences the performance of the managers. Investment in training increases the productivity influences organizational commitment, participant knowledge and organizational based self esteem. From the standpoint of employee training serves as an important means for the development of effective and productive work habits, methods of work, and in consequence it improves job performance, it prepares individual for modified jobs, avoids unnecessary absenteeism reduces turnover arising out of faulty selection and placements, it reduces chances of accidents. It also, increases employees 'loyalty to the organization and enables them to develop and rise within the organization with full confidence.

Evaluation Training

Evaluation of training refers to the process of examining the effectiveness of the training program in terms of the benefits to the trainees and to the organization, or company. Evaluation is a

continuous process rather than a one-time activity. According to Deb, “Training evaluation is the application of systematic methods to periodically and objectively assess the effectiveness of training and development programmes in achieving expected results, their impacts, both intended and unintended, continued relevance and alternative or more cost effective ways of achieving expected results.”

What to evaluate in a training evaluation?

Customarily, following questions are answered through evaluation i.e. a particular training course?

- the trainees?
- the trainers?
- the training Organisation or Department?
- a certain set of training materials?
- and training in general?

According to Watson (1979), the following five areas of a training programme merit evaluation.

- Reactions: trainees’ reactions to all facets of the learning experience itself.
- Learning: changes in attitude, knowledge, and skills of the trainees.
- Job behaviour: how and to what extent trainees behave differently because of the training
- how they have applied what was taught on the job.
- Organizational impact: how changes in trainees affect the functions of their organizations.
- Additional outcomes: results or by products of the training not identified or assessed by the other four areas, such as the social value of training, its effect on trainees’ self concept, its relation to trainees’ personal goals, and other such issues

Why to conduct training evaluation?

Evaluation of training would answer the following four questions i.e. what did participants say about the training in general?; what knowledge, skills, or attitudes were learned?; did the training create visible behavioural changes?; and did the training pay off?. It is also a process of collecting outcomes to determine if the training program was effective. A proper plan is to be made beforehand: how to collect various information or data, from whom the information has to be collected, what type of data has to be collected and when. Training evaluation determines whether

the candidates are able to implement their learning in their respective workplaces, or in their regular work routines.

Evaluation literally means the assessment of value or worth. It would simply mean the act of judging whether or not the activity to be evaluated is worthwhile in terms of set Criteria. Hamblin defined evaluation of training as- —Any attempt to obtain information (feedback) on the effects of training programme and to assess the value of training in the light of that information for improving training. Validation, as against evaluation, applies directly to the programme and its, immediate results. Validation is defined in terms of internal and external validation. It deals with a series of tests and assessments designed to ascertain whether training met with its objective. In internal validation the focus is on the immediacy of the training and learning resulting in the improvement of the trainee. External Validation involves a series of tests designed to ascertain whether the objectives of an internally valid programme are based on an accurate identification of training needs relation to the criteria of effectiveness adopted by the organization. This is to ensure that:

- a) Training is carried out in the most efficient and effective manner,
- b) At the lowest cost
- c) With the high implementation value.

Evaluators often talk about two different types of evaluations: "formative" and "summative."

A formative evaluation is usually conducted in the early stages of a programme and addresses questions about implementation and ongoing planning. This is used in the classroom with some planning. Formative evaluations are useful for various purposes. For example:

- a) They may help find problems early, while they can still be corrected.
- b) They provide an opportunity to collect basic data for future summative (or "impact") evaluations.

Summative Evaluation: Summative evaluations assess programme outcomes or impacts. To determine the relationship of different factors to outcomes, similar to formative evaluations, some information used in summative evaluations is collected early in the programme (e.g., basic data, test scores). Some advantages of summative evaluations include:

- a) They can, if designed properly, provide evidence for a cause-and-effect relationship.
- b) They assess long-term effects.
- c) They provide data on impacts.
- d) They can provide data on change across time.

OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Reasons why training should be evaluated:

1. To find out where the desired expectations (goal) are and are not being met.
2. To make the training environment more supportive of learning.
3. To revise and redefine the course to make it more effective.
4. To identify and reduce workplace constraints that inhibits transfer of training.
5. To prove that training is investment and not cost.
6. To get commitment and support of training by management.
7. To give instructors and course developers feed back to help them improve.
8. To justify and perhaps increase the training budget.
9. To influence future decisions like on what kind of programmes to be included.
10. To manage the training function more professionally

Evaluation of the training deals broadly with four questions

- (a) Whether a training programme has actually brought about the desired modification in behavior or not?
- (b) Whether training has demonstrable effect on the performance of the task or achievement of organizational goals?
- (c) Whether present methods of training are the superior one to achieve the desired results?
- (d) Whether the cost of training is proportionate with achievements in the performance.

Evaluation also refers to reaction of the participants as to how they found the training programme. This is usually done at the end of the last session where participants are asked to fill out the form. The form contains information on the objectives of the programme and how well

they were achieved during the training period. It also seeks information on the content material presentations, trainers' qualities and relationship with other participants.

Evaluation of training effectiveness is most critical phase. It aims at assessing the quality of training imparted and based on the findings the future changes in the training programmes is also foreseen. The effect of training on the performance of the people to achieve organizational goals and objective is difficult to measure because performance is a function of complex forces and motives. The training effectiveness deals with the issue that whether formal training programmes contribute to the development of job-related skills which ultimately lead to greater effectiveness. Training effectiveness is dependent on two considerations. Firstly trainers are fully responsible for training activities. If the employees do not show the result, the trainer shall be accountable. Secondly training per se is not an answer to the problem. Training effectiveness depends on the kind of atmosphere and culture prevalent in the organization. It may be pointed out here that the qualitative and quantitative improvement in the output is difficult indicator. Changes in the output depend on numerous variables, some known and others unknown. At a given time evaluating the effectiveness of training is a very slippery proposition. Because of this some researchers' have tried to test the effect of the training on performance by the use of control group where two matched groups are identified and their performance is measured before and after training. Of these two group one groups takes training and the other does not. Changes in the performance in the post training are taken as indicators of learning.

NEED FOR EVALUATION

Evaluation is needed to achieve the following purposes:

- To know increase in productivity and company profit through human perfection by training. To know whether improvement in quality of a company product or service has taken place.
- Whether exiting employees are ready for higher level jobs. Whether there is enhancement in personal growth of the employees and motivation towards their work-area has taken place.

- Whether improvement in organizational climate has taken place. Existing employees require refresher training so as to keep abreast of the latest development in job- operations.
- To make employees mobile and versatile. They can be placed on various jobs depending on organizational needs.
- To raise the morale of the employees and maintain the validity of an organization and maintain the employees. Need for enabling employees to do the work in a more effective way to reduce learning time, reduce waste and spoilage of raw material and product quality service and develop their potential.

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING

Training is effective only if it produces desired result. When the organization is executing a training programme, there should be an ideal evaluation scheme, to measure the effectiveness of training and development activities. To find out the effectiveness of the training and development programmes the evaluation of training programmes has to be done. Training evaluation is carried out by participants expressing their feedback regarding effectiveness of training programmes through questionnaires completed at the end of the training programmes. Participants' reaction to the training can give opinions about the effectiveness of training programmes. This feedback can also be extremely useful in predicting performance after the programme.

Training evaluation questions on the importance and relevance of the training to the job have been shown to have a correlation to actual use of skills and knowledge learned on the job. The following steps maximizes the effectiveness of training Training:

- Need identification – Employee must get the training in the area of needs
- Pre-training activities – Every superior is expected to explain to the subordinate the rationale for nominating him for training.
- Planning and organizing the programme- Factors such as location and venue and duration are significant.
- The training module must be discussed with either internal or external faculty to suit the participants.

- Feedback on faculty- The feedback forms must be got filled from the participants.
Feedback from the external faculty- They must give feedback on:

- i) Participation level of the trainees.
- ii) Training infrastructure existing in the company and
- iii) Training support received from the company.

Training is conceived as an effort to bring about constant progress in the quality of person's work.

Training are building up inherent skills and update the existing skills and knowledge. The idea of training is not to make manager knowledgeable but behave differently. It is qualitative and works as change agent. It aims at bridging the quality gap. Training is a vital factor and a firm business strategy, but firms do not evaluate the impact of training over the employees all the time.

Evaluation of training is undertaken for several purposes. Generally they fall into two categories:

- (i) To improve the process or
- (ii) To decide whether or not to continue it.

Philips gives following reasons for evaluation.

- To determine whether a programme is accomplishing its objective.
- To identify strength and weakness in HRD processes.
- To determine cost/benefit ratio of HRD programmes.
- To decide who should participate in the future programmes.
- To reinforce major points made to participant.
- To identify which participants benefitted the most or the least from the programme
- To gather data to assist in marketing future programmes.
- To determine if the programme was appropriate.

PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING EVALUATION

To achieve the desired results, evaluation has to be based on sound principles that include the following.

- i. **Clarity Training Evaluation:** The trainer or evaluator must be clear about the purpose of evaluation in order to set the standards and criteria of

evaluation. Moreover, he or she must be clear about various objectives of training programme both general as well as specific objectives.

ii. **Objectivity All objectives should be evaluated.** The evaluation should be fair, free from any type of bias or subjectivity.

iii. **Objectivity is the characteristic of a good trainer.**

Objectivity requires

- measurable standards of assessment
- designing valid and reliable research instruments
- detailed analysis and interpretation of data in order to validate necessity of evaluation. iii) Reliability Subjective analysis of evaluation data cannot produce reliable results. The instruments used in evaluation must be reliable and should not deviate and should ensure certainty as far as following key points are concerned.
- Irrespective of the method used to gather the data • When repeated by the same trainer again
- When interpreted by any other person Normally, a good trainer uses more than one method of data gathering and data interpretation in order to achieve reliable results. Therefore, the evaluation instrument must ensure reliability.

iv. **Feasible. The evaluation must be feasible.** Following should be checked for feasibility

- Is it cost effective? Is it spending more on evaluation than the returns on training?
- Is your methodology practical? Do you have the human/other resources and time for executing the suggested methodology?
- Is the data useful? It is possible that a lot of time/money is spent on generating evaluation data without knowing, or being unable to put the data to any use, whatsoever. Therefore it is important to collect data which are useful only for evaluation purpose.

vi. **Evaluation Design to be custom-made** The design and approach to evaluation has to be custom-made to suit specific training levels and standards. General inference drawn from one evaluation design may not identify strengths and weaknesses of training meant for different set of objectives.

- vii. Evaluation must emphasise** on process and not end product Evaluation is a process, but not an end product of training. As a process, it has to be continuous. The trainees' reaction at the end of the course evaluation especially when it gives conclusive and quantitative ratings such as "M" Excellent, "N" good, "O" average and "P" not good, cannot guide trainers for subsequent improvements in a programme. Therefore, evaluation has to commence before the actual training activity, and continue during the process of training.

KIRKPATRICK'S EVALUATION MODEL

Donald Kirkpatrick in 1959 developed four levels of evaluation. The four levels of training evaluation model was later redefined and updated in Kirkpatrick's 1998 book, called 'Evaluating Training Programs:

The Four Levels'. The four levels represent a series of steps to evaluate training programs and are now considered an industry standard in personnel departments of Human Resources Development wings, and by training communities. Each level is important and has an impact on the next level. As one moves from one level to the next, the process becomes more difficult and time consuming, but it also provides more valuable information.

The four levels of Kirkpatrick's (KP) evaluation model essentially measure

- reaction of trainees – what they thought and felt about the training
- learning - the resulting increase in knowledge or capability
- behaviour - extent of behaviour and capability improvement and implementation/application
- results - the effects on the business or environment resulting from the trainee's performance.

All these measures are recommended for full and meaningful evaluation of learning in organizations, although their application broadly increases in complexity and cost, through the levels from level 1 to 4. The various levels of evaluation as envisaged by Kirkpatrick evaluation model follow.

Level 1: evaluation at this stage measures how the participant reacts immediately after the completion of the training program in which he/she has participated. It is observed that a positive and favourable reaction from a few key persons in the group influences the future of a program. In fact a less favourable reaction affects the motivation to learn among the participants. A negative reaction could greatly reduce the scope for conducting further training programs. This evaluation is made to know attitude and opinion of the trainees about various aspects of the training, viz., boarding, lodging, timetable, trainees' behaviour, classroom, course content, etc.

Level 2: At this level, a simple standardized questionnaire on the subject of training is administered before and after the program as a part of the evaluation process. This helps in assessing the degree of improvement/ change in knowledge, skills and attitude of trainees as a result of training.

Level 3: In this phase, the evaluation is done to know the extent to which the trainees applied the learning and changed their behaviour. Generally, this type of evaluation is done after 3 to 4 months, to assess the performance of the trainees

Level 4: at this level, the final impact results are taken into consideration. The Training Evaluation final results can be in the form of increased production, improved quality, decreased costs, increased sales, reduced turnover, and higher profits. It is the acid test.

PROCESS OF TRAINING EVALUATION

An evaluation basically asks the questions: was the training worthwhile? And how can it be made meaningful in the future? In this section, we will examine the following processes/ methods of evaluation.

Evaluation at the Beginning. The learner's skills and knowledge are assessed at the beginning of the training program and termed, entry test. During the start of training, candidates generally perceive it as a waste of resources because most of the time candidates are unaware of the objectives and learning outcomes of the program. Once aware, they are asked to give their opinion on the methods used and whether those methods conform to the candidates' preferences and learning style. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the level of knowledge and skills of

the trainees before the training. This will help in making the trainees aware of their state of knowledge and areas where they are lacking, guide the trainers in planning the training program and evaluating the gain made, and sensitize participants to key concepts. It also helps the trainer to focus on objectives. And finally, it serves as a benchmark for the final test. It is particularly important to reassure the trainees that this test is in no way meant to reflect on their capability or to categorize them according to some competence level. It may be advisable to give an objective type test, correct and return the test scripts, but not to do grading or marking on the scripts. Oral tests may also be given in instruments identification and use.

Evaluation During the Training .This evaluation is conducted when the instruction starts. It usually consists of short tests at regular intervals. The evaluation during the training is for both the trainer and the participant to know how well they are doing. This helps to improve the learning process and learning principles (e.g., adult learning). Some of the key principles of this type of evaluation are given below. • The evaluation should be specific rather than abstract.

- Evaluation feedback is the trainer's best control over the learning process.
- Adult professionals want to know how well they are doing.
- Adults like to be evaluated if they take part and see the importance of the evaluation.
- When adults take part in the measurements, it adds to the learning process. • Adults benefit from such evaluations if they can relate it to the specific objectives of the course.

This evaluation takes place during classroom lectures, discussions, tests, class problems and demonstrations. Brief examples of these types of evaluation are questions and answers. The purpose of this evaluation is to obtain responses to specific questions. For example, in a course of micro-level planning for rural development, the trainer may ask the following questions in the class.

- What kind of tools are used for Participatory Rural Appraisal survey?
- True/false questions on procedures for conducting a Participatory Rural Appraisal survey.

Again, evaluation at this stage is to provide the participant the feedback about Training Evaluation his progress as well as information to the trainer for improving the training activity. The evaluation during the training will make the teaching-learning process participatory and learner friendly.

Evaluation at the End of the Training. The evaluation at the end of the training can help to identify:

- i) The trainees' reactions to the course and the learning experience.
- ii) The learning or changes in attitudes, knowledge and skills of the participants.
- iii) The participants' evaluation of the performance of the staff. This evaluation cannot ascertain the impact on job behaviour. It can only evaluate what was learned. The evaluation forms need not be excessively long. Short forms with specific questions often provide more usable information.

This evaluation will broadly cover the aspects, below.

a) **Participants' Reactions** Participants' reactions to the training programme are included in an evaluation form developed for the purpose. The results of these evaluations can be biased by the trainer. Therefore, it is recommended that someone else who is not involved in the course needs to administer this evaluation.

b) **Exit Test** Where an entry test was given, an exit test can be used to ascertain what learning actually took place. Some training institutions are using the exit test very effectively. These tests are developed around the objectives of the training programme. For example, a sample of test question can be used related to

- facts participants need to know
- key concepts and principles
- techniques, i.e., skills, methods, and procedures
- processes and where, when, and how to use them
- professional attitudes or values needed by participants. The exit test need not be too long. The purpose is to assess behaviour and knowledge.

This test could also include practical exercises where actual field skills are demonstrated. Often, a practical exercise precedes the final written test.

c) **Sample Interview** In addition to the final test, some trainers select a 10 per cent random sample of participants for an intensive face-to-face personal interview. This is time consuming but can yield some useful information. Again, this should cover

- the reactions of the participants to the total training programme
- the learning that took place
- the relevance of the learning to the participant's job
 - the performance of the trainers.

d) **Evaluation of the Trainers by the Participants.** Trainers also need to know how well they have performed. Various evaluation forms can be developed. Without this evaluation, a trainer may not know the areas in which improvement is required. An alternative method is to have one's peers evaluate his training approach.

e) **Staff evaluation of the training programme** .The evaluation of a training programme by the staff of a training organization is followed by some training organizations. A practice followed by one training institute is to schedule a one to two day staff evaluation upon the completion of a given training programme. This is useful in that it identifies weaknesses and recommends solutions. The results from the other evaluations can be used for this staff evaluation. Focus is given on the planning, the objectives of the training programme, the content, training methods, and results.

Use of Evaluation Findings. Sometimes evaluations done but the results are not adequately utilized. Evaluation should never be done as a formal procedure. The purpose of evaluating a training programme is to determine its value or to identify ways for its improvements. The three major uses of the findings of evaluations are for improving the training programme, improving the institute's training programme and promoting the value of the training.

a. **Improving the quality of the training programme** The results of the evaluation should help the training organizers make decision regarding several key questions.

- Was adequate time spent in planning the training?
- Did it meet its objectives?
 - Were the training methods and aids adequate?
- Were the needs and interests of participants met?
 - Was there adequate balance between field exercises and class room presentations?
 - Was the duration of the course adequate?
- How can the course be improved?

b. Training Institute's Capability Strengthening The training institute is interested in improving its programme. Training programme evaluations can provide useful information about how to do this. Some questions which evaluations can help to answer are given below.

- Were the facilities for this training programme adequate?

Is there a growing demand for the programme? Training Evaluation

- Should the training programme be continued? Revised? Cancelled? • What was the performance level of various trainers?
- Was the budget for the training programme adequate?
- If needed, when should the training programme be scheduled?
- Was there adequate support staff for the training programme? c) Promotion of Training Evaluation reports are useful for promoting and sharing information about training programme. Reports can be sent to the following.
 - Organizations that send trainees
 - Sponsors of the training Evaluation by participants, staff or outside evaluators includes the performance of the trainers, the effectiveness of the training program content, the perceptions of participants, of benefits, and the attainment of the performance objectives

STATISTICAL TOOLS FOR EVALUATION OF TRAINING

The training coordinator may take the help of a statistician for the evaluation of a training programme. For example, it may be used to see the difference between pre and post test result of the trainees. The statistical analysis may be conducted internally or contracted out to external consultants if the trainees are large in number. Depending upon how complex the design is, how

much data collection is required, or what the organizational requirements are, the statistical analysis may be made and stored on a standard spreadsheet application or relational database.

Participants' responses on any of the tools can be coded and entered into a spreadsheet or a standard statistical package for analysis. The way, in which, the participants' responses are entered depends on the response alternatives and format of the software to be used. Before any calculation is performed, it is imperative to check the data for errors. It should be ensured that all numbers are in the correct column after coding. This can be done simply by printing the spreadsheet of data, highlighting every other column with a marker and systematically examining the columns. Simple calculations that are most useful and can be easily computed by spreadsheet application include: Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Mode, Median, Range, Variance, and Standard Deviation. Sometimes, advanced spread sheets to calculate t-tests, correlations, regressions, etc. can also be used. These analyses sometimes require a minimum number of participants or certain assumption levels which must be met by the data. If it is not met, the results may be inaccurate.

References

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