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FOR DEVELOPING TALENT



THE FOUR LEVELS OF EVALUATION—AN UPDATE

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LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

THE FOUR LEVELS OF EVALUATION—AN UPDATE



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

Creating a culture and an expectation that individuals are responsible for maintaining the knowledge and skills to enhance their own performance will encourage individuals to be accountable and feel empowered.

On-the-job learning provides an opportunity for employees and their employers to share the responsibility for good performance.

Level 2: Learning

The original definition of Level 2, learning, is the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and attitudes based on their participation in the learning event. Confidence and commitment have been added to Level 2 in the New World Kirkpatrick Model. These dimensions help to close the gap between learning and behavior, and to prevent the cycle of waste when training is repeated for people who possess the required knowledge and skills but fail to perform appropriately on the job.

Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge is the degree to which participants know certain information, as characterized by the phrase, “I know it.”

Skill is the degree to which they know how to do something or perform a certain task, as illustrated by the phrase, “I can do it right now.”

Many organizations make the common and costly mistake of inaccurately diagnosing poor performance as a lack of knowledge or skill. Underachievers are continually returned to training with the belief that they do not know what to do, when in reality, the more common cause of substandard performance is a lack of motivation or other environmental factors.

Attitude

Attitude is defined as the degree to which training participants believe that it will be worthwhile to implement what is learned during training on the job. Attitude is characterized by the phrase, “I believe it will be worthwhile” (to do this in my work).

Confidence

Confidence is defined as the degree to which training participants think they will be able to

do on the job what they learned during training, as characterized by the phrase, “I think I can do it on the job.”

Addressing confidence during training brings learners closer to the desired on-the-job performance. It can proactively surface potential on-the-job application barriers so they can be resolved.

Commitment

Commitment is defined as the degree to which learners intend to apply the knowledge and skills learned during training to their jobs. It is characterized by the phrase, “I will do it on the job.” Commitment relates to learner motivation by acknowledging that even if the knowledge and skills are mastered, effort still must be put forth to use the information or perform the skills on a daily basis.

Level 1: Reaction

Level 1, reaction, is the degree to which participants react favorably to the learning event.

According to ATD research, approximately 78 percent of training events measure reaction in some fashion. The current investment in gathering this type of data is far greater than the importance this level dictates. This investment occurs at the cost of measuring Levels 3 and 4, which would yield data more meaningful to the business; these levels are only measured 25 percent and 15 percent of the time, respectively.

The New World Kirkpatrick Level 1 has three dimensions: customer satisfaction, engagement, and relevance.

Customer Satisfaction

The original definition of Level 1 measured only participant satisfaction with the training. Dr. Donald Kirkpatrick Sr. referred to this as the customer satisfaction measurement of training.

Engagement

Engagement refers to the degree to which participants are actively involved in and contributing to the learning experience. Engagement levels directly relate to the level of learning that is attained.

THE KIRKPATRICK LEVELS OF EVALUATION

LEVEL 4: RESULTS

To what degree targeted outcomes occur as a result of the learning event(s) and subsequent reinforcement

LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOR

To what degree participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job

LEVEL 2: LEARNING

To what degree participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and attitudes based on their participation in the learning event

LEVEL 1: REACTION

To what degree participants react favorably to the learning event

Source: Kirkpatrick Partners. Used with permission. Visit Kirkpatrickpartners.com for more information.

Personal responsibility and program interest are both factors in the measurement of engagement. Personal responsibility relates to how present and attentive participants are during the training. Program interest is more commonly the focus, including how the facilitator involved and captivated the audience.

Relevance

Relevance is the degree to which training participants will have the opportunity to use or apply what they learned in training on the job. Relevance is important to ultimate training value because even the best training is a waste of resources if the participants have no application for the content in their everyday work.

Putting It All Together

Levels 1 and 2 of the New World Kirkpatrick Model provide data related to effective training. These levels measure the quality of the training program and the degree to which it resulted in knowledge and skills that can be applied on the job. These

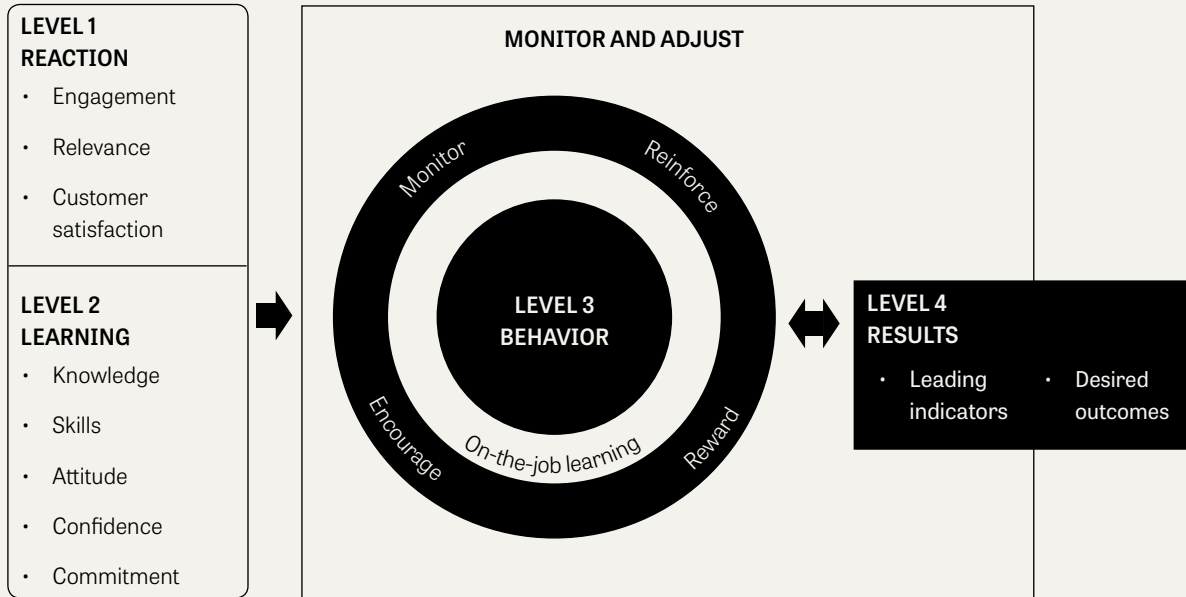
measurements are useful primarily to the training function to measure internally the quality of the programs they design and deliver.

Levels 3 and 4 provide the needed data related to training effectiveness. These levels measure on-the-job performance and subsequent business results that occur, in part, because of training and reinforcement. Training effectiveness data are key to demonstrating the value that the training program has contributed to the organization and are typically the type of data that key business stakeholders find valuable.

A PURPOSEFUL APPROACH TO TRAINING EVALUATION

You may be wondering why this piece introduced Level 4 first, and not Level 1. The reason is that this is how successful training professionals organize their work when planning, implementing, and evaluating training programs.

THE NEW WORLD KIRKPATRICK MODEL



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Why the Old-School Way Isn't Working

When you start training with a focus on the Level 4 results you need to accomplish, efforts are automatically focused on what is most important. Conversely, if you follow the common, old-school approach to planning and implementing your training, thinking about how you will evaluate Level 1 reaction, then Level 2 learning, then Level 3 behavior . . . it's easy to see why few people get to Level 4 results in this fashion.

Set yourself apart from and ahead of the crowd by using the four levels upside down—start every project by first considering the leading indicators you plan to influence, and articulate how this will contribute to the Level 4 result of your organization. Then, think about what really needs to occur on the job to produce good results (Level 3). Consider next what training or other support is required for workers to perform well on the job (Level 2). Finally, consider what type of training will be conducive to imparting the required skills successfully (Level 1).

All Programs Are Not Created Equal—Your Evaluation Approaches Shouldn't Be Either

You may be thinking that the resources required to evaluate all training programs at all four levels are simply not available. Set your worries aside; this is not the recommendation. All programs are not created equal, and only those that are the most mission critical for an organization should have an entire four levels evaluation plan created and implemented. From there, consider the impact a program has on the bottom line or mission accomplishment, and invest resources in its evaluation accordingly.

ALL PROGRAMS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL, AND ONLY THOSE THAT ARE THE MOST MISSION CRITICAL FOR AN ORGANIZATION SHOULD HAVE AN ENTIRE FOUR LEVELS EVALUATION PLAN CREATED AND IMPLEMENTED.

During the program-planning phase, review each program through the lens of the four levels, starting with Level 4. If you are not able to articulate easily how the program contributes organizationally, then it is probably not a good candidate for a robust evaluation plan. It would not be a good use of resources. However, taking this moment to consider the Level 4 impact of every program is a good practice to prioritize each program's relative importance.

The Four Levels Are Not Created Equal

Much like how not every training program has equal importance to an organization, the four levels themselves are not equal in importance, nor are they equal in the resources required to implement them properly.

Level 4 results are actually the simplest and least resource-intensive to evaluate. If something is a true Level 4 result, it is important enough that someone in the organization is already measuring and monitoring it, and it is simply a matter of obtaining the data. What is more difficult is finding the connection between training, on-the-job performance, and organizational results. In many evaluation plans, the missing link is Level 3.

For mission-critical programs, it is important to create a strong Level 3 plan that not only measures what is happening on the job, but includes a variety of required drivers to ensure that performance actually occurs. This is the level where most spending should occur. You may now be wondering where this money will come from.

The 2009 ATD *The Value of Evaluation* study polled more than 700 organizations and revealed that they are investing nearly 70 percent of their training evaluation resources in Levels 1 and 2. This old-school approach of spending heavily on effective training leaves few resources for the more important job of ensuring training effectiveness at Levels 3 and 4.

To have sufficient resources to implement a quality Level 3 plan, streamline evaluation at Levels 1 and 2. Carefully consider what information is useful to the training department to ensure that training is of sufficient quality, and what information is required by stakeholders,

if any, at these levels. If you do not plan to use a particular piece of data, save resources by choosing not to gather it. Reserve those saved resources for your Level 3 plan.

Learner-Centered Questions Maximize Meaningful Data

While you are reviewing and streamlining what you evaluate at Levels 1 and 2, also consider how you go about evaluating it. A common complaint from learning and performance professionals is low response rate and poor-quality responses. One reason is that questions tend to be phrased in terms of the trainer, instead of from the perspective of the learner.

Example:

- Trainer-centered question: The instructor is knowledgeable in the subject matter being taught.
- Learner-centered question: The instructor's knowledge contributed to my learning experience.

Making questions learner centered shifts the focus from critiquing the program to sharing a personal viewpoint. In most cultures, this is more comfortable; it also provides an open door for honest and robust feedback.

Review your own evaluation questions to see if they are learner centered. If not, a simple rewording will likely increase both the quantity and quality of your responses.

A Variety of Evaluation Methods and Tools Provides Complete Data

Some believe in the existence of a miracle survey that will give you all of the training evaluation data you need at all levels. Don't buy it. For mission-critical programs, it is important to employ multiple evaluation methods and tools to create a credible chain of evidence showing that training improved job performance and contributed measurably to organizational results.

Surveys, particularly those administered and tabulated electronically, are a wonderfully efficient means of gathering data. However, response rates tend to be low, and there is a limit to the types of information that can be gathered.

CONVERTING TRAINER-CENTERED QUESTIONS TO LEARNER-CENTERED QUESTIONS

Trainer-Centered Items	Learner-Centered Items
Each learning objective was covered during the course.	I was able to relate each of the learning objectives to my job.
The course materials were well organized.	I found the course materials easy to follow.
The material was relevant to my needs.	I will be able to apply what I learned immediately.
The facilitator demonstrated a good understanding of the content.	My learning was enhanced by the knowledge of the facilitator.
The facilitator did a good job of generating participant interaction.	I remained actively involved during the session.
The exercises and activities were useful.	I was given ample opportunity to practice my new job-related skills.

Source: "The New World Level 1 Reaction Sheets."

For mission-critical programs in particular, gather both quantitative (numeric) and qualitative (descriptive) data. Open-ended survey questions can gather quantitative data to some degree, but adding another evaluation method provides better data. For example, a post-program survey could be administered and the results analyzed. If a particular trend is identified, a sampling of program participants could be interviewed and asked open-ended questions on a key topic.

When people think of interviews, the terms *time-consuming* and *expensive* often come to mind. Depending upon the rigor required by your

stakeholders, you may be able to obtain good interview data by simply calling or briefly visiting training participants and asking them a question. Don't be too intimidated to get this human element into your program evaluation data.

An often overlooked source of evaluation data is formative data; that is, data collected during the training program. Build in touch points for facilitators to solicit feedback, and ask your facilitators for their feedback via a survey or an interview after the program.

A Hybrid Approach Maximizes Data With Minimal Resources

A final tip for achieving purposeful training evaluation is to use a hybrid approach. By definition, a hybrid is a combination of different elements. When applied to training evaluation, it is an evaluation method or tool that evaluates more than one level at the same time.

A hybrid approach maximizes program evaluation resources and assists in gathering robust data. Instead of "doing a Level 1" after a training program, administer a hybrid evaluation in which you ask questions related to all dimensions of Level 1, questions about confidence and commitment to apply what was learned on the job (from Level 2), and questions related to anticipated results at Level 4. This not only makes good use of training evaluation resources, but also reduces the focus on the less important Level 1 and proactively provides clues as to what is in store when training graduates return to the job and attempt to apply what they learned.

A HYBRID APPROACH IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO MAXIMIZE DATA WHILE MINIMIZING RESOURCES ON THE PART OF BOTH THE TRAINING DEPARTMENT AND THE PEOPLE BEING SURVEYED.

Similarly, when delayed evaluation is conducted, consider what information will be useful to the training department and important to stakeholders at all four levels. Sometimes it is appropriate to ask participants to think back

to the training after they've had the opportunity to apply what they learned, and have them reassess the value of the program (Level 1). In a delayed evaluation, you probably also want to ask numerous questions about how training graduates have applied what they learned, what support they are receiving on the job (Level 3), and what kinds of results they have accomplished (Level 4).

Many training professionals have adopted a hybrid approach and do not even realize it, or perhaps believe it is an error. To the contrary, a hybrid approach is an excellent way to maximize data while minimizing resources on the part of both the training department and the people being surveyed. (See the job aid at the end of this TD at Work for a post-program hybrid evaluation form example.)

HOW TO ANALYZE EVALUATION DATA

By employing the ideas presented in this TD at Work, you will gather a robust data set. The next step is to analyze it and take appropriate action. If you are following the recommendations, you already realize that you do not want to wait until after the program is complete to gather data, and then wait until later to analyze it and see what happened. Instead, you want to gather and analyze data along the way, so instead of measuring what happened, you can influence what happens and maximize results.

Three Key Data Analysis Questions

To maximize program results, ask these three key questions as you analyze the data:

- Does . . . meet expectations?
- If not, why not?
- If so, why?

To analyze Level 3 data, a key question is, “Does the level of on-the-job application of the new skills meet expectations?” A key assumption is that expectations were agreed upon prior to the start of the initiative so that there is a basis for evaluating the findings. For mission-critical

programs, create a four levels evaluation plan during the program design and development phase. Present the plan to stakeholders, and discuss your and their expectations. Document what each party finds acceptable, and use this information when the data analysis begins.

FOR MISSION-CRITICAL PROGRAMS, CREATE A FOUR LEVELS EVALUATION PLAN DURING THE PROGRAM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE. PRESENT THE PLAN TO STAKEHOLDERS, AND DISCUSS YOUR AND THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

As preliminary program results begin to occur, an example of a key question could be, “Does the level of customer satisfaction meet expectations?” If so, see if the data indicate the contributors to success, because there are typically several. Document them as possible organizational best practices or items to propagate. If you are not sure what caused the success, this is a good time to conduct some interviews. If the data show that the level of customer satisfaction is not acceptable, find out what has gone wrong, and put together an intervention plan. Keep in mind that the majority of the causes will be issues in the on-the-job application environment. Timely, proactive data analysis and response maximize program outcomes because issues are surfaced and addressed when there is still time to fix them.

Data analysis resources should be focused on Levels 3 and 4 data, much the same way as overall program resources are allocated to favor these more important levels. Streamline analysis at Levels 1 and 2 by having trainers conduct analysis formatively, as they teach the program. For example, they can mentally assess if the level of interaction during the program meets their expectations. If not, they can conduct a pulse check, in which they stop teaching momentarily and ask the class open-ended questions to determine if there is something inhibiting participation. If the level of interaction is good, the trainer can note in a post-program evaluation form which techniques or program activities

seemed to be particularly successful. These Levels 1 and 2 findings can be reviewed by the training department to improve the quality of future programs. As an added bonus, little or no time on the part of training participants and business stakeholders is required for this analysis at Levels 1 and 2.

Expectation Standards Are Unique for Each Program or Organization

There is no universal standard for program expectations at any of the levels. Expectations are specific to each program and organization. For instance, the compliance standard for airline pilots following safety procedures is probably 100 percent. A shipping company may consider a 95 percent on-time shipment record to be acceptable. A call center supervisor may be satisfied if 85 percent of callers rate their experience positively. Organizations that wish to benchmark as a way to know if their performance is acceptable can consider internal benchmarking and competing against themselves for continual improvement.

HOW TO SHARE YOUR STORY OF VALUE

By now, you likely understand that not all training evaluation data are of equal value, particularly to different audiences. In addition to considering where to spend training evaluation resources, consider with whom the resulting data will be shared.

Every group that uses the results of training evaluation data should see all results in a high-level summary. However, each group will consider different results to be of the most interest. Limit detailed reports to include only information that will be most useful and compelling to each of your key stakeholder groups, along with representative decisions they can make using the information.

As you move farther up the corporate ladder, so you move up the Kirkpatrick levels in terms of what type of information is appropriate and most meaningful to emphasize. Focusing your presentation of data by following this guide will show both your sensitivity to limited resources and your business acumen.

LIMIT DETAILED REPORTS TO INCLUDE ONLY INFORMATION THAT WILL BE MOST USEFUL AND COMPELLING TO EACH OF YOUR KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS, ALONG WITH REPRESENTATIVE DECISIONS THEY CAN MAKE USING THE INFORMATION.

For example, an executive report might include an aggregate of participant satisfaction scores and a few representative testimonials (Level 1), average retrospective pretest and post-test score comparisons (Level 2), a scorecard of implementation and support findings during the prior 90 days (Level 3), and a more detailed discussion of how the training has supported key organizational outcomes and contributed to the bottom line or mission accomplishment (Level 4).

Conversely, the information you bring to an internal training department meeting would likely include the raw participant evaluation data and all comments, training presenter input related to the program design, and feedback from participants and managers about the practicality of the content for their job responsibilities.

Refer to the “Results Most Important to Each Key Group” sidebar for a guide showing the results that are generally of most interest to each key group involved in training evaluation and the organization it serves.

For in-person presentations, it is very powerful to bring a business partner who has personally benefited from applying what was learned in training or who manages a team that has accomplished results in part due to implementing new learning. This testimonial supporting the data provides credibility and a human connection.

CONCLUSION: A CALL TO ACTION

Learning and development professionals enter new territory in the New World Model. They are no longer relegated to only formal training and issues related to Levels 1 and 2. The focus on Levels 3 and 4 encompasses factors other than learning, such as business processes and systems, role modeling, resource availability, and other

RESULTS MOST IMPORTANT TO EACH KEY GROUP

Level	Key Partner Group	Learner-Centered Items
Level 1: Reaction	Instructional designers and trainers	Improving program development and delivery Ensuring training is targeted to strategic goals
Level 2: Learning		
Level 3: Behavior	Training leaders and consultants	Improving follow-up and reinforcement in order to increase on-the-job application Improving business partnerships
	Business supervisors and managers	Improving decisions about training choices for direct reports Enhancing engagement of direct reports through support and accountability Improving performance of direct reports
Level 4: Results	Training leaders and consultants	Ensuring training offered aligns with key strategic initiatives and company goals Reducing costs by trimming nonstrategic training
	Business supervisors and managers	Improving department or division key performance indicator metrics
	Business executives	Communicating strategic objectives to focus training and reinforcement efforts Modeling and communicating the business partnership approach to training, performance, and strategy execution

Source: *ASTD Handbook of Measuring and Evaluating Training*, chapter 20.

workplace issues. This expands the role of the learning and development professional to that of a learning and performance consultant. This is the key to a valuable and sustainable role as an internal training professional or a sought-after training consultant.

This newly cast role may require some courage and a bit of adjustment. Your responsibility is to seek the truth through assessment and analysis. Then, you need to speak the truth about root causes and the type of intervention package that will remedy the situation. You will need to lead a conversation about the level of effort required by each party involved. You may not always find an open door, but sharing your knowledge and

gathered data will build trust and eventually make you a highly valued project team member.

**YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND GATHERED DATA
WILL BUILD TRUST AND EVENTUALLY
MAKE YOU A HIGHLY VALUED PROJECT
TEAM MEMBER.**

Consider this example that has frequently been repeated around the world: Organizational leaders are called into the boardroom to create a cost-cutting plan. Departments that are considered to

be nonrevenue-producing are on the chopping block, so the training department is on the list. One of the largest departmental costs is payroll, so the leadership team considers if the group can be downsized. A summary of the names, titles, and salaries of the training team is distributed around the room. During the next hour or so, each person is discussed in the following manner:

“John Smith. Does anybody know him?”

“Oh, yes. We see him quite often conducting on-the-job training, working with our supervisors, or asking employees how things are going.”

“OK; he stays. Next is Susan Bosch. Does anybody know her?”

Two leaders say, “Yes, we always invite her to new product roll-out strategy meetings. She helps us brainstorm all of the necessary considerations and make a good plan. We wouldn’t want to lose that support.”

“OK; we don’t want to lose that contribution. How about Ken Miller?”

Silence. “Anyone know Ken Miller?”

More silence.

A red line goes through Ken Miller’s name, and human resources is notified that he will be let go.

The choice is yours. If you embrace this new-world view of the role of training and evaluation, you can become an indispensable partner to the business you serve. View training evaluation as mandatory, not optional. Redeploy your resources to involve and embed yourself in the business. Use new-world methods to drive program results and demonstrate your role in contributing to improved job performance and subsequent business results.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Chain of Evidence: Data, information, and testimonies at each of the four levels that, when presented in sequence, demonstrate the value obtained from a business partnership initiative.

Critical Behaviors: The few, key behaviors that the primary group will have to consistently perform on the job in order to bring about targeted outcomes.

Desired Results: Statement of organizational purpose, combined with financial reality, if appropriate.

Drivers/Required Drivers: Processes and systems that reinforce, monitor, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job.

Formative Evaluation: The collection of data and information during a learning event or phase.

Key Business Stakeholder: A member of the organization who has a stake in the success outcomes of a training initiative and ultimately judges the value of training relative to its costs.

Leading Indicators: Short-term observations and measurements suggesting that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on desired results.

Level 1: Reaction: To what degree participants react favorably to the learning event.

Level 2: Learning: To what degree participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and attitudes based on their participation in the learning event.

Level 3: Behavior: To what degree participants apply what they learned during the training when they are back on the job.

Level 4: Results: To what degree targeted outcomes occur as a result of the learning event(s) and subsequent reinforcement.

Pulse Check: A technique in which a facilitator determines the level of engagement or knowledge of participants.

Summative Evaluation: The collection of data and information after a learning event or phase.

“The Missing Link”: Another name for Level 3 because execution at this level is critical for maximizing Level 4, yet neither training professionals nor the business tends to take ownership of it.

Source: “Glossary of Kirkpatrick Terms.”

QUIZ

- Which of the following is NOT a good reason to evaluate a training program?
 - To demonstrate the value of the program to the organization
 - To determine who attended a particular training program
 - To improve a program
 - To maximize organizational results
- Most organizations have numerous Level 4 results, one for each department or function.
 - True
 - False

3. Match each concept on the left to the correct definition on the right.

a. Leading indicators	_____ Short-term observations and measurements that suggest that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on desired results
b. Critical behaviors	_____ The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the learning event(s) and subsequent reinforcement
c. Required drivers	_____ Processes and systems that reinforce, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job
d. Level 4: Results	_____ The few, specific actions, which, if performed consistently on the job, will have the biggest impact on desired results

- Addressing _____ during training brings learners closer to the desired on-the-job performance.
 - Knowledge
 - Skill
 - Attitude
 - Confidence
 - Commitment
- Data from which levels relate to training effectiveness, or the value that a program has contributed to on-the-job performance and organizational results?
 - Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4
 - Levels 1 and 2
 - Levels 3 and 4
 - Levels 1 and 4

6. It is important to evaluate all levels equally for every program.
 - a. True
 - b. False
7. The best way to gather meaningful data for mission-critical programs is to:
 - a. Administer electronic surveys
 - b. Talk to training participants to gather qualitative data
 - c. Use a hybrid approach
 - d. None of the above
8. Program expectations:
 - a. Should be set in advance with stakeholders so you know what to evaluate and what range of outcomes is acceptable
 - b. Should NOT be discussed prior to a program because they cannot be predicted and should not influence actual outcomes
 - c. Should be set by the training group without input from stakeholders because it is the group's responsibility
 - d. Should be set by stakeholders without input from the training group because they know their employees and business needs best
9. It's a good idea for training organizations to invest in obtaining industry benchmarks for program expectations.
 - a. True
 - b. False
10. It is important to provide the same training evaluation data in the same format to all audiences, to provide an objective view of the program and related results.
 - a. True
 - b. False

QUIZ ANSWER KEY

Here are the correct answers to the quiz questions. The section of the publication in which the answers can be found is noted in parentheses.

1. b. (Why Evaluate?)
2. b. (Level 4: Results)
3. *See below* (Level 4: Results, Leading Indicators, Level 3: Behavior; Critical Behaviors, Required Drivers)

a. Leading indicators	<u> a </u> Short-term observations and measurements that suggest that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact on desired results
b. Critical behaviors	<u> d </u> The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the learning event(s) and subsequent reinforcement
c. Required drivers	<u> c </u> Processes and systems that reinforce, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job
d. Level 4: Results	<u> b </u> The few, specific actions, which, if performed consistently on the job, will have the biggest impact on desired results

4. d. (Confidence)
5. c. (Putting It All Together)
6. b. (A Purposeful Approach to Training Evaluation)
7. c. (A Variety of Evaluation Methods and Tools Provides Complete Data, A Hybrid Approach Maximizes Data With Minimal Resources)
8. a. (Job Aid—How to Analyze Evaluation Data)
9. b. (Job Aid—Expectation Standards Are Unique for Each Program or Organization)
10. b. (How to Share Your Story of Value)

POST-PROGRAM HYBRID EVALUATION FORM EXAMPLE

Instructions. Thinking about the course you just completed, please indicate to what degree you agree with each statement using this rating scale:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree									Strongly Agree	

Please provide comments along with your rating to help us improve this course in the future.

	Strongly Agree											Strongly Disagree
The class environment helped me to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
There were no major distractions that interfered with my learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I was engaged with what was going on during the program.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
The activities and exercises aided in my learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I was given adequate opportunity to practice what I was learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I will be able to use what I learned immediately.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
The program material will contribute to my future success.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
I would recommend this program to my co-workers.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Comments:

From what you learned, what will you be able to apply to your work?

What assistance or resources will you need to apply what you learned to your work successfully?

+ JOB AID

How confident are you that you will be able to apply what you have learned to your work? (Circle one rating)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at All Confident									Extremely Confident	

Comments:

How committed are you to applying what you learned to your work? (Circle one rating)

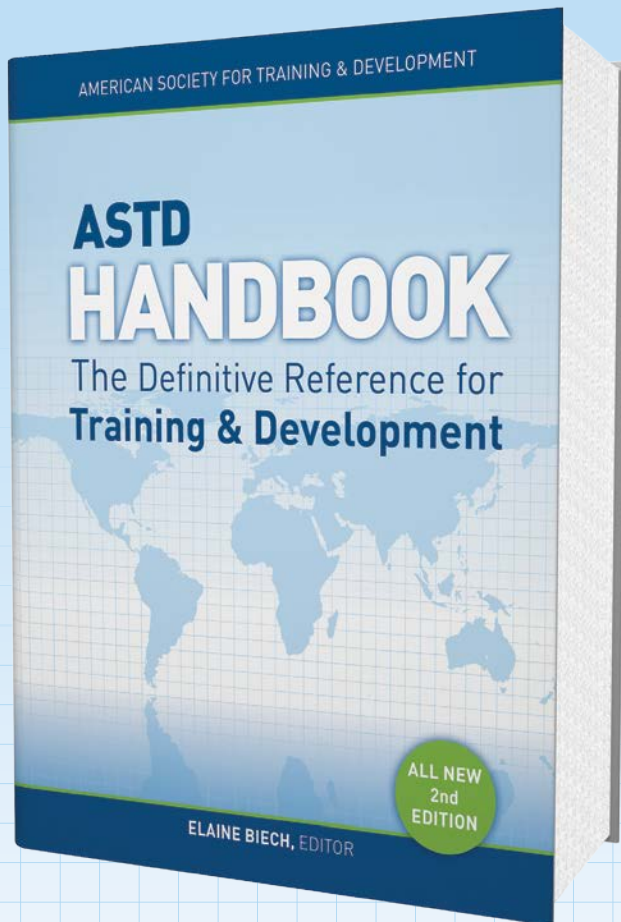
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at All Committed									Extremely Committed	

Comments:

What outcomes are you hoping to achieve as a result of your efforts?

What other feedback would you like to share?

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