

Evaluation Exercise

TRAINERS

Overview

This short activity will help you focus on how to evaluate the success of any training programme.

Some people say that it is hard for training to be measured but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't try to make this happen. Training is often seen as a cost to the business and therefore any cost needs to be justified. It is important that you, as a trainer, focus time in the preparation stage to ensure that your training success can be measured and that any time away from people's jobs is valuable for them as individuals and to the business.

Resources

Post-its and pens
Flipchart paper

Number of people

From 1 – 8 people

Do you find it difficult to really evaluate the success of your training?

Do you find that you are so busy delivering that you have little opportunity to check out the impact on operational performance?

If the answer is yes to either of these questions take 10 minutes out now to work through this exercise and notice if this creates a clearer focus about where to apply effort.

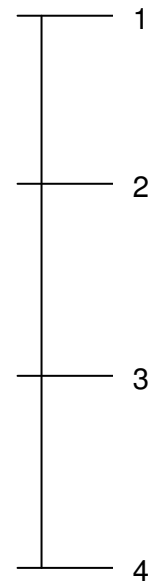
Step One

On post-it notes identify all the ways in which you currently evaluate training.
Go on, you have 2 minutes!

Step Two

This process for evaluation is based on Kirkpatrick's 4 level model of evaluation, which is simple and effective. Incidentally this model was developed in 1959 and is still widely cited as the most useful tool for evaluation.

On a flipchart draw the following filling the whole flipchart sheet



Let's consider this 4-stage model in more detail.

At **Level 1** you are evaluating participants reactions to the event – how did they feel about the event?

At **Level 2** you are evaluating the learning gained – i.e. new skills, knowledge or attitude

At **Level 3** you are evaluating behaviour – what will they do as a result of the event?

At **Level 4** you are evaluating impact – what value did the event have to the business?

So knowing this, now place your post it notes on the level you think they most apply to.

Step Three

What do you see?

Are there any gaps?

Are there any levels that you focus on more than others?

Look at each level in turn and ask yourself on a scale of 1 – 10 how effective are you... really... at evaluating that level of learning?

So you should now have a good idea of where you can get most rewards by focusing your effort.

But what should you do?

Take a further 5 minutes to think about a renewed focus – for all the analysis available within the business, how can you evaluate your training at the chosen level more effectively?

Why focus your efforts?

Trainers, like most functions within businesses, have limited time to build in new processes so by focusing your efforts, you are more likely to make improvements. If you try to do too much you are likely to achieve nothing at all.

Why is evaluation important?

Training is not about how much fun people have or how much content you fit into an event – successful training is all about **results**. The more you can build information about what results you can gain, the more you can shout about your successes. The more you shout about your successes, the more the operation commits to training and the easier the whole process becomes, because people can clearly see the impact training is having.

Quote

"It takes little talent to see what lies under one's nose, a good deal to know in what direction to point it."

-- Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-73), British-born American writer, critic

Tips

- Measure at four levels from "Reactions" to "Return on investment".
- Think about what you want to observe that's different after the workshop.
- Work with the business to identify the step up they need (measures of success) – this will help you focus your efforts whilst both designing and delivering training
- Think about the behavioural change that is needed- not just the skill – attitude will make change happen – or not!
- Once you have designed your training, go back to your measures of success you identified with the business and check that you will hit them all.

Want to know more?

Have a look at these books or give us a call!
01634 294051 or caroline@leaps-bounds.co.uk

'Evaluating training programs: The four levels'

Donald Kirkpatrick

'Another look at evaluating training programs'

Donald Kirkpatrick

'Training evaluation made easy' Jane Holcomb

'Training needs analysis and evaluation' Frances and Roland Bee