Ensuring Learning Transfer

ASTD Learning and Development Community Webinar—September 6, 2012—presented by Andy Jefferson and Roy Pollock, The 6Ds Company

Introduction

Ongoing learning is essential for individuals and companies to remain competitive in today's rapidly-changing, knowledge –based economy. But learning is of value to companies only when it is transferred and applied on the job. In this webinar, we will explore the two critical questions that determine whether training gets transferred and applied to produce results or becomes wasteful learning scrap.

These note pages are designed to help you capture key points of the discussion.

Objectives

Enable you to create greater value from training and development by:
- Improving learning transfer
- Using the two critical questions to ensure training effectiveness

Purpose of Training

What is the ultimate purpose of training in a business? That is, what does management expect will happen as a result of investing in training?

Notes:

Current Yield

After a typical training program, what percent of participants apply what they learned well enough to improve their performance? Your estimate: _____%

Notes:

Root Cause

Training doesn't always produce improved performance. What is the most common reason that training fails to improve performance?

A. Training was the wrong solution
B. Inadequate preparation or experience
C. Poorly-designed or -delivered training
D. Lack of transfer to the job

Notes:

Learning Transfer Defined

"Learning transfer **is the process of** putting learning to work **in a way that** improves performance."

Moment of Truth

When employees return to work, there comes a "moment of truth" in which they decide (consciously or unconsciously) how they will accomplish a particular task or action:
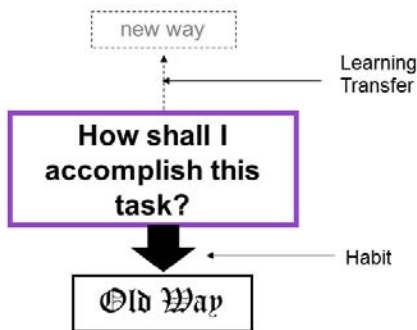
Two Key Questions

Which pathway an employee follows—whether they take the more difficult path of applying their new knowledge and skills, or whether they continue to do their job "the same old way"—depends on their answer to two key questions:
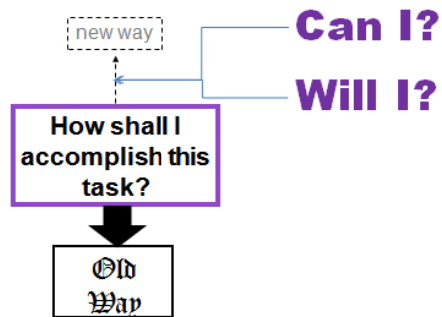
Key Point

Everything about the learning experience—the design, the delivery, and especially the pre- and post-training environment—affects the answers to these two critical questions

The "Can I" Question

The "Can I?" question is about ability and opportunity. The answer to the "Can I" question depends on the answers to three related questions:

- Did the program actually teach me how?
- Do I have the opportunity?
- Am I confident enough to try?
    - (Can I get help if I need it?)

Notes:

Addressing the "Can I" Question

Things I can do as a learning professional to ensure that trainees answer "Can I?" in the affirmative include:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Notes:

The "Will I" Question

Even if someone *can* perform as they were taught, and even if they are given the opportunity, it doesn't mean they *will*. The "Will I? question is really a question of motivation. Are people motivated enough to make the extra effort required to put new skills and knowledge to work.

The answer to the "Will I? question depends on the answers to four related questions:

- Do I think it will help my performance?
- Will anybody notice if I do?
- What does my boss think?
- What do my peers think?

Notes:

Addressing the "Can I" Question

Things I can do as a learning professional to be sure that trainees answer "Can I?" in the affirmative include:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

"To change behavior and get the results you want, you need structure, support, and accountability."
—Ken Blanchard, *Know Can Do*

Notes:

Check the Process

Whether training pay dividends in terms of improved performance depends to a very great extent on the amount of learning transfer. The formula is:

Learning X Transfer = Results

That means that even if the learning is a "10," if transfer is a zero, then the results for the business = ___

Because learning transfer is so crucial to training's success, you need to measure and monitor it. Reaction scores are not enough! You have to measure on the job behaviors or results and then use these to drive continuous improvement.

Notes:

Learn More

Want to learn more about how to improve learning transfer and results. Here are four suggestions:

1. Read the August *Infoline* on Learning Transfer
   Infoline.astd.org

2. Attend the Learning Transfer Conference October 2-3, Denver Colorado
   www.astd.org/Events/Learning-Transfer-Conference.aspx

3. Take *Essentials of Learning Transfer* online
   www.astd.org/Education/Essential-Series/Learning-Transfer.aspx

4. Read *The Six Disciplines of Breakthrough Learning*
   http://www.amazon.com/Six-Disciplines-Breakthrough-Learning-Professionals/dp/0470526521

Additional Information and Tools

Additional information and tools as well as a copy of today's slides and notes are available at: http://www.the6ds.com/resources-1.

Job Aid

Complete the 6Ds Application Scorecard on the next page to help you identify your greatest opportunities for improvement.

Application Scorecard

Use this tool to evaluate the readiness of a program to deliver results. For each of the items below, check the box that best describes the program using the following key:

1 = Not at all   **2** = To a small extent   **3** = Somewhat   **4** = To a large extent   **5** = To a very great extent

1.	The business needs are well understood. Anticipated on-the-job results of the training are clearly defined and measurable.	1	2	3	4	5	**Define**
2.	The program design covers the <u>entire</u> process from invitation to on-the-job application and measurement of results.	1	2	3	4	5	**Design**
3.	The relevance of each section to the business is explicitly stated; application is stressed throughout, as is the expectation for action.	1	2	3	4	5	**Deliver**
4.	A robust process and sufficient time are provided for participants to set strong goals, plan for action and prepare communications to others.	1	2	3	4	5	
5.	After the program, participants are reminded periodically of their objectives and their opportunity to apply what they learned.	1	2	3	4	5	**Drive**
6.	Participants' managers are actively engaged during the post-program period. They review and agree on objectives and expect and monitor progress.	1	2	3	4	5	
7.	Participants continue to learn from each other after the program. Materials and advice are available to help them accomplish their goals.	1	2	3	4	5	**Deploy**
8.	Participants can easily engage coaches for feedback, advice, and support. The group is tracked and supported during the application (post-program) phase.	1	2	3	4	5	
9.	On-the-job results are measured based on desired outcomes identified prior to the program.	1	2	3	4	5	**Document**
10.	An active continuous improvement process is used to strengthen the preparation, program and learning transfer.	1	2	3	4	5	

Total Score: _____

Scoring Instructions: Add the numeric value (1 to 5) of all boxes selected. The maximum possible score is 50. Use the table below to assess the readiness of the program to deliver valuable follow-through results.

Points	Assessment
> 45	Excellent likelihood of measurable results and return on investment from program. Action: Continue disciplined approach to learning; strengthen lowest scoring items.
33 - 44	Moderate likelihood for positive results, but return may be less than optimal. Action: Strengthen weakest items to raise score to > 44.
< 32	Valuable results and adequate return on investment is less likely. Action: Revise program in a systemic way.