

# EVALUATING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Iftikhar Ahmad and Siraj ud Din

Gomal Medical College and Gomal University, D.I. Khan, Pakistan

Human Resource Management (HRM) is seen as an important activity in health and its impact on the performance of health sector organizations is well supported by many studies<sup>1</sup> and plays a major role in the success of organization by integrating the interest of organization and its workforce.<sup>2</sup>

In human resource management, training and development is intended to enhance the performance of employees through a learning process that involves the acquirement of knowledge, improvement of skills, concepts, rules, or changing of attitudes and behaviors in organizational settings. It is known by other names, like employee development, human resource development, and learning and development.<sup>3</sup>

Training improves the knowledge, skill and attitude of the workforce and develops their services.<sup>4</sup> Training prepares employees for the new job while development is essential for future assignments. Global competition has made training and development a viable tool for all kinds of organizations.<sup>5</sup>

Hamblin (1974) defined the process of evaluating training and development as: 'any attempt to obtain information (feedback) on the effects of training program, and to assess the value of the training in the light of that information.'<sup>6</sup>

In the words of Warr (1969) 'Evaluation is the systematic collection and assessment of information for deciding how best to utilize available training resources in order to achieve organizational goals.'<sup>7</sup>

Traditional training and development has been criticized for its lack of evaluation. For many organizations it has become a target (fixed number of workers to be trained each year) or budget (money, material, time) based endeavor and nobody has attempted to evaluate its positive effects on employees regarding their efficiency and effectiveness / cost benefit analysis.<sup>8</sup>

When the participants of proposed training and development program are optimistic and motivated about its desirable and pleasant outcomes then such training will prove beneficial to them.<sup>9</sup>

Training is indispensable for the success and productivity of national governments all over

the world and they spend huge amounts on training and development. It leads to successful performance of employees, institutions and nations.<sup>10</sup>

There are many reasons which emphasize the need to evaluate the training and development particularly demand of donors/executives against the amount spent and hours consumed alongwith the impact of the training on organization. Economic slump in the global market is another reason for evaluation, which has increased competition for scarce resources. Top executives are also concerned about the congruence of training and organizational goals and development of new tools and techniques has also highlighted the need to evaluate. . Besides growing training budgets on one hand and development of new tools and techniques for evaluation are the other reasons behind evaluation.

## **Models of Evaluation:**

There are different models of evaluating training and development put forward by different experts such as Kirkpatrick's (1998)<sup>11,12</sup> four-level taxonomy, Phillips' (2003)<sup>13</sup> five level model, Swanson and Holton's (1999)<sup>14</sup>. Among these models Kirkpatrick (1998) model is well known and it was originally presented in 1959.

## **Elements of Evaluation:**

Evaluation of health training is not an easy task.<sup>15</sup> Elements of evaluation include relevance, adequacy, accessibility, acceptability, effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Relevance means whether the training is needed at all<sup>16</sup> while adequacy is related to achievement of quantum of targets and should be economically / culturally affordable.<sup>17,18</sup> Effectiveness means measuring the degree of attainment of the predetermined objectives and targets of training.<sup>19</sup> Efficiency means measuring how well resources are utilized to achieve a given effectiveness<sup>20</sup>. Impact is the measurement of the overall effect of training program on trainees.

## **Level of Evaluation:**

1. Reaction: immediate reaction of the participants about training

2. Learning: Learning of knowledge, skill and attitude and change in abilities
3. Behaviour: improvement in job performance
4. Results: Results in terms of reduced turnover, absenteeism, high productivity etc

#### **Aims of Evaluation:**

The basic aims of evaluating training and development are the assessment of training effectiveness regarding achievement of stated objectives and using it as a training aid for learning.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Training and development is adopted by organizations to fill the skill gap of employees and proper evaluation based on Kirkpatrick's four levels model helps in achieving the requisite goals. Training evaluation must be appropriate for the person and situation. Feedback is essential for not only teachers but for learners's confidence also. Evaluation will not ensure effective learning unless training is properly designed. Successful evaluation depends upon whether the means of evaluation were built into the design of the training program before it was implemented<sup>21</sup>.

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#### **Address for Correspondence:**

Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad  
 Assistant Professor  
 Department of Community Medicine  
 Gomal Medical College  
 D. I. Khan, Pakistan  
 Cell: +92 333 9961943  
 E mail: iftikharahmadgandapur@yahoo.com