



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**AN EVALUATION OF A TRAINING PROGRAM
CONDUCTED BY A PRIVATE TRAINING PROVIDER**

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FPP 1998 84

**AN EVALUATION OF A TRAINING PROGRAM
CONDUCTED BY A PRIVATE TRAINING PROVIDER**

By

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**Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Science in the Institute
for Distance Education and Learning
Universiti Putra Malaysia
March 1998.**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the Institute for Distance Education and Learning (IDEAL), Universiti Putra Malaysia for giving me the opportunity to conduct this research study.

Thanks are due to the staff of Consembition Jaya Sdn. Bhd. who made available to me the completed questionnaires from which the data were extracted for this study.

For the completion of this research study, I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Shamsuddin Ahmad for his invaluable advice and guidance throughout the duration of the study.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr. Sukumaran Shunmugam of University Malaya for his guidance and advice during the early parts of the research; and many other persons who had who had made it possible for the successful completion of this research study. The services of Mr. Christopher Raj and Mr. Charles Selvathurai in helping me to complete this study are indeed appreciated.

To my family, especially my wife, I owe a special word of thanks for the patience, understanding and encouragement shown during the course of my studies at the Institute for Distance Education and Learning, Universiti Putra Malaysia.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
ABSTRAK	xii
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study.....	1
The Importance of Training and Development.....	4
Evaluation of Training.....	11
Training Providers.....	19
Statement of the Problem.....	22
Objectives of the Study.....	23
Significance of the Study.....	25
Assumptions.....	26
Limitations of the Study.....	27
Definition of Terms.....	28
II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	30
Introduction.....	30
Historical and Theoretical Development of Evaluation.....	31
Summary.....	41
Models and Methods of Training Evaluation.....	43
Summary.....	47
Current Practice of Program Evaluation.....	48
The Telephone Techniques and Courtesies Training Program.....	62



Chapter	Page
III METHODOLOGY	66
Introduction.....	66
Design of the Study.....	67
Population and Sample.....	67
Instrumentation.....	68
General Information.....	69
Program/Course Content.....	69
Program/Course Trainer.....	70
General Assessment.....	70
Data Gathering.....	72
Data Analysis.....	72
IV FINDINGS	74
Introduction.....	74
Program Evaluation in Terms of Course Content.....	75
Assessment of Program Objectives.....	75
Assessment of Program Relevance/Applicability.....	77
Assessment of Program Learning Substantiality.....	80
Assessment of Program Content.....	82
Assessment of Program Trainer.....	86
General Assessment.....	93
Participants' Willingness to Recommend the Program to their Colleagues.....	100
Overall Evaluation of the Program.....	101
V SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	106
Summary.....	106
Program Content (Overall).....	107
Program Objective.....	108
Program Relevance/Applicability.....	108
Program Learning Substantiality.....	109
Program Content.....	110
Program Trainer.....	111
General Assessment.....	113
Implications.....	113



Chapter	Page
Conclusion.....	116
Recommendations for Improvement.....	120
Suggestions for further Study.....	126
BIBLIOGRAPHY	129
APPENDIX 1	136
APPENDIX 2	140
APPENDIX 3	142
APPENDIX 4	149



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Development Allocation for Training-1991-2000.....	3
2	The Subject Matter of Evaluation.....	33
3	Three Evaluation Traditions.....	35
4	The Historical Development of Evaluation Models.....	42
5	Frequency of Usage's of Evaluation under Different Time Zones.....	55
6	Breakdown of Number of Participants.....	67
7	Participants' Reaction to Program Content- Achievement of Stated Objectives.....	76
8	Participants' Reaction to Program Content- Meeting the Expectations of the Participants.....	77
9	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Relevance to Work and Enhance Work Performance.....	78
10	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Applicability to Job.....	79
11	Participants' Reaction to Learning Substantiality-The Program has Significantly Increased my Knowledge and Understanding of the Content, Concept, and Principles.....	81
12	Participants' Reaction to Learning Substantiality-Ability to do Job Better.....	82
13	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Coverage of Subject Matter.....	83
14	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Usefulness of Examples.....	84
15	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Adequacy of Examples.....	85
16	Participants' Reaction to Program Content-Adequacy of Discussions.....	86
17	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer-Level of Preparedness..	87
18	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer-Overall Performance....	88
19	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer- Knowledge of Subject Matter.....	89
20	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer-Presentation Skills.....	90



Table	Page
21	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer-Ability to Generate Participation..... 91
22	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer- Understanding of Real Life Situations..... 92
23	Participants' Reaction to Program Trainer-Overall Rating 93
24	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment- Ease of Understanding..... 94
25	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment-Layout and Sequence..... 95
26	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment- Administration and other Support Services..... 96
27	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment- Suitability of Training Center..... 97
28	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment-Seating Arrangements..... 98
29	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment- Food and Refreshment..... 99
30	Participants' Reaction to Program General Assessment- Reasonability of Course Fee..... 100
31	Total Number of Participants..... 101
32	Mean Scores and Rank Order of Participants' Reaction to Program 103
33	End-of-Course Questionnaire 124



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Positive Feedback Loop Resulting from Reliance on Participant Reaction Forms.....	53
2	Participants' Overall Reaction to Program Content.....	102
3	Participants' Overall Reaction to Program Trainer.....	102
4	Participants' overall Reaction of General Assessment.....	103
5	Graphical Representation of Ranking of Programs.....	104



Abstract of the research project submitted to the Jabatan Pendidikan Pengembangan,
Universiti Putra Malaysia in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Science.

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By

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March 1998

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate a series of a training programs conducted by a private training provider from January 1996 to December 1997. The training program was 'Telephone Techniques and Courtesies' organized by a private training provider, Consembition Jaya Sdn. Bhd. located in Klang.



Data collection was done by using secondary data derived from a questionnaire administered immediately after the completion of a session of a program. There were thirteen sessions of the program in all. A total of 249 participants responded to the questionnaire that was designed by The Human Resource Development Council, Ministry of Labour, Malaysia. The questionnaire typically sought the reaction of the participants in the areas of program content, program trainer, and general assessment, which many scholars would call a smile sheet or happiness indicator. This evaluation method was found to be the most popular method currently employed by most Human Resource practitioners, although many more reliable and effective tools are available.

The results of this research study indicate that this evaluation was basically a level one evaluation that tested only the reactions of the participants in the area of the program content, relevance/applicability of the program, the learning substantiality, the trainer, and a general assessment. The reactions of the participants in all these areas of evaluation were found to be generally favorable. The customer satisfaction level was high indicating that the participants enjoyed attending the program, generally.

A number of implications of the findings were also discussed. The shortcomings of using only a reaction questionnaire were highlighted and recommendations and suggestions were put forward to make the program evaluation process more effective in the future including possible areas of future research

Abstrak projek penyelidikan yang dikemukakan kepada Jabatan Pendidikan Pengembangan, Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian daripada keperluan untuk mendapat Ijazah Master Sains

**SATU PENILIAN PROGRAM LATIHAN YANG DIKENDALIKAN OLEH
SATU PENGAJUR LATIHAN SWASTA**

Oleh

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Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menilai siri-siri program latihan yang dikendalikan oleh suatu organisasi swasta yang menganjurkan latihan latihan dari Januari 1996 hingga Disember 1997. Program latihan tersebut adalah 'Telephone



Techniques and Courtesies' yang dikendalikan oleh Consembition Jaya Sdn. Bhd. yang berpusat di lembah Klang.

Data sampingan bagi kajian ini didapati daripada soal selidik yang diberikan kepada pelatih sebaik sahaja latihan tamat tiap tiap kali.. Secara keseluruhan, tiga belas latihan yang telah digunakan untuk kajian ini dan seramai 249 peserta telah menjawab soal-selidik tersebut. Soal-selidik telah direka oleh kakitangan Majlis Pembangunan Sumber Manusia, Kementerian Sumber Manusia. Soal-selidik ini secara amnya mengkaji tentang kandungan latihan, jurulatih dan penilaian umum program tersebut. Soal-selidik ini kebetulan nya adalah rupa 'smile sheet' atau 'happiness indicator'.

Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa penilaian ini merupakan penilaian tahap satu yang menguji tindakbalas para pelatih di dalam objektif program, kandungan program, jurulatih dan juga penilaian umum program. Tindak balas para pelatih di dalam bidang tersebut adalah positif keseluruhannya. Kepuasan pelanggan (customer satisfaction) juga didapati berada pada tahap yang tinggi. Ini menunjukkan bahawa peserta peserta , pada kesulorahannya, suka menghadiri program latihan ini.

Kesan-kesan latihan telah dibincangkan dan cadangan-cadangan juga diberikan untuk menjadikan program latihan serta proses penilaian lebih efektif. Cadangan cadangan untuk membuat kajian kajian terlibat juga di kemukakan.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Malaysian economy is envisaged to grow at 8% for 1997. The budget allocation for education increased by 12% from 1996 RM 78 Billion. Out of this amount RM 300 Million has been set aside for training programs and human resource development. This increase shows the importance of education the Government is placing. Furthermore, the Government has set up the Human Resources Development Council under the Human Resources Development Act 1992 to give a further impetus to the employers of the private sector to actively provide training to upgrade their workers skills. Under the Human Resources Development Act 1992, companies in the manufacturing and service sectors with more than ten employees are required to contribute one percent of a worker's wage each to the fund which is registered with the Human Resources Development Council. There are about 6,000 employers contributing to the fund. A total of RM 502.36 million has been paid to the Fund since its inception in 1993 with about 533,330 employees being trained so far. This is a substantial amount, which would go to waste if the training provided is not effective bearing in mind the basic objectives of training, which is to bring about change with regards to knowledge,

skills, aspirations and attitudes. In other words, there should be an impact, and the impact should be to bring about an observable change with regards to knowledge, aspirations, skills and attitude. This calls for measuring the impact of training, i.e. evaluation. Earlier in 1995, in line with the objective to increase training capacity in new areas as well as higher level skills, the coverage of the Human Resources Development Fund was expanded. Selected industries in the service industry, namely the hotel industry, telecommunications, tour and travel agencies, shipping, freight forwarding, courier services, advertising and computer services are now allowed to access the Fund.

Since independence in 1957, this country has formulated various Development strategies in the form of Five Year Plans. Like other developing countries, Malaysia has given education and training high priority in all its development plans. This emphasis is because education and training have contributed significantly to the efforts in fulfilling the twin objectives of the New Development Policy (NDP), namely, eradication of poverty and restructuring of society.

In the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996 -2000), education and training have again been emphasized. The focus of this emphasis has been directed at improving the quality of education to help develop a competent labor force that will hone the competitiveness of the Malaysian economy. Table 1 shows the development

allocation for training in the Sixth Malaysia Plan and the Seventh Malaysia Plan respectively.

Table 1: Development Allocation for Training, 1991-2000 (RM.Million)

Program	6 Malaysia Plan	7 Malaysia Plan
Training	615.4	292.0

The importance of human resource development is also reflected elsewhere. Speaking at the 1982 Annual Conference of The American Society for Personnel Administration in San Antonio, Texas, Toffler, the author of *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*, predicted that human resource management, and training in particular, would be the fastest growing and most crucial industry in the future (Freeman, 1983). Toffler's prediction appears to be an emerging reality, in considering the current substantial growth achieved and investment committed in the field of human resource management globally in general and Malaysia in particular.

In this regard, one of the most important developmental phenomena in the field of human resource development could be said the current emphasis towards high professional accountability (Philips, 1990). As a result, human resource development managers and other professionals involved in the training profession, have been subjected to greater scrutiny and pressure to implement result - oriented training programs. For example, they have to ensure and maintain a reasonably

acceptable level of efficiency and effectiveness in all training programs so as to meet the ever- increasing demands from management for cost - effectiveness and result-orientation, and from the participants who request programs that would produce immediate and tangible results.

The Importance of Training and Development

Training and development programs are becoming more and more widely accepted as a necessity for most organizations today. These organizations consider human resource as the most dynamic and most important of their resources. As such, they need considerable attention from the organization's management. In order to maximize this important resource, these organizations' look towards training and development. These organizations, which Senge, (1990) in his book, *The Fifth Discipline*, called "The Learning Organizations", clearly consider training and development to be a sound investment.

Taken together, training and development or systematic training, can be considered to be a process which enables the continuous and systematic development of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations of employees at all levels. The benefits of systematic training can be seen as follows (Cole, 1993):

1. The provision of a pool of skilled manpower for the organization.
2. The improvement of existing skills.
3. An increase in the knowledge and experience of the employees.

4. Improvement in job performance with resulting improvement in productivity overall.
5. Improved service to customers.
6. Greater commitment of staff (that is, increased motivation).
7. Increased value of individual employees' knowledge and skills.
8. Personal growth opportunities for employees.

An organization can only improve by learning, which is brought about by a systematic training and development program. Therefore, the continuous successful existence of an organization would depend upon the effectiveness of its training program. This effectiveness can be made a reality by looking at three critical issues. These issues are (Garvin, 1993) 1) meaning, 2) management, and 3) measurement. In other words there must be a well grounded objective of training and development programs which must be understood by all stakeholders (namely the purchaser of training, the training agency or the provider, the trainer and the trainee) and which must be actionable and easy to apply. Secondly, there must be clearer guidelines for action, and thirdly there must be better tools for assessing the effectiveness of the training and development to ensure that gains have in fact been made. In essence it can be said that the new philosophy on training and development emphasizes on bottom line results. This trend toward accountability can be considered to be the most significant development in the field of training and development in recent years. This training and development philosophy of these learning organizations is manifested in the following ways:

1. Training programs are usually undertaken only when tangible results can be obtained. Adoption of this policy may cause a review of the process and the creation of a more meaningful evaluation approach.
2. At least one method to ensure the results of a training program is included in the program design. This philosophy would ensure that evaluation strategy is placed on par with the objectives of the program, the content, the delivery system, and the instructor of the program.
3. There is an active commitment and involvement of management effort in all aspects of the training and development process. From inception through evaluation and follow-up, management's active commitment and involvement is essential to the success of any program. This increased support will allow for additional efforts put in to evaluate programs. It is seen as a continuous cycle.

Basically, efficient and effective training programs need systematic planning and instructional design, and a well-monitored implementation process with adequate resource support for achieving the desired program objectives. However, without an appropriate evaluation program, it would be difficult to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of any training program and, subsequently rationalize the continual implementation of such a program.

In the business setting, learning is another phase of behavior that encompasses virtually all functions in the management of human resource. Learning a job is invariably a social process - one normally learns from someone, and this usually happens in a group or organization. It is a form of socialization - a process by which the individual acquires knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations to meet the expectations of those who influence his behavior. It suggests that the individual changes his behavior to conform to certain expectations, especially the expectations of management. In the management of human resources, it implies the development of understanding and increased knowledge as a result reading, doing and experiencing. It occurs in the form of adaptive behavior that is caused by changed conditions and shifts in motivation. The purpose of learning is improved personal development and organizational effectiveness while Nadler (1988) prefers to look at learning as consisting of three activities - training, development, and education.

However, distinctions between training, development and education are far from clear in the management process. While some scholars use these terms interchangeably, (Nadler, 1988; Kirkpatrick, 1971) some others think of education as those human resource development activities designed to improve the overall competence of the employee in a specified direction and beyond the current job held and is related to the future job of the employee concerned (Goldstein, 1986). Training on the other hand refers to activities that are designed to improve performance on -the - job the employee is currently undertaking or is hired to do. It is often regarded as the learning of a particular task or series of assignments.

Development is a continuous process that occurs throughout an employee's career with an organization and prepares him for general growth. It is therefore, concerned with assisting the employees so they can move with the organization as it develops, changes, and grows (Laird, 1983).

The differentiation here then is in the objectives: training is teaching and learning in order to master the knowledge required to master the knowledge required for initial performance on a job while development aims to help the growth of management personnel in their careers in the organization. Development takes place through increased knowledge, skills acquisition and understanding and may embrace courses and other devices as well as on - the - job guidance. The objective of development is the achievement and maintenance of a higher level of performance, and whenever possible the assuming of greater and complex responsibilities for employees.

Training is also a continuous learning process for employees at all levels to acquire and master the appropriate knowledge and skills to perform to set standards within the organization (Laird, 1983). By implication, the objectives of training are increased productivity, greater effectiveness in the present job and for some employees, readiness to fill a vacant position.

In the workplace, the function of training and development is to bring about behavior change. As a result of the learning process, individuals will do something in



a way different from that in which they did the same thing before training and development took place .The behavior changes brought about by training and development must be measurable in terms of the organization's requirements. For example, there is no point to train the technician on Telephone Techniques if he is not required to use the telephone in his daily work. Similarly, there would be little value in teaching Effective Telephone Techniques And Courtesies to the receptionist and telephone operator unless the organization has some means to measure (to evaluate) the effectiveness of the training provided.

Before any attempt is made to change behavior, the required behavior must be known and the means to measure the change in behavior must be ascertained. Until these two constraints are satisfied, the effectiveness of training actions cannot be known and their functional utility becomes guesswork (Kirkpatrick, 1994).

Furthermore, behavior change must be measured not only during training, but also in terms of what the trainee does after receiving the training in the actual job environment. It is his performance on the job that is important, not his performance in a training program. There is little point in training an employee any skill that he or she will not feel comfortable using back on the job. A real test of change in behavior, is how well the trainee performs in terms of task accomplishment, The only valid result of training or management development actions is a measurable increase or improvement in an individual's contribution to organizational goals.

Behavior changes brought about by training and development can be divided into changes of knowledge, attitude, skills, and work habits. The effect of training and development is to change human behavior in the cognitive, the affective, and the psychomotor domains. Hence, training and development have a common function: the development of human resources.

In summary, it can be said that there are a number of assumptions on training and development that have been adopted, and these are:

- 1 It is a process which continues throughout the life of every individual;
- 2 There must be continuous guidance and direction by a group of teachers for training to be effective;
- 3 As new problems , techniques and information arise constantly at every rung of the organizational ladder , training must be broad enough to meet the developmental needs of every individual in the organization;
- 4 Training must be planned, systematized and organized in accordance with well known principles of learning and teaching if the learners are to acquire the necessary skills , knowledge and attitudes necessary for both the individual and the organization;

- 5 Training must deal with the whole person and be flexible enough to adapt itself to the individual rather than a rigid pattern to which he is forced to conform;
- 6 Training must recognize the role of attitudes and understandings in the application of skills and knowledge. The employee must have the right attitude towards his job and his organization;
- 7 Learning and training can only happen where there is a positive climate that encourages growth and self - improvement.

Evaluation of Training

The Human Resource Development field has grown at a phenomenal rate in recent years. The exact amount of growth and the size of this industry are difficult to pinpoint. At the same time, training and development has also taken on much criticism in recent years for apparently failing to contribute to overall corporate development. The criticisms commonly offered are (Philips, 1991): 1) programs have no direct links specifically to strategies, challenges, or problems in the office, 2) programs are designed to create awareness and understanding, but not competence, 3) programs focus on individuals rather than operating units, 4) participants do not have a clear objective for attending programs, and 5) programs fail to help participants confront reality. Following these criticisms the field of program evaluation has become a hot area.