



Effectiveness of Training Transfer and Factors Influences the Training Transfer --An Analysis

KEYWORDS

Training, knowledge Skills Abilities (KSA), Transfer, Motivation, organization, Personality, Training Design, Work Environment

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of the paper is to present an empirical study based on an effectiveness of training transfer, the paper also examines trainee characteristics factors which affect the motivation to transfer and determine the trainees' behavior in organizations. | Design/Methodology/Approach – the author used 40 in-depth interviews with trainees from a single organization who participated in a training program and subsequently observed in the organization. Qualitative methodology used is a strong element of this study as it provides good information regarding the training transfer process. The research design mode is interviewing trainees one year after the training took place, revealed important factors affecting the training transfer process. | Findings – The report reveals the importance of work environment, trainee characteristics, and environmental factors in the training transfer process and provides useful insights regarding the design and management of the training program.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to present an empirical study based on the trainee's view of learning transfer at work and to determine the motivational aspects that trainees view as important in affecting the training transfer. Under mentioned some of the literature review supporting the training transfer variables. This study also aims to gain insight into some of the factors that determine the transfer of training to the work context. The present research examined the relationship between three types of predictors on transfer of training, including training design, individual characteristics and work environment

The methodological concerns and the results of the present study are then discussed. Finally limitations, suggestions are presented.

OBJECTIVES

Training transfer evaluation is not carried out in a professional manner, or it does not exist at all in many companies, and the lack of this information makes it impossible either to prove training value or to find reasons for its existence. When training transfer is not evaluated, the investment and its effects cannot be tested and resources can be wasted in inadequate activities. Sometimes, training transfer is avoided because it is considered an expensive and time-consuming process. At other times, the reason is the lack of measurement systems for determining the changes arisen from training.

The objective of this paper is, taking the above-mentioned situations into consideration, to analyze the effects of training on business results. First, the theoretical aspects related to training evaluation. Next, the empirical research carried out up to now is compiled and, from these data, The last part of the paper includes conclusion and suggestion based on study carried out. The research objectives were, to examine whether and to what degree the participants in the training program transferred to their work the knowledge and skills acquired at the programme to study the factors that support and hinder the participants' transfer of training to the workplace and to study the trainee himself and his characteristics and how these affect the training transfer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Factors affecting training transfer at work:

1. Motivational factors concerning the trainee;
2. Organizational factors affecting the transfer of training and the Trainee.

Previous research has shown that the characteristics of the trainee's personality directly affect the training process and

training transfer (Ford et al., 1992; Warr et al., 1999). The ability of the person to learn, synthesize, and connect what he has learnt to practice and transfer the skills and knowledge to work is the second factor for training transfer (Robertson and Downs, 1979).

Other studies have identified the following which affecting the training transfer: the motivation of the person to learn and transfer the skills to his work (Facteau et al., 1995; Kontoghiorghe, 2002); his perception of opportunities to apply the new skills (Noe, 1986); his personal career goals (Tziner et al., 1991);

Training design

In order to achieve successful training transfer to the workplace, the training program must be relevant to the job. However, it is not enough for the content of training to be relevant. The trainee must also understand the relationship between training and work practice to be able to make the transfer. The planning of the training program is very important for its total success and therefore for training transfer at work. The goals and the extent of training, the training methods and means, as well as the training place and equipment, are important factors related to training program planning.

The quality of the trainer: The trainer himself must possess two essential characteristics. First of all he must be reliable, and secondly he must be effective. Finally, the content of the training must emphasize both theoretical and practical aspects, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Gould and Miller, 2004). A good combination of all these is important and leads to increased training transfer. In the end it is the participant only who decides whether to change his behavior or not. Trainees do not change their behavior merely because someone tells them to do. They change when they feel there is a need of it. They do it with their own learning style. The trainer and the organization can only try to remove the mental blocks of the trainee, rest depends on trainee itself. Rapid technological development will place greater demands on workers. In addition, the increased emphasis on improving quality of services and products due to global competition is expected to continue to change the way work is accomplished by more self-managed work teams.

Organizational characteristics

The prevailing organizational climate concerning new knowledge and skills greatly influences whether the transfer will be made or not (Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993; A supportive climate increases the adoption of transfer strategies by the trainees as well as the transfer in general (Burke and Baldwin, 1999). Supe-

riors and colleagues are another important factor mentioned in the literature as affecting training transfer and existence of available equipment used at work will affect the training transfer. Culture will or will not allow the employee to experiment with his new skills in his working position. Thus, we expect that in performance-oriented and humane-oriented organizational cultures there will be more opportunities for employees to experiment and transfer newly acquired knowledge and skills. We assume that the trainee enters the training process having specific, characteristics and motives. During the training process, the complex interactions among the trainer and the trainee influence trainee characteristics, knowledge, skills and abilities and result in direct or indirect training transfer to his work environment. Finally, organizational factors affect training transfer rate and work performance, as well as the trainee himself, thus shaping his perception of learning and its transfer to the workplace. The first theories on training transfer focused on the proper learning environment and play a defining role in the training transfer. When the training focus is on specific job-related skills, the instructional strategies in training design must emphasize the application of the training content to the job for training transfer to occur. Transfer occurs when the trainee exits training and applies what he has learned directly or indirectly to work. Direct training transfer to the workplace means that the trained employee is able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired to his work. Indirect transfer means that the trained employee may transfer to the workplace skills or attitudes that were developed in training, not as part of the training objectives but as a result of the interactions and methods used. Thus, working in a group, promoting self-confidence, self-esteem, being responsible, reliable, punctual, etc., are all possible skills and attitudes developed indirectly through training and may contribute to enhanced work performance (Baldwin and Ford, 1988).

Significance of formal training programs for organizational effectiveness, it is imperative that organizations design and implement training programs in the most effective manner, and that they understand the factors that contribute to training effectiveness. Some practitioners have attempted to increase the effectiveness of training by utilizing sophisticated training techniques without regard for their actual need. Others have focused on arranging the "best" training environment (e.g., Wexley, 1984).

Influences of individual characteristics on transfer of training

In addition to training design, there are several individual characteristics that affect the transfer of the training process. Some of these characteristics include cognitive ability, locus of control, conscientiousness, achievement motivation, motivation to learn and to transfer, anxiety, self-efficacy, suspicion and job satisfaction of these characteristics, performance self-efficacy has been found to strongly relate to both learning and transfer of training when a trainee feels confident in his or her ability to perform, the more likely he or she will transfer such knowledge and/or skill to the job. Performance self-efficacy will be positively related to training transfer.

As suggested before, trainees must have the ability to retain the knowledge instilled during the training program to facilitate the transfer process. Similar to cognitive ability, training retention is the degree to which trainees retain the content after training is completed. Baldwin and Ford (1988) argue that learning retention outcomes are directly associated with the generalization and maintenance of training effects on the job. They argue that in order for training skills to be transferred, they first must be learned and retained. Although we were unable to find any previous research empirically demonstrating this relationship, we believe it is an important aspect in the transfer of the training process. Trainee retention will be positively related to training transfer. Finally, as the trainee enters the workplace after training he influences the organization directly or/and indirectly through the acquired knowledge and skills. He may influence job and organizational design by demanding more autonomy, task variety, and job involvement. Moreover, he may contribute to quality management and learning in the workplace. On the

other hand, work- and people-related factors will influence trainees' perceptions by giving them feedback regarding the value of training and its benefits for both the trainee and the organization examined the influence of organizational factors on motivation to learn and transfer and individual and/or organizational performance. In our study, we examine if and how the individual can affect organizational factors through training transfer to the workplace.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

To transfer the training to the job we required Feedback, Supervisor support and Transfer of training (Holton, 1996; 2005). Consequently, when trainees have previous knowledge and practice on how to apply the newly learned knowledge and skills to the job and when training instructions are congruent with job requirements, an increased likelihood of transfer should exist. The purpose of the present study was to examine the extent to which employees' attitudes and beliefs about training influence their pre training motivation, and their perceptions of the extent to which they are able to transfer training back to their job. Several predictors of these variables were examined in the study, including training attitudes, individual attitudes, and social support for learning and transfer. Prior to actually taking a training course, an employee often has an expectation about the quality of the course and its job relevance. Such expectations may be based upon past experiences with a specific training program or may actually come from comments made by coworkers who have already completed the training. While other researchers have acknowledged the importance of developing an understanding of factors that affect training motivation (e.g., Noe, 1986; Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 1991), research has not examined the influence of the general reputation of training on pre training motivation. Training motivation should be affected by the extent to which training is rewarded in the organization. Motivation factors comprise the second group. Workers need to have both the ability to apply knowledge and the motivation to do so. Motivation has two components:

- 1) Workers have to believe that the expended effort will change performance and
- 2) Changed performance leads to valued outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire based on the following variables consolidated as the independent variables of transfer design, performance self-efficacy, supervisor support and performance feedback were measured with items from the learning transfer system inventory LTSI (Holton et al., 2000). The measure of training retention was created specifically for this study. The measure of the dependent variable, training transfer, was based on tesluk et al.'s (1995) research. All variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The LTSI is based on the HRD research and evaluation model (holton, 1996) theoretical framework. The macro-structure of that model hypothesizes that HRD outcomes are a function of Ability, Motivation and Environmental influences (Noe & Schmitt, 1986) at three outcome levels: learning, individual performance, and organizational performance. Secondary influences such as attitudes and personality are also included, particularly ones that impact motivation.

The questionnaire is based on the following dimensions

Learner's Readiness

1. Motivation to Transfer
2. Positive Personal Outcomes
3. Personal Capacity for Transfer
4. Peer Support
5. Perceived Content Validity
6. Transfer Design
7. Opportunity to Use
8. Transfer Effort-Performance Expectations
9. Performance-Outcomes Expectations
10. Resistance to Change
11. Performance Self-Efficacy
12. Supervisor support and sanctions

Specific training had taken place almost a year previously and we wanted to examine and evaluate training transfer one year later. We considered this time period necessary for our research purpose, as trainees were able to assess training transfer and remember and evaluate the training acquired. Thus, we conducted in-depth personal interviews, which included semi-structured personal interviews of people separately, and these were used to investigate the trainees' perceptions regarding the degree of training transfer to their work, the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired at the training, the factors that affected the transfer of training, and the personal characteristics of the trainees and how these affected the transfer.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- The majority employees view is that new knowledge, skills and abilities has very much helped to perform their work so training program is very effective and employees transfer the KSA in to their job is evident
- This result shows employees perform their tasks easier and faster, the neutral employees look like they are not fully engaged in their tasks may be the nature of their depth is difficult to assess their job disagreed employees may be performing administration jobs than the one for what they recruited
- Other results clarifies that quality of the task has been improved after training by using new KSA
- The majority of the employees are accomplishing their task earlier by using new KSA so this clearly proves training transfer has happened positively
- For another question training for new equipment disagreed employees are doing administrative task where equipment are not available, agreed employees are the people who performing task using equipment for which they trained, so this shows the organization trains people for their new equipment it is a good sign on the part of the management
- So management not compelling the employees to use particular methods to perform their task it gives free hand to do the tasks it is good for some tasks, for other tasks it has to impose to use standard operating procedure for their equipment how to use it etc.
- An interview reveals that 1st line supervisors are behind newly trained employees to make them to do the tasks as required this positive attitude helps employees to grow up in their profession which makes profit for the organization

Maximum employees has agreed for a question supervisors provide assistance when you have a problem trying out KSA, this is also a good sign for organization development it also motivates the employees to perform effectively and efficiently without any fear on their task accomplishment, disagreed peoples may be their dept may not have supervisors, may have managers and their expectations may be different as employees has to perform on their own because of managers work load.

- For another question your supervisor discusses how to apply KSA to job situations. answer reveals that best quality of the supervisor during crisis helping the subordinates, positively develop motivation among employees to perform well, and those are willing to learn more this assistance will helpful
- Even though majority agreed supervisors should inform or should give feedback and set goals about the tasks they performed as 35% of employees dissatisfied over this otherwise this may demotivate employees, they lose interest on their task and chance for leading to monotonous job
- Another result shows that proper training transfer has happened and new KSA has improved their task
- Measured result is evident that after new KSA employees are performing tasks much faster. this makes sure that training transfer is happening in organization
- The views of employees agreed shows the effectiveness of training transfer it is not only benefit the organization, employees morale also will be high, once quality of the task is improved after training this will surely motivate the employees to maintain standard

- The result for "You can accomplish job tasks better by using new KSA". Maximum respondents agreed is also a very good example of training transfer happened
- Your work and the work of your colleagues are converged. For this question Neutral results show that the samples are from different depth of the same aging but the result of other questions members are cooperating effectively favors this result as very much positive
- Other results shows that no ego problem among employees, so their group morale will increase since training transfer happened to all employees and all are performing very well in their task. Even a difficult task will be made easier by this group
- Respondent felt Difficult to answer a question related to organization is proud of your formal discussion with the management Dept head reveals that the organization is very much proud of the employees being performed very well after undergoing any training program for their task this is also evident that training transfer happened
- Formal discussion with one year old employee (samples) reveals that employees are very much proud of employers/Co workers being treated very well even though they are new to their Dept this shows positive approach by older employees towards welcoming new peoples this approach it will make the newcomers feel secured seniors explaining all facilities, welfare measures provided by might makes good bonding between seniors and new comers.

Major Issues

The majority of trainees emphasized personal needs for their participation, the fact that trainees themselves proposed according to their needs was a strong motive to participate actively in the training and subsequent transfer of KSA. They also stated that they participated in the program because their personal philosophy was that "knowledge is a power which is never wasted". This statement reflects trainees' perception about learning. Another argument revealing trainees' learning perception is that "knowing management theory has always been helpful in managing our own personal lives". Furthermore, they mentioned reasons related to their personal growth. Another participant had expressed that he wanted to apply management skills to his own work situation. Thus, when people believe that a specific training course will be useful in their current job position, they express interest and attend the program because they believe that it can be useful for their career in general. In our interviews, the majority of trainees mentioned that they wished to be prepared for any job that might come up and be able to find the job they dreamed of.

A significant proportion of participants expressed their initial interest in participating in training to acquire knowledge and skills which would help them in their jobs. Regardless of the initial trainees' motivation to participate in the training program, the majority of the participants had positive expectations regarding training transfer to the workplace. These expectations formed trainee commitment and active involvement in the training process. These participants were thinking of how they could apply what they were learning to their work. They were interested in improving themselves at work, in enriching their job, in finding and suggesting new ways of operating, in getting their own voice heard in the company and getting credit for acquiring useful knowledge and skills. In our interviews one year after the training, almost all of these trainees expressed they did manage to transfer the training to their work. Contrary to what we expected, the persons who said that they were thinking during training on how to apply what they were learning to their work finally transferred only a small percentage or even nothing at all. The only exception was few participants who mentioned that he had not transferred almost everything he had learned and had greatly influenced by his work environment. It is certainly worth mentioning that the neutral people who did not transfer training to their work reported that they had benefited from the training. They report that they may not have transferred knowledge and skills directly, but indirectly there are some results evident in their work. More specifically, they refer to being more professional, consistent and careful in what they do. They feel that they are Supervisor support can be described as the extent to which supervisors support and

reinforce the use of newly learned knowledge and skills on the job (Holton et al., 2000). Although there is some contradictory evidence (e.g. Russell et al., 1985), the dominant literature suggests that when trainees perceive that their supervisors support the application of newly developed knowledge and skills, they are more likely to transfer these competencies back to the job (e.g. Bates et al., 2000; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995).

Conclusion

This study proposed a systemic model in training transfer by examining the trainee as he enters the training process, the training itself, as well as the outcome of the training, i.e. What was actually transferred to work and the factors affecting the transfer. One of the most important findings of our research is the significant impact of trainees' goals and expectations regarding training transfer to the workplace at the beginning of the training. The person's goals had the most decisive role in transferring the training to work or not. Almost 50 percent of the people interviewed participated in training with the goal of developing their own skills and knowledge to be prepared for a future job, and not thinking about their current position. Thus, it was expected that training transfer would be limited, which was exactly what happened. Furthermore, the perception of a person concerning the opportunities to apply his new skills also plays a decisive role.

People who believe and know in advance that they will not have any opportunity to apply their new skills did not transfer training to work. Since people know they will not have any opportunities to apply their new skills, they set their own goals, and training transfer of their work is not considered significant. This is in line with previous research, emphasizing that clarifying training expectations and goal-setting according to trainee needs are important factors in the effectiveness of training and training transfer (Latham and Frayne, 1989; Wexley and Baldwin, 1986). The impact of "motivation to learn" and trainees' goals is significant and the two related factors are important in the training process. However, it became apparent from our research that the motivation of the person to learn does not mean that the person will afterwards transfer what he wanted and managed to learn. In order for the person to transfer the knowledge and skills acquired through training, he must also have the so-called "motivation to transfer" what he is learning to work. We saw that in cases where there was great motivation to learn about the lack of motivation to transfer, no training transfer at work took place. This is in contrast with previous research supporting a positive relationship between learning and transfer (Holton, 1996). Environment variables that have a significant impact on the post-training behaviors. Some indicators of transfer climate include performance feedback, peer support, supervisor support and supervisor sanctions.

Limitations of Study

The major limitation of study is that it is confined to one organization and small sample size of forty. However, all factors of transfer of training analyzed, and in both work environment and motivational factors. First, it is one of the few approaches to the study of the training transfer results relationships from the empirical point of view. Second, this study finds signs of positive effects of training for the company. Finally, it proposes a methodology for the empirical study of the effect of training on results that can be used in later researches, and it points out some aspects that must be included in those future papers in order to avoid some limitations of this study, like not having considered effects delayed by longer than one year.

Suggestions

Based on research, the following suggestions may be discerned.

Training design: It is very much accepted as majority of samples transfer the training in particular depth, but design should relevant to another department also as there are 5% of the respondents are dissatisfied.

The quality of the trainer: since the same depth personal is the trainers they are all well versed with KSA but strongly suggest hiring a trained professional along with the in house trainer.

Maintain the morale of the trainees: during the course of study it is observed that the new employee is a highly motivated group, management has to maintain this because only trainees can change their behavior when there is a need of it, trainer and organization can only remove the mental blocks, peer support and superior support to be maintained

Management should maintain this morale by making employee participation in management, assigning committees and other welfare measures; this will lead to valid outcomes

Keep continuous training program: Mgt has to plan training as and when required for existing employees and newcomers as tech development demand for good work force this can be enhanced by recruiting qualified entry level employees

Follow human oriented cultures: Superiors of some depth are following human oriented cultures it should adopt for all 1st line supervisors this will enhance more opportunity for employees to experiment and transfer new KSAs.

Trainee retention: Result shows training retention to have positive relations to training transfer so might should maintain more autonomy, task variety and job involvement for their employees

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