



HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR COURSE



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You can learn a lot by talking to learners a few months after the training.

You were lucky. You got funding to create training. You did that, possibly on your own, or possibly with the help of a team of professionals, maybe even the Yardstick professionals. It seems great. You've rolled it out across your organization and scratched another task off your to do list. You're feeling good. Until the management comes to you and says, "We need you to do a presentation on that training program you developed. We are reviewing the budget."

Gulp... Presentation? Budget?

The implications are clear. You know budget cuts are coming. This is your one and only chance to convince upper management that they need to continue to allocate funds for training. But how?

As I talked about in Evaluation Part 1, you probably didn't decide to train people so that they would achieve high test scores.

You probably intended that the training would have a positive impact on an organizational result. But did it? How can you know?

Suddenly you remember, you asked learners to complete a survey after they completed the course. Yes! You can pull together a presentation, no problem. You get the survey results, which show that people liked the program, and they felt like they knew more (Kirkpatrick Levels 1 and 2). But then you realize you know

nothing about their actual job performance since taking the training (Kirkpatrick Levels 3 and 4).

This story is not unique. Doing follow up and evaluating training beyond test scores and surveys is a challenge; it takes time and potentially money. Hopefully, you built some funds and time for this in your original budget, but if you didn't you are not out of luck yet. Evaluation doesn't have to be an impossible mountain to climb.

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You can learn a lot by talking to learners a few months after the training. Ask them how the training program has affected their behaviour on the job. Do they feel more confident? What improvements have they noticed? Are there any barriers that are preventing them from implementing the training? Do they need additional support?

Talk to their supervisors too. What have they noticed since the training? Increased productivity? Improved independence? Fewer incidents of non-compliance?

Then look at the numbers. What was the organizational result you were targeting? What did it look like before the training? What does it look like now?

Organizational results are the most convincing pieces of information you want to try to get. It's the information that will get you into the next budget. It will let you implement follow up and support programs to continue training post-course. It will also make it easier for you to get the funding for the next course you have in mind.

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