

## LESSON 30

### FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT

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#### How to Give Good Feedback

People won't get great at their jobs unless you do a great job of giving them feedback. So why are performance reviews the most hated ritual in business? Here's a five-point program to improve your performance with reviews.

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A few years ago, Chris Oster's unit at General Motors got so fed up with traditional reviews that it abolished them. "There were so many problems - for managers and for people being appraised," explains Oster, director of organizational development for the GM Powertrain Group. "We had 'rater error.' We had the 'contrast effect.' We had the 'halo effect.' But the biggest problem was that feedback wasn't leading to changes in behavior."

Darcy Hitchcock, president of AXIS Performance Advisors, helps companies create high-performance work systems, including feedback systems. She says that one of her most painful professional moments came from a performance review early in her career: Her boss rated her a four on a five-point scale. Though most people would consider that a decent score, Hitchcock agonized over why she didn't get a five. She confronted her boss: What steps could she take to get a perfect score? He had no answer. Angry and confused, she left the office and spent the day in a nearby park. "In the space of a one-hour meeting," she says, "my boss took a highly motivated employee and made her highly unmotivated."

Many years ago, top executives at Glenroy Inc., a privately held manufacturer of packaging materials outside of Milwaukee, held an off-site at which they reviewed key company policies. A week later, Glenroy held a rally in the company parking lot at which employees built a bonfire and burned its policy manuals.

The company's well-established approach to reviews literally went up in smoke. But unlike other policies, which Glenroy refined or reinvented, reviews were never reinstated. "When people find out that we don't have formal reviews, it drives them crazy," says Michael Dean, Glenroy's executive vice president. "They don't understand how we can run the business. Leaders here provide people with feedback. But the way for it to be effective is on a day-by-day, minute-by-minute basis - not twice a year."

Feedback matters. The only way for people to get better at what they do is for the people they work for to provide candid, timely performance evaluations. "In today's environment, you have to evaluate what's changing and what's staying the same, what's working and what's no longer working," says Bruce Tulgan,

author of *FAST Feedback* (1998, HRD Press) and founder of Rainmaker Thinking, a consulting firm based in New Haven, Connecticut. "Feedback plays that role." Anne Saunier, a principal at Sibson & Co., a consulting firm based in Princeton, New Jersey, puts it this way: "If you have ideas and information that will help someone perform better, it's hostile not to share them."

So why are reviews still the most painful ritual in business? A 1997 survey by Aon Consulting and the Society for Human Resource Management reported that only 5% of HR professionals were "very satisfied" with their performance-management systems. In 1995, William M. Mercer Inc., based in New York City, polled executives about reviews. Only 7% said their systems were "excellent"; more than 70% had revamped them or were planning to.

Part of the problem with reviews is that human nature hasn't changed - few of us enjoy hearing about our shortcomings, and few of our bosses and colleagues look forward to describing them. Part of the problem is that work itself has changed - it's more team-oriented, less individualistic. The tougher it is to measure individual performance, the tougher it is to evaluate it.

But the biggest problem with reviews is how little they've changed. Too many leaders still treat feedback as a once-a-year event, rather than an ongoing discipline. "Doing annual appraisals is like dieting only on your birthday and wondering why you're not losing weight," cracks Saunier. Too many leaders confuse feedback with paperwork. "Filling out a form is inspection, not feedback," says Kelly Allan, senior associate of Kelly Allan Associates Ltd., a consulting firm based in Columbus, Ohio whose clients have included Boeing, Paramount Pictures, and IBM. "History has taught us that relying on inspections is costly, improves nothing for very long, and makes the organization less competitive."

We can't teach you the one right way to provide - or receive - feedback. But our program does offer five action-oriented principles to improve your performance with performance reviews. Be sure to let us know how you think we performed. . .

#### 1. Feedback is not About Forms

Mention the term "performance review," and the first image that comes to mind is paper: checklists, ratings, all-too-familiar reports that invite all-too-predictable answers. That's a problem. Anyone who equates delivering feedback with filling out forms has lost the battle for smart appraisal before it's begun. "If you use forms as the basis for meetings about performance," argues Allan, "you change only one thing - what might have been a natural, helpful conversation into an awkward, anxious inspection."

Yes, there are reasons to document the appraisal process. But most of them involve administrative neatness or legal nervousness, not sound thinking about feedback. That's why more and

more companies that are serious about reviews use forms only to confirm that a review has taken place - not as a tool for the review itself.

Consider the example of Parkview Medical Center in Pueblo, Colorado. For years, the hospital's leaders have been importing new ideas about quality and service into their 286-bed facility. Early on, administrators and executives looked at ways to improve how the hospital evaluated its employees. They began by exploring how best to modify the hospital's existing checklist-based reviews: Which ratings made the most sense? Which scoring systems worked best? But no amount of tinkering satisfied Parkview's leaders.

Dorothy Gill, vice president of human resources, and a team of her colleagues explained their dilemma to the CEO: "He said, 'If there isn't a better way to do reviews, let's just stop doing them.' So we did. We had no idea what we were going to do instead."

Gill and her colleagues eventually came up with an idea. It's called APOP, for Annual Piece of Paper. The most valuable kinds of feedback, they concluded, are the daily interactions between leaders and their people - interactions that can't be captured on paper. The hospital still requires that managers do annual reviews. But instead of being top-down appraisals, the reviews are bottom-up requests for assistance: What can the leader do to make the employee's job easier? What gets in the way of accomplishing the job?

And the medium for those reviews is conversation, not written evaluation. There is a form - the APOP. But its only role is to confirm that the conversations took place. There are no scores, no written goals for the next year. It's literally a piece of paper, signed by the employee and the director, that records the date, place, and agenda of the meeting. The APOP process "takes performance reviews and turns them upside down," Gill says. "Directors don't tell employees how they're doing. They ask open-ended questions to see what will help employees do a better job."

## 2. Feedback Delayed is Feedback Denied

You know the old joke about airline food. First passenger: "This food is terrible!" Second passenger: "And the portions are so small!" Most of us feel the same way about performance reviews. The only thing worse than how unsatisfying they are is how seldom they take place.

Bruce Tulgan interviewed hundreds of managers and employees for his book, *FAST Feedback* (the acronym stands for "frequent, accurate, specific, timely"). One of the most common complaints, he says, is that reviews take place too long after the performance being critiqued has occurred. "We don't work in a year-by-year, pay-your-dues, climb-the-ladder environment anymore," he says. "The once- or twice-a-year evaluation is a creature from the workplace of the past. Today's business leaders expect workers to be project-driven, results-oriented. That doesn't fit with the old model of reviewing performance every 6 or 12 months."

Why do smart companies and leaders stick with such an obsolete practice? Because, Tulgan argues, they have well-established systems for conducting annual or semiannual

reviews. "There are no systems for day-to-day engagement with workers," he says.

That's where "FAST feedback" comes in. Tulgan offers lots of techniques for accelerating how people deliver and process feedback. Managers, he says, can build feedback into routine meetings and memos. They can learn to deliver feedback through email and voice mail. They can use short notes. Ideally, they should set aside a designated chunk of time each day, just for giving their people feedback. "If we really want a just-in-time workforce," he argues, "we have to create just-in-time feedback."

One caution: There's a difference between timely feedback and rushed feedback. Rick Maurer, author of *Feedback Toolkit* (Productivity Press, 1994), argues that a few old-fashioned principles of human behavior still apply, even in fast-paced work environments. If you're providing feedback around an emotionally charged event, wait a day or two (but never more than a week). "Sometimes you're so emotional that it makes sense to wait," he says. "Let your gut be your guide." And if your feedback involves a big issue, something the person you're working with really needs to take seriously, then find an appropriate time and place - even if it delays the session. "Schedule an appointment and have a meeting," Maurer urges. "Don't give important feedback in the hallway."

## 3. Feedback is Where you Find It

It's a mistake to blame all the problems with performance reviews on the people who deliver them. Feedback is no different from any other business process - you get out of it only what you put into it. If you're not getting enough useful feedback, don't look at your boss; start by looking at yourself. "Ultimately," says Sibson & Co.'s Saunier, "managers aren't responsible for their people's performance. People are responsible for their own performance. There's feedback all around you - if you pay attention. If you're not getting enough feedback, ask for it."

Saunier offers an example from her own experience. She heard from a unit coach that a new employee, who'd been on the job three months and had been working with Saunier on a project, complained that he wasn't receiving enough feedback. "I couldn't believe it," Saunier says. "We walked back together from the client's office every day. And every day we discussed what we could do better. Just because I didn't sit him down in my office doesn't mean I wasn't providing feedback. The next time we walked back from the client's, I began our discussion by saying, 'Now, here's some feedback.'"

LeRoy Pingho, a vice president at Fannie Mae, the mortgage giant, never complains that he's not getting enough feedback. Since the mid-1980s, he's organized annual 360-degree reviews. This is not an official company program; it's his personal program. He selects a cross-section of colleagues - a boss, a subordinate, a customer - and asks them each to assess his performance. "Some things are 'flat spots' for me," he says. "I can struggle with them alone or get help."

Last year, Pingho took his review process a step further. He wrote an assessment based on the feedback he received, and then distributed copies to 50 people: bosses, peers, direct

reports, his wife. He sent everyone the same message: “You work with me, so you should know my strengths and weaknesses. Also, I’m going to ask four of you to help me work on the things I’m not good at.”

Pingho dubbed those four people his “spotters.” He chose two at his level, one above him, and one below him. He met with each of the spotters to review the “flat spots” he’d identified. Then he told them that he wanted to focus on getting better at two of those weaknesses. (He didn’t think he could tackle five at once.) One was active listening: “When I’m in meetings, I’m already through the presentation before the presenter has gotten to the first page.” The second was empowerment: “I want to use the input I get from people instead of disregarding it.”

He asked his spotters to alert him when they saw behavior that related to those improvement goals: “I said, ‘You don’t have to do this in a formal way. But if you see something, tell me.’ It’s like being on the high bar. Just knowing that there’s somebody to make sure you don’t fall helps you become more self-confident.”

At GM Powertrain Group, a new approach to feedback is helping salaried employees gain more self-confidence. The group, which designs and manufactures castings, engines, and transmissions, began redesigning its appraisal processes in July 1996. The new system, called Individual Growth Strategy, revolves around a few simple principles: People want to do their best. The people who improve are those who have the most control over their development. So it’s up to employees - not managers - to decide what kind of feedback is most useful and from whom it should come.

GM offers training in ideas, techniques, and tools for soliciting feedback. But it’s up to the people who want feedback to seek it out. “If I buy something, I’m more committed to using it than if someone gives it to me,” explains Chris Oster. “The same goes for feedback. If I solicit feedback, I’m more inclined to use it.”

#### **4. Giving people a Raise isn’t the Same as Giving them Feedback**

It’s hard to argue with the principle that the better you do, the more money you should get. But most performance gurus say that explicitly linking reviews and raises has unintended consequences.

“A raise is a transaction about how much money you or I can get,” explains Kelly Allan. “Feedback is a conversation about how much meaning you and I can create. Feedback is about success for your people and your customers. Pay is about marketplace economics and skills. Pay and feedback are not related.”

Allan practices what he preaches. At his company, discussions about money are tangible and statistical. People play a big role in setting their own pay. Associates research market rates for talent in their peer group, based on skills and experience. People who want a raise can present evidence that they’ve acquired a new skill or had an experience that the market would reward with a salary increase.

Conversations about performance, on the other hand, are informal and collegial. Associates meet weekly with a colleague

to discuss their current project. The firm schedules formal sessions monthly, quarterly, or every six months (depending on the associate’s tenure) to discuss the past, present, and future of each person’s work. “We have conversations, not appraisals,” Allan says. “And these conversations never include discussions of pay. Period.”

Glenroy Inc., the Wisconsin manufacturer that burned its employee manuals, has experimented with a more radical approach to pay. Several weeks after the bonfire, it was time for annual performance appraisals and salary reviews. Management was clear: Reviews were on the ash heap of history. But Glenroy did need to figure out what kinds of raises its employees would get. The improved approach? Employees decided their own raises.

Glenroy divided its workforce into peer groups based on job classifications. It was up to those peer groups to set their raises. In most cases, executive vice president Michael Dean reports, the peer groups were tougher than management would have been; the company later had to adjust many of the raises upward. “We treat people like adults,” says Dean. “That’s the essence of leadership.”

#### **5. Always Get Feedback on your Feedback**

One reason candid feedback is so important is that most people are great at self-delusion. It’s easy to think we’re better at writing software, creating marketing campaigns, or evaluating business plans than we really are. That same talent for self-delusion applies to the art of giving feedback. Bruce Tulgan puts it this way: “There’s such a disconnect between managers’ impressions of the feedback they give and their employees’ impressions of the feedback they get. Most managers need a reality check.”

Tulgan has devised a simple technique for creating such a check. He suggests that managers think about the three most recent times they offered feedback to one of their employees. Then, they should write down brief answers to questions about those sessions: What prompted you to give feedback on that matter at that time? Did you check your facts first? What was the substance of the feedback? Was there any concrete action as a result? Next the manager should ask the employee to write down brief answers to the same questions. The comparisons, Tulgan says, make for interesting reading.

“Think of the people who work for you as ‘customers’ for your feedback,” he argues. “Find out whether the feedback you’re providing is working for them. If it’s not, what’s the point?”

#### **Basic Guidelines for Giving Feedback**

1. Clarity — Be clear about what you want to say.
2. Emphasize the positive — This isn’t being collusive in the person’s dilemma.
3. Be specific — Avoid general comments and clarify pronouns such as “it,” “that,” etc.
4. Focus on behavior rather than the person.
5. Refer to behavior that can be changed.
6. Be descriptive rather than evaluative.
7. Own the feedback — Use ‘I’ statements.

8. Generalizations — Notice “all,” “never,” “always,” etc., and ask to get more specificity — often these words are arbitrary limits on behavior.
9. Be very careful with advice — People rarely struggle with an issue because of the lack of some specific piece of information; often, the best help is helping the person to come to a better understanding of their issue, how it developed, and how they can identify actions to address the issue more effectively.

## Handling Criticism with Honesty and Grace

Perhaps one of the most vulnerable of moments is when someone criticizes you, especially if that person knows you well. The scalpel of her comments can be surgically rapid and close for the bone, more damaging than the rubber hammer of a stranger’s passing slight. Yet, as the old say goes, “What doesn’t kill us can make us stronger.” People are most revealing when offering praise or criticism. Praise indicates what they most like about themselves and criticism often shows what they least like or feel least competent about in themselves. So criticism is actually a two-way mirror. How can you respond to another’s criticism with honesty and grace and actually gain new insights about yourself and the other person in the process?

### First Recognize that you are an Animal Under Attack

Whether you are with someone you love, hate, know little or just met, in the first moments when you realize that you are being criticized you will react the same. Your heart beats faster, skin temperature goes down and you even lose peripheral vision. Because you feel under attack, your first instincts are to focus on that feeling, making it more intense. You will then feel like withdrawing or retaliating. Just remember that both instinctual responses are akin to saying, “I don’t like your comments therefore I will give you more power.” Attempt to do neither as both fight or flight responses leave you with fewer options, not more.

When you focus on your feelings, you will be distracted from hearing the content of the comments. *You are more likely to react*, rather than choose how you want to act. Avoid a “faceoff” of escalation of comments between the two of you. Instead imagine a triangle of three entities: the other person, you and the topic of the criticism. Picture you both staring at the criticism, the third point in the triangle, to work through the comments, rather than staring each other down, where one person has to be wrong.

### Look to Their Positive Intent

#### Especially When they Appear to Have None

You are your most disarming when you compliment someone else for taking the time to give you feedback. You take the wind out of their sails. The other person may even backtrack. Yet our first instincts are to look for the ways we are right and others are . . . less right. In responding to criticism, the momentum of defensive emotions builds fast. Why? Because we mentally focus on the smart, thoughtful, and “right” things we are doing, while obsessing about the dumb, thoughtless, and otherwise wrong things the other person is doing. This tendency leads us to take a superior or righteous

position, get more rigid, and listen less as the criticism continues. Difficult as you might find it, try staying mindful of your worst side and their best side as you engage in responding to the criticism. You will probably be *more* generous and patient with them, and increase the chances that they will see areas where you might be right after all. Act as if they mean well, especially if it appears they do not, not for them, but for yourself. The more you can look to their positive intent, the greater the likelihood that you can respond to their comments without their adding more or elaborating before you can respond to their first comments.

Here’s an easy to remember four step process to follow when responding to a criticism. Remember it is never comfortable to hear negative comments. I just find this approach makes it easier than any other alternative I’ve found.

### “AAA” Approach to Responding to Criticism

#### Step One: Acknowled

Acknowledge that you heard the person, with a pause (buys time for both to cool off), nod, or verbal acknowledgment that demonstrates that you heard them. Whether the criticism is “justified” or not, if you attempt to avoid discussing it, it will loom larger in everyone’s minds that heard it and stick to you like fly paper, as you attempt to move on. Do not disagree or counter- attack. Prove that you have heard his comment. Perhaps say “I understand you have a concern” rather than “You shouldn’t have. . . .” Avoid blaming or “bad labeling” language such as “That’s a lie” or “You don’t know what you are talking about.” You will only pour hot coals on the heat of escalation and harden the person into their position so she will want to elaborate.

#### Step Two: Ask for More.

Ask for more information so you both can cool off more and stay focused on the issue, not the feelings or personalities. Go slow to go faster later in reaching agreement about how to resolve the criticism. Try to “warm up” to the part of the person you can respect — focus on it mentally and refer to it verbally: “You are so dedicated” or “knowledgeable” or whatever their self- image is that leads them toward making the criticism. The more fully the other person feels heard, the more likely that he will be receptive to your response, whether it is to agree or disagree.

#### Step Three: Add Your Own

Add your own, asking permission first. If you believe the comments are accurate, then say so. If an apology is in order, give it sooner rather than later. Then say what you plan to do differently to respond to the criticism. Ask for their response to your comments and again thank the person for being thoughtful in offering them. The sooner you verbally agree, if you find truth in the criticism, the more likely that you will engender respect ITom the other person and any others who witness the interaction. In fact, if you tell others who are important to that person that you were wrong and appreciate his pointing it out to you, you will feel and appear more comfortable with yourself.

If, on the other hand, you disagree with the comments, say “May I tell you my perspective?” This sets the other person up



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| Date: | Name (Optional) |
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| Training Site: |
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| Organization and Office: |
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| Job Title: |
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**Please provide your candid assessment of the course by completing this evaluation form. For questions 1 through 9, select one response only by placing "X" in the appropriate box. For questions 9 through 14, write your comments in the space provided. Use the back or additional sheets if necessary. Your feedback is an important part of the evaluation of this course and of distance learning as an instructional strategy. Thank you for your help in the assessment of the OMB Circular A-87 training session conducted on December 19 and 20, 2002.**

|                                    |             |           |      |      |      |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| 1. Please evaluate the instructor. |             |           |      |      |      |
| Stephen Garfinkel                  | Outstanding | Excellent | Good | Poor | Very |

|  |         |         |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. This course deserves an overall grade of: |         |         |         |         |
| A _____                                      | B _____ | C _____ | D _____ | F _____ |

|  |         |         |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. This course deserves an overall grade of: |         |         |         |         |
| A _____                                      | B _____ | C _____ | D _____ | F _____ |

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| 2. The video quality was: | Excellent | Good | Poor | Very Poor |
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| 3. The audio quality was: | Excellent | Good | Poor | Very Poor |
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| 4. Course content was relevant. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
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| 5. The graphics were useful in illustrating the subject matter. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
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| 6. I had adequate access to the instructor to ask questions. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
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|  |                |       |          |                   |
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| 1. Course objectives were clearly stated.  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 2. Would you participate in another grants training like this? Yes _____ No _____        |                |       |          |                   |
| 3. What information did you find most useful?  |                |       |          |                   |
| 4. What did you like most about the course?  |                |       |          |                   |
| 5. What did you like least about the course?   |                |       |          |                   |
| 6. What information that could be useful to you would you like to see in another course? |                |       |          |                   |
| 7. Additional comments:  |                |       |          |                   |

### Evaluation of Training and Learning

These instruments for training and learning evaluation and follow-up were developed by W Leslie Rae MPhil, FITOL, Chartered FCIPD, who is an expert in this field, and author of over 30 books about training and learning. These materials are free for personal and organizational use subject to the terms stated (basically, retain the copyright notice, accept liability for any issues arising, and don't sell or publish the materials).

This document contains the essential end-of-programme validation, feedback and follow-up instruments: most ready for use, others for you to develop to suit your own situation.

Instruments such as the ones included here are the most effective way of:

- determining what the participants have learned
- giving the learners time to reflect on their learning during the programme prior to their completion of their post-training personal action plan
- getting useful feedback in an organized manner, to help with future training planning, and
- ensuring trainees and learners follow-up their training with relevant actions to apply, improve, develop and reinforce learning attained.

The document contains two alternative learning evaluation instruments; two suggested approaches to post-training personal action planning, and four types of 'reactionnaire' for post-training feedback.

### Tools included

- Evaluation of Learning Questionnaire (LQ) - ready to use
- Evaluation of Key Objectives Learning Questionnaire (KOLQ) - guide
- Action Plan template and instruction - ready to use
- Four separate and different 'Reactionnaires' - to suit different situations

### About 'reactionnaires'

It is often valuable to obtain the reactions of training participants to matters outside the evaluation of the learning itself, eg., domestic arrangements, style and pace of training delivery, training administration, etc.

By using a well constructed and effective 'reactionnaire' (not a tame 'happy sheet', skewed to prompt favourable comments) useful data can be obtained to help plan future training.

### Evaluation of learning questionnaire (LQ)

Please consider the learning programme that you have attended and complete the following. Be completely honest in your assessments and answer the questions as fully as possible, continuing on a separate sheet if necessary. You will find your reflections helpful in the completion of your Action Plan.

### LQ Part I - Learning

To what extent do you feel you have learned from the programme? (Please ring the score number that you feel most closely represents your views)

| *Learned a lot*      6 5 4 3 2 1 *Learned*      *nothing*

If you have rated 6, 5 or 4 please describe a) what you have learned and b) what you intend to do with this learning on your return to work.

If you have rated 3, 2 or 1, please state as fully as possible the reasons why you gave this rating.

### **LQ Part II - Confirmation of Learning**

To what extent do you feel you have had previous learning (perhaps some you have forgotten) confirmed?

*Confirmed a lot*      6 5 4 3 2 1 *Confirmed*      *little*

If you have rated 6, 5 or 4, please describe a) what has been confirmed and b) what you

intend to do with this learning on your return to work.

If you have rated 3, 2 or 1, please state as fully as possible the reasons why you gave this rating.

### **LQ Part III - Non-learning**

What have you NOT learned that you needed to and /or expected to learn during the programme? Please describe fully any items.

### **LQ Part IV - Any other comments**

#### **evaluation of key objectives learning questionnaire (KOLQ)**

This instrument is a more specific alternative to the LQ where you want to determine the learning of the particular content and objectives of the programme. You should identify from the training programme planning activity what are the main objectives of the programme (which, of course, every programme should have). These can be converted into a format of questions seeking information on the extent to which the learners feel that they have learned in each key objective area. While being more specifically related to the learning, this method obviously takes greater effort in preparation since a different KOLQ will have to be produced for each different programme.

Part of a KOLQ for, for example, an interpersonal skills programme might be:

1. To what extent have you learned on the course about your behavioural skills?

A lot 6 5 4 3 2 1 Nothing

If you scored in the range 3 to 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

2. To what extent have you learned on the course about how much you contribute to group discussions?

A lot 6 5 4 3 2 1 Nothing

If you scored in the range 3 to 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

3. To what extent have you learned on the course about non-verbal communication?

A lot 6 5 4 3 2 1 Nothing

If you scored in the range 3 to 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

and so on.

## **Action Plan - Template and Instruction**

### **The Action Plan Format**

It is essential that at the end of every learning event, all learners should complete an action plan based on what has been learned or has been reminded. When learning is applied when the trainee returns to work, the new skills and knowledge develop, reinforce their new abilities, and the organization benefits from improved performance. Learning without meaningful follow-up and application is largely forgotten and wasted.

Learners should be guided to produce action plans that:

- are simple and straightforward
- are clear and unambiguous
- contain items that can be implemented by the learner at work, with or without support
- or any resources that might be available
- contain comments on the methods to be used; the resource required and the timings: start, finish times or dates, for all the action items (use 'SMART' - Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, Time-bound)

Finally, action plans should be achievable in the context of work demands. Action plans should not contain more items than the learner can handle without undue delay or creating problems at work. If the action list appears to be too complex or long, items should be scheduled for progressive introduction, when prior items have been completed.

### **Personal Action Plan**

#### **Action plan item how to implement when**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

### **Action Plan Implementation Aid**

Complete this sheet for each item included on the action plan:

1. What is the item of learning you intend to implement?
2. By which targets will you measure progress?
3. What barriers might impede your implementation?
4. How will you avoid or negate these barriers?
5. Time: when do you intend to start implementing the item?
6. Time: by when do you intend to complete the implementation of the item?
7. Resources: what resources (people, equipment, extra skills, etc.) will you need to complete the implementation of the item?
8. Benefits: what benefits do you hope will result from your actions (including financials if possible to assess)?
9. Commitment: when will you and your manager meet a) to discuss the implementation of your plan and b) to review the progress of this action?



10. Any other comments (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

**Reactionnaire 1 (general)**

Where scoring number ranges are given, circle the number that you feel most closely represents your views.

1. To what extent do you feel your personal learning objectives have been achieved?

|              |                    |                   |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Fully</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Not at all</i> |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|

2. Which of your personal objectives were not achieved, and why?

3. Which parts of the event do you feel will be most useful back at work?

4. Which parts of the event do you feel will be least useful, or not at all useful back at work?

5. Are there any subjects you would have liked to be included?

6. To make way for any additional material what would you omit?

7. How would you rate the programme overall

|                         |                             |                           |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Very useful</i> 6    | 5 4 3 2 1 <i>Little use</i> |                           |
| <i>Very interesting</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b>          | <i>Of little interest</i> |

Please state fully why you have given the above ratings.

**Reactionnaire 2 (specific)**

**Training location/hotel/accommodation/travel**

This reactionnaire can be used as a model to customise your own, based on the specific areas on which you wish to obtain the learners' views - eg., administration, accommodation, training facilities, etc.

Circle the score nearest to your views.

bedroom comfort

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**bedroom facilities**

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**food quality**

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**training accommodation - seating comfort**

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**training accommodation - facilities**

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**training location - ease of travel**

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**other:** .....

|             |                    |             |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <i>Good</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Poor</i> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|

Why have you given this score?

**Any other comments:**

**Reactionnaire 3 (general)**

**Comments are required as well as scores please.**

For every item place an 'X' in the scoring box that most closely represents how you feel about the programme. Also, please comment briefly on each item about your reasons for giving this score, particularly if your ratings are 3, 2 or 1.

|                    |                    |               |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <i>Stimulating</i> | <b>6 5 4 3 2 1</b> | <i>Boring</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                           |  |                |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|
| <i>Useful for my work</i> |  | <i>Useless</i> |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                            |  |                   |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <i>Relevant to my work</i> |  | <i>Irrelevant</i> |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Good discussions</i> | <i>Limited discussions</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Flexible structure</i> | <i>Rigid structure</i> |
|---------------------------|------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Well conducted</i> | <i>Poorly conducted</i> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Demanding</i> | <i>Undemanding</i> |
|------------------|--------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

**6 5 4 3 2 1**

|                    |  |                    |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| <i>Challenging</i> |  | <i>Patronizing</i> |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Well spaced out</i> | <i>Too condensed</i> |
|------------------------|----------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Good use of time</i> | <i>Poor use of time</i> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Good level of activity</i> | <i>Poor level of activity</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

|                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>My objectives achieved</i> | <i>My objectives not achieved</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

I would recommend the programme to my colleagues Yes No

**Any other comments:**

**Reactionnaire 4 (general - detailed)**

Please comment as fully as possible on all relevant items and where scoring ranges are given, circle the score that most closely represents your views.

**general**

1. To what extent have the objectives of the programme been achieved?

| *Fully 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Not at all*

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

2. To what extent have your personal objectives for attending the programme been achieved?

| *Fully 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Not at all*

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

3. To what extent has your understanding of the subject improved or increased as a result of the programme?

| *A lot 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Little*

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

4. To what extent have your skills in the subject of the programme improved or increased as a result of the programme?

| *A lot 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Little*

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

5. To what extent has the programme helped to enhance your appreciation and understanding of your job as a whole?

| *A lot 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Little*

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating.

6. What is your overall rating of this programme?

| *Excellent 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*

Make any comments on your ratings that you feel will be of help to the designers of this programme.

7. To what extent would you recommend others with similar needs to your own to attend this programme?

| *Fully 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Not at all*

**Programme Administration**

8. To what extent was material necessary to the programme provided to you prior to the programme?
9. What was the level of the instructions given to you to, a) attend the programme, b) complete pre-programme material, c) bring relevant material with you to the programme, d) travel to the training location?

\_\_\_\_\_ | *a) Excellent 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*

\_\_\_\_\_ | *b) Excellent 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*

\_\_\_\_\_ | *c) Excellent 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*

\_\_\_\_\_ | *d) Excellent 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*

Please make any comments you feel would help the designers and administrators of this programme.

10. Did you think that the number of participants on the course was

***Too few Just right Too many***

**Trainer Evaluation**

11. Please rate each trainer by placing his/her initials under the relevant score and for each aspect, from (a) to (f).

**Very Good Not very Not**

**effective effective effective**

- a. Knowledge of subject 4 3 2 1
- b. Organization of sessions 4 3 2 1
- c. Obvious preparation 4 3 2 1
- d. Style and delivery 4 3 2 1
- e. Responsiveness to group 4 3 2 1
- f. Producing a good learning climate 4 3 2 1

Any other comments:

**Balance of Programme**

12. How do you rate the balance between input sessions, activities, discussions, and videos?

| *Good balance 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poor*                      *balance*

Why do you give this rating?

13. How did you feel about the length of the programme?

***Too short Just right Too long***

14. To what extent was the programme logically sequenced?

| *Well sequenced 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Poorly*                      *sequenced*

In what way?

15. How did you feel about the pacing of the programme?

***Too short Just right Too long***

16. How effective were the practical activities?

\_\_\_\_\_ | *Very effective 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Ineffective*

Why do you give this rating?

17. What was the level of time given for (a) the activities and (b) the follow-up discussion?

\_\_\_\_\_ | *a) Sufficient 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Insufficient*

\_\_\_\_\_ | *b) Sufficient 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Insufficient*

What level of time would you like to have seen?

18. How knowledgeable and/or experienced are you in the techniques and approaches of training?

\_\_\_\_\_ | *Very 6*                      *5 4 3 2 1 Not at all*

In what way?

**Programme Content**

- 19. What did you like best about the programme?
- 20. What did you like least about the programme?
- 21. What did you learn from the programme?
- 22. What did you not learn from the programme that you were expecting to learn?
- 23. What do you think should be added to the programme?
- 24. What do you think should be dropped from the programme?
- 25. To what extent did the programme duplicate what you had learned previously?
- 26. What are your views on the handouts issued?

Excellent quality 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 Poor quality |

**Too many Just right Too few**  
**Very relevant Satisfactory Not at all relevant**

Any comments on the above ratings?

27. What are your views on the visual aids used?

OHP/Powerpoint slides:

| Excellent quality 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor quality |

**Too many Just right Too few**

Well used 6 5 4 3 2 1 Badly used |

Flipchart:

| Excellent quality 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor quality |

**Too many Just right Too few**

Well used 6 5 4 3 2 1 Badly used

**Training Location**

27. How do you rate the training establishment?

| Excellent 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor |

If you have rated 3, 2 or 1, please state why.

28. How do you rate the training accommodation (training room, etc)?

| Excellent 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor |

29. How do you rate the service (breaks, refreshments, meals, etc)?

Excellent 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor |

**Post-Training**

30. Has a post-training debriefing meeting been arranged with your line manager?

**Yes No**

31. If 'No', will you have a post-training debriefing with your line manager?

**Yes Don't know No**

32. To what extent will you be helped to implement your Action Plans: (a) by your line manager (b) by your colleagues?

A lot 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not at all |

A lot 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not at all |

33. If your line manager does not perform post-programme reviews and follow-up of your action plans, do you agree that the Training Department can contact you for this purpose?

**Yes No Don't know**

34. Are there any other comments about the training programme that have not been covered and that you would like to make?

**Points to Ponder**

**IS MEASURING SOFT SKILL TRAINING REALLY POSSIBLE**

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**Agenda**

- **What are "Soft-Skills"?**
- **Who Needs Soft-Skills Training?**
- **Why Measure Soft-Skills Training?**
- **Why do Organizations Implement Soft-Skills?**
- **Developing Objectives for Soft -Skills Programs**
- **Techniques for Measuring Soft -Skills Training**
- **Using Soft-Skills Metrics**

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**What are “Soft-Skills”?**

Five categories...

- Behavioral Development
- Professional Development
- Company Specific
- Compliance
- Job/Task Specific

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**What are “Soft-Skills”?**

**Professional Development**

Required for an individual to obtain or maintain a professional certification or accreditation

Examples Include...

- Project Management Professional®
- Certified Public Accountant
- Legal

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**What are “Soft-Skills”?**

**Behavioral Development**

Designed to improve or enhance the underlying social behaviors and influencing capabilities of the participants

Examples Include...

- Leadership Development
- Teamwork
- Coaching Employees
- Change Management

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**What are “Soft-Skills”?**

**Company Specific**

Feature company specific information, policies and/or procedures

Examples Include...

- HR Policies & Procedures
- Employee Orientation

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## What are “Soft-Skills”?

### Compliance

Designed to help employers become legally compliant with various legislated safety or work environment standards

Examples Include...

- Sexual Harassment
- Office Ergonomics
- Lockout/Tagout

## Who Needs Soft-Skills?

| Job Role               | Example            | Behavioral Development   | Professional Development | Company Specific         | Compliance               | Job/Task Specific        |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Executive              | Vice President     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Middle Management      | Department Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supervisory            | Team Leader        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Individual Contributor | Programmer         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional           | Accountant         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## What are “Soft-Skills”?

### Job/Task Specific

Relate to the actual performance of a specific task or job function that is a fundamental component of the employee’s responsibilities.

Examples Include...

- Entering purchase orders
- Responding to a customer call or inquiry
- Assembling product

## Why Measure Soft-Skills Training?

### Three Basic Questions-

1. Is the training effective in transferring the knowledge and competency as intended?
2. Are the outcomes of training, relevant to the needs of the organization?
3. Are the costs of the program worth the competencies obtained?



## Measuring – Kirkpatrick Model

### Level 1: Reaction

A measure of how students react to aspects of a training program.

Examples Include...

- *Rating of instructor effectiveness*
- *Adequacy of training facilities*
- *Quality of audio & video signals*

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## Measuring – Kirkpatrick Model

### Level 3: Behavior

A measure to the extent to which there has been a change in behavior due to participation in a program

Examples Include...

- *Surveys of supervisory or subordinate personnel or on-the-job observations*

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## Measuring – Kirkpatrick Model

### Level 2: Learning

A measure of how much a student increased knowledge, improved a skill, or changed an attitude.

Examples Include...

- *Measures of performance on a written test or a hands-on assessment of skill, each compared to a before-training baseline*

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## Measuring – Kirkpatrick Model

### Level 4: Results

A measure of the final results that occurred due to participation in a program

Examples Include...

- *New business (in terms of dollars) and/or clients secured in a consulting business as a result of employee certification from training*
- *Reduced fines and/or litigation as a result of compliance or safety training*

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## LESSON 31 EVALUATING TRAINING STAFF

Friends,

In previous units you have been explained about the training and development procedures. In this unit you have got exposure towards evaluation of training and development, which is the last step for training procedure.

After reading this lesson you will be able to

1. explain criteria for training staff evaluation
2. Design evaluation for training staff
3. conduct evaluation for training staff
4. help in improving the key areas of training staff performance

### Evaluating Effectiveness of Training of Workers, Administrators, Trainers, Managers, Technicians

Evaluation of training, as has been discussed in the earlier chapters is a process which can be made simple by clearly answering the 'what', 'when', 'who' and 'how' of evaluation. The whole thing looks complex when something is measured to evaluate something else. For example we tend to evaluate the trainer whenever we talk of classroom training. But if the training manager has failed to choose the right inputs, he is looking at the wrong things by evaluating the trainer. The best trainer available cannot train employees if the inputs do not deal with their deficiency on the job (input evaluation). By the same token, we cannot expect the best trainer to help improve the organisation if the wrong set of people are selected for training (context evaluation). So part of the evaluation has to do with the training organisation's skill in selecting the inputs, setting specific objectives and getting the right set of trainees to the training. Even then, we may evaluate the wrong thing. We may watch the trainer in action and decide that he is doing a good job because there is lot of action, movement and variety. The concerned faculty may be a good performer, he does not lean on the podium, does not talk while facing the board, and gets lot of eye contact (good lecture skills). We have to remember that we are looking for is not a good public speaker, but a good facilitator of learning. So the characteristics of a good learning situation are: accountability, feedback and involvement which helps us evaluate whether the trainer is doing his job properly. Whatever be the trainee group, it is important to identify the characteristics of its learning-training situation. Once this has been identified the evaluator is left to use the appropriate evaluation model. There are a few options:

1. Borrowing the model off-the-shelf from those presented in this book or other published/available literature;
2. Hire the services of consultant specialists to develop the evaluation model exclusively for your needs;
3. Train your own personnel in developing the model internally;

4. Combine the first two options by using specialists' services to develop the model while concurrently training some of your own personnel for gradual take over of the task.

Each of these has its advantages and disadvantages. While borrowing the ready model is easy it may be too general to meet the requirements of a particular situation. Unless the expertise is available within, the evaluators may not be able to adapt the available model.

But if the expertise is available it is advantageous to develop one's own model so that there is internal control on the strategy, techniques and cost of evaluation. Besides, the skills and expertise developed within become part of the resources for the organisation and can be generalized for use in other types of training and target groups.

The skeleton required for developing one's own model is provided in this chapter. The trainer has to fill in the gaps by information relevant and required for each category of trainees (Administrators or workers or managers or trainers or technicals). Depending on the availability of time, expertise and resources one can pick and choose the levels, techniques and strategies to suit one's requirements. The user should nevertheless be aware of what they are sacrificing in terms of quality of evaluation for want of resources of time, in order to optimize results. Wherever essential, examples have been used to elaborate the point. It is assumed that the reader would have carefully read and grasped the preceding chapters to enable indigenisation of the Evaluation Design with ease.

| Action steps | TRAINEE GROUP (*) : (1)      |                        |                   |
|--------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
|              | Workers/<br>(W)              | Administrators/<br>(A) | Trainers/<br>(Tr) |
|              | Managers/T echnicians<br>(M) |                        | (TE)              |

1. What is the Training Purpose in Focus. Is it :
  - i. Orientation Trg. for inducting new recruits -----
  - ii. Refreshor Trg = upgrading skills, operations, changes in products/services -----
  - iii. Developmental Trg = for projected requirements and higher responsibilities -----
  - iv. Diagnostic Trg = to correct deficiencies in Knowledge, skills and attitudes of trainee group -----
2. What are the training needs in focus

Eg : For W = Safety, Trade, Psychomotor skills

A = Policy~orientation/  
Decision making skills

TR = Sensitivity, Communication skills