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*“The only reason that learning functions exist is to drive business outcomes.”*

—Rita Smith, 2010

Ensuring learning transfer is the greatest and most important challenge facing workplace learning professionals today. But this challenge is nothing new. More than fifty years ago, Mosel (1957) pointed to “mounting evidence that shows that very often the training makes little or no difference in job behavior.” This is a real problem, because it is only on-the-job behavior that matters; the business benefits only when learning is transferred and applied to the trainee’s work in a way that positively impacts performance.

The impact of learning transfer on an organization can be demonstrated with a simple equation: The *results* of training are the *product* of learning *times* transfer, or  $Results = Learning \times Transfer$ . This means that even when the actual learning scores a ten, if the transfer is zero, then the benefit to the business is zero.

We coined the term “learning scrap” to describe learning that never gets applied. The term is derived from the manufacturing industry, where “scrap” is parts or products that are manufactured but which fail to meet customer requirements and, as a result, must be scrapped or re-worked.

Scrap is costly because it consumes time, materials, labor, and opportunity without producing any value. In today’s competitive environment, no company can afford to invest in processes that produce significant amounts of scrap. Yet the evidence is that typical corporate training programs often produce more scrap than value (see the sidebar *The Current State of Learning Transfer*).

## THE CURRENT STATE OF LEARNING TRANSFER



Precise measures of learning transfer rates are hard to find. This is partly because level three and four results are rarely measured after training, and partly because definitions of transfer vary. In an ESI International study of learning transfer, nearly 60 percent of over 3,000 respondents admitted that the primary method for evaluating transfer is either collecting anecdotal feedback or “simply a guess” (Haddad, 2011).

Nevertheless, both learning leaders and business managers have a “gut feel” for the rate of transfer—and it is almost universally low. We have asked over 1,000 learning leaders around the globe to estimate the percentage of their trainees who use what they have learned long enough and well enough to improve their performance; their estimates routinely average 15 percent. In a survey by McKinsey & Company, only 25 percent of business managers said that training and development contributed measurably to business performance (DeSmet, McGurk, and Schwartz, 2010). Berk (2008), using self-reports from thousands of learners across a range of companies, estimated the transfer rate at 40 percent.

In general, the transfer rate is higher for technical courses, in which learners typically must apply what they learned immediately upon returning to work, than for soft skills classes, for which there is usually no post-program plan to ensure transfer. One group we worked with reported a more than 90 percent transfer rate. When we asked how they achieved such extraordinary results, they explained, “We are in compliance training; if they don’t do it the way we taught them, they are fired.” That seems to encapsulate what is known about the importance of consequences and motivation: People respect what you inspect.

Whether the actual rates are as low as Georgenson’s oft-quoted 10 percent estimate (1982), or as high as the 50 percent reported by Saks (2002), that still means that half or more of all training is going to waste for lack of transfer. Given the cost of training and the customer dissatisfaction that results when performance fails to improve, learning transfer needs to move to the front of the learning professional’s agenda.

Years ago, companies considered manufacturing scrap an inevitable “cost of doing business.” Then came the quality revolution in which Japanese firms, in particular, showed that driving down the cost of scrap through process improvement resulted in significant competitive advantage. Companies now strive for—and many achieve—six sigma quality in which scrap is reduced to less than 0.001 percent.

Achieving consistently high quality output requires managing the *entire* process, continuously identifying and strengthening the weak links. Today, learning transfer represents the weak link in training. And it is costing companies—and learning professionals—dearly. Indeed, in a recent study by the Executive Board’s Corporate Leadership Council, 56 percent of business managers felt that performance *would not suffer* or *would be improved* if the learning and development function were completely eliminated! How can managers possibly feel that way when our understanding of how to deliver great learning—and our tools for doing so—have never been better?

Managers feel that way because while they can clearly see the cost of training, they are not seeing the result they were looking for: improved performance. It’s also because business managers don’t distinguish between learning and learning transfer. To a business manager, the analysis is simple: “If I invest in training, but performance does not improve, then the training was a waste of time and money.”

It doesn’t matter if the training event itself was excellent. It doesn’t matter if the real problem is in the post-training environment that we, as learning professionals, don’t control. When performance doesn’t improve, the business still views it as training’s failure. As learning professionals, we have to figure out how to ensure learning transfer if we want to be considered strategic and effective contributors to the business.

This *Infoline* will show you how to improve the business impact of your training and development efforts by

- addressing two key questions that drive learning transfer
- practicing the six disciplines required for optimal transfer
- designing programs to answer the “Can I?” question
- designing programs to answer the “Will I?” question
- engaging participants’ managers in the process.

## LEARNING TRANSFER DEFINED

There are many academic definitions of learning transfer. The core meaning, however, involves the application of learned skills and knowledge to problems and opportunities outside the learning environment. For workplace learning, we like this definition: “Learning transfer is the process of putting learning to work in a way that improves performance.” This definition underscores learning transfer as a *process*. That is, transfer is something that takes place over time and involves multiple steps. “Putting learning to work” reiterates the need to have new knowledge and skills literally put to work, not stuffed in a binder on a shelf. And the emphasis on performance is a reminder that the ultimate aim of corporate training is to improve performance. As Fred Harburg wrote in *Chief Learning Officer* when he was CLO of Fidelity Investments: “We are not in the business of providing classes, learning tools, or even learning itself. We are in the business of facilitating improved business results.”

The need for learning transfer applies to all kinds of corporate training initiatives—whether classroom, virtual, self-directed, e-learning, or social—because they all have a common goal of improved performance. Instructional methods and media should be selected to maximize the performance gain (efficacy) relative to their cost; not just to minimize cost.

## TWO KEY QUESTIONS

Transfer is obviously something that occurs *after* training. But ensuring learning transfer, as we will show, is something that has to permeate the entire process, from instructional analysis, design, and delivery, to follow-through and evaluation.

There is a “moment of truth” for every employee after she has participated in training. That moment is when she decides (consciously or unconsciously) to take action in the new way she has just been taught, or in the old, familiar, habitual way she has used in the past.

Employees are strongly tempted to continue to do things the way they have always done them before. The new, just-learned way is uphill work with a much weaker neural pathway leading to it; it requires real effort to execute a task or action in a new way. This is why it is so much harder to change an existing behavior than to teach an entirely new one.

Furthermore, people are almost always less skilled and less proficient in the newly learned approach. Using it will likely take longer or produce less satisfactory results initially. Therefore, it requires strong motivation and sustained effort to keep at it long enough to realize the benefits.

Which path an employee chooses at the moment of truth—whether to utilize her new skills and knowledge or keep doing what she has always done—depends on the answers to two key questions:

- Can I?
- Will I?

Both must be answered in the affirmative for learning transfer to occur.

The “Can I?” question is about ability and opportunity. In other words, “Am I able to do what they want me to do?” There are two parts to the answer:

- “Did the training actually teach me how to do this?” That is, “Do I have enough confidence in my ability to at least try?”
- “Do I have the opportunity?” That is, “Do my current assignments offer situations in which I can use what I just learned?” and “Will my manager let me?”

The “Will I?” question is really about motivation. Even if an employee can perform the task, even if the program did a great job of teaching the new skill, and even if she has the opportunity, how she answers the “Will I?” question determines whether or not she will transfer the learning.

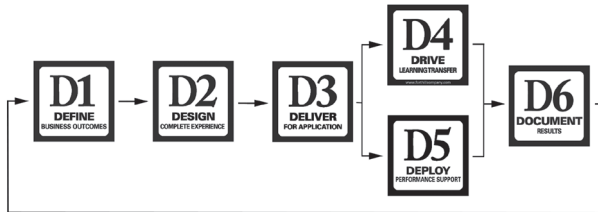
- “What is my incentive to make the (extra) effort to apply a new skill or knowledge and let go of the old way of doing things?”

As Jeffrey Pfeffer and Robert Sutton pointed out in their book, *The Knowing Doing Gap*, most employees *know* how to perform better than they actually do perform; the problem is frequently one of “knowing too much and doing too little.” To deliver the results that the business wants and expects, we must ensure that participants can answer both the “Can I?” and “Will I?” questions with an enthusiastic “yes!”

## SIX DISCIPLINES FOR ENSURING LEARNING TRANSFER

To ensure learning transfer, learning professionals need to address *both* the training program *and* the work environment (transfer climate) to which the employee returns. A study at American Express concluded: “Climate factors can quite literally make or break a company’s training investments,” and therefore, “Understanding and creating a high transfer climate should swiftly move to the forefront of any training initiative.”

## SIX DISCIPLINES FOR ENSURING LEARNING TRANSFER



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The Six Disciplines for Ensuring Learning Transfer Model has proven very helpful for optimizing learning transfer. The 6 D's® are a mnemonic for the six disciplines that must be practiced throughout the process of defining, designing, delivering, and evaluating training for maximum business impact.

The 6 D's® are:

- **D1: Define the Business Outcomes.** Get clarity about the business objectives (not just the learning objectives) and the sponsor's definition of success before embarking on design.
- **D2: Design the Complete Experience.** Treat learning as a process rather than an event; include what needs to happen before and after instruction as integral parts of the plan.
- **D3: Deliver for Application.** Select instructional strategies, tactics, and delivery vehicles to answer the "Can I?" question and maximize the ease of application to work.

- **D4: Drive Learning Transfer.** Put in place the systems and processes to ensure participants are held accountable for using what they learn.
- **D5: Deploy Performance Support.** Provide job aids and other forms of support to increase the probability of successful application of new skills and knowledge.
- **D6: Document Results.** Gather, analyze, and report outcomes that are relevant to the objectives and definition of success agreed to in D1.

In the rest of this *Infoline*, we will show how to apply these six disciplines to ensure that participants respond affirmatively to the "Can I?" and "Will I?" questions and put their learning to work.

## ADDRESSING THE "CAN I?" QUESTION

Before employees can even attempt to transfer training to their work, they have to confidently answer the "Can I?" question. Ensuring a positive response to this question requires learning professionals to make certain that:

1. The training actually teaches them how.
2. Participants will have opportunities to use what they learn.
3. Help will be available if it is needed.

### 1. Teach them how.

The first criterion for answering the "Can I?" question is "Do I feel confident enough in my ability to perform this task or function to at least give it a try?" It seems obvious that training should teach people how to do things. Nevertheless, corporate training programs tend to be overstuffed with content and theory, and short on actual "how-to" advice and practice. The core concept of D3: Deliver for Application is that training must be specifically designed and delivered in ways that facilitate transfer and application back on the job.

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*“Content covered is not content learned.”*

—Ruth Clark, 2010

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To make sure that trainees are able to use the training to improve their performance:

- Do a solid needs- and task-analysis up front to identify what performance is actually required. In D1, define the *performance* objectives: What do trainees need to do better and differently when they return to work? For employees who are new to a role, focus on what they need to be able to do immediately.
- Be realistic about what can be learned in the time available. Cognitive overload is real; do not allow the “nice to know” interfere with mastering the “need to know.”
- Match the instructional methods to what the employee has to actually do.
- Allow adequate time for realistic practice and feedback during the training. For most programs, that means significantly reducing the amount of content and increasing the amount of practice time to ensure that employees are confident in their ability to perform the required task or skill, even if they are not yet proficient.

## 2. Give them opportunities to use what they learned.

The second aspect of the “Can I?” question is “Do I have the opportunity?” More specifically, the question is “Will I have an opportunity to try what I learned before I have forgotten most of it?” A hundred years ago, Ebbinghaus’s work on memory confirmed our common experience: “If you don’t use it, you lose it.” So we have to ensure not only that people have the opportunity to use what they learned, but that they will have those opportunities soon after training when the information is still fresh and easy to recall.

Ensuring opportunities to practice new skills and knowledge requires that learning professionals:

- Get the timing right. Make sure employees attend “just-in-time” training, shortly before they will need the skills in their jobs. If the training is meant to onboard new employees, remember to keep it brief and relevant. Jim Williams and Steve Rosenbaum, in *Learning Paths*, claim that you can shorten the learning path for new employees by 30 percent in 30 days by cutting out unnecessary content and delaying the teaching of advanced skills until after new employees have mastered the basics.
- Make sure the manager acknowledges the importance and relevancy of the training content. Nothing is more wasteful to the organization or confusing to an employee than to be taught one thing in training and later told something completely different by his or her manager. Even if the manager doesn’t actively block learning transfer, he or she may fail to reinforce it, or fail to create opportunities for employees to practice their new skills. Getting D1 right—clearly defining the business outcomes and benefits—is an important part of getting managers on board; it makes it easier for them to see the payoff. But there is more to it than that. Because managers have such a profound impact on learning transfer, we will discuss how to enhance their role in it in greater detail.

## 3. Make help available if it is needed.

Anytime an employee tries to do something new, he is likely to have trouble remembering all the steps or their sequence, and he may encounter situations that weren’t covered in class. The fifth “D” (D5: Deploy Performance Support) helps employees answer the “Can I?” question by providing job aids and other kinds of performance support (including their manager’s engagement).

Ensure that trainees can answer the “Can I?” question back on the job by:

- Including performance support as an integral part of the instructional design.
- Anticipating the kinds of on-the-job challenges or memory lapses trainees are likely to encounter and creating job aids or other support mechanisms to address them. Terrence Donahue of the Performance Maker Group goes further: He believes you should design the job aid first and then design the training to show people how to use it effectively. As he says, “In many cases, a well-designed job aid along with some practice on using it might be all that an employee needs for successful performance.”

## ADDRESSING THE “WILL I?” QUESTION

Knowing *how* to do something is necessary, but not sufficient. Learners have to be adequately motivated to cross the learning-doing gap; they have to answer the “Will I?” question in the affirmative.

To ensure that learners are willing to make the effort to transfer their learning, we need to design learning experiences in ways that:

1. Give them reasons to do things a new way.
2. Make sure that someone notices.
3. Engage learners’ managers.
4. Align rewards, consequences, and systems to support the new behaviors.

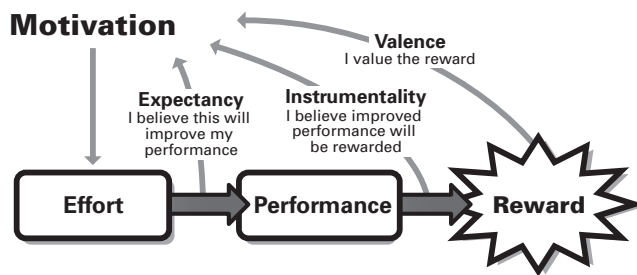
### 1. Give them a good reason.

Employees are motivated when they believe that effort, performance, and rewards are linked (see the sidebar, *Vroom’s Expectancy Model of Motivation*). For employees to make the effort to transfer their learning, they have to be convinced that it will help them improve their performance.

Ensure learners have the motivation to make the transfer effort by:

- Answering the WIIFM (“What’s in it for me?”) question. A key principle of andragogy is that adult learners want to know *why* they should learn something before they will do so willingly. Include testimonials from successful program alumni, or invite them to teach in the program, to explain how they have used its content to improve their own performance.
- Clearly defining the business outcomes (D1) and performance objectives. Show how each topic is linked to a business imperative by means of a value chain or impact map.

## VROOM’S EXPECTANCY MODEL OF MOTIVATION



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## 2. Make sure someone notices.

A common reason that learning transfer fails is a lack of structure and accountability for learning transfer. Trainers move on to their next class and employees don't hear from them again until it is time to enroll in another. Managers seldom follow up with their direct reports after training. Even in programs where people set goals and create action plans, they are not often reviewed, and almost never with the same rigor as business or performance goals. The lack of accountability is interpreted by employees as "Nobody really cares," which undermines the response to "Will I?"

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*"To change behavior and get the results you want, you need structure, support, and accountability."*

—Ken Blanchard, 2007

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When employees are contemplating the "Will I?" question, it is important for them to be confident that their efforts to transfer their learning will be recognized by others (peers, managers, facilitators) and that failure to transfer also will be noticed.

To provide structure and require accountability for learning transfer:

- Practice the fourth "D"—Drive Learning Transfer. Do not leave transfer to chance or individual initiative.
- Remind learners periodically about the need to utilize their training. There are many ways to do this, from automated learning transfer support tools to virtual check-in's, to sending employees access to new resources, tips, and advice after training has taken place. Advertisers know the importance of keeping their message top of mind. We should take a lesson from what they have learned about influencing behavior.
- Make sure managers recognize efforts to transfer learning and address any struggles employees are facing during on-the-job application of training (see below for more on manager involvement).
- Give users a sense of accomplishment and progress. For knowledge workers, the sense of making progress in meaningful work is a powerful motivator that is positively correlated to productivity, creativity, and commitment to the work, according to Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer, authors of *The Progress Principle*. Utilize innovative social media like We Achieve™, reconvene the group, or make use of online follow-up tools.

## 3. Engage managers.

Numerous studies indicate that the factor with the greatest influence on the answer to the "Will I?" question is the attitude and engagement of the learner's manager. A study by American Express concluded that "An immediate leader has the potential to either make or break any training effort."

Interestingly, the manager's impact may actually be greatest before the training. If an employee goes to training already knowing that his manager is interested in the outcome, then he approaches the learning and its application with a much more attentive attitude—even more so if his manager has indicated that the employee will be expected to apply what he learned when he returns.

Of course, managers also have a profound impact after the training by encouraging or discouraging its use. In many cases the impact is unintentional. A manager may fail to get involved just because he is very busy, not because he is indifferent. The result is the same, however. Hearing nothing from his manager, the employee concludes that applying the training cannot be very important.



# SAMPLE LEARNING CONTRACT



A pre-training meeting between a participant and his manager has a significant positive influence on both learning and learning transfer. Requiring participants to bring a simple “learning contract” like the one below to the training will ensure that such a meeting takes place.

In order to maximize the value of my learning and development in the upcoming

*Parts Department Management* program, I agree to:

- ☒ Complete all required pre-work reading and other assignments.
- ☒ Attend and be actively engaged in all sessions.
- ☒ Develop goals for applying what I learned to my work.
- ☒ Execute a follow-through plan that improves my performance.
- ☒ Report the results.
- ☒ Share highlights and insights with my co-workers.
- ☒ Other: *Seek out and bring back best practices from other dealerships.*

Specifically, I will focus on *inventory management* during the program in order to improve my ability *to maximize profitability and efficiency of the repair process* afterward.

Signed: *Malcolm Rogers*

Date: *July 23, 2012*

## MANAGER'S AGREEMENT

As the manager of the employee above, I agree to:

1. Attend and participate in any advance briefing sessions for supervisors.
2. Meet with my direct report before the program to discuss the most important developmental opportunities the training provides.
3. Release my direct report from sufficient work assignments so that he/she has time to complete the preparation for the training and attend all the sessions.
4. Minimize interruptions during the training.
5. Meet again after the program to discuss the highlights of the session and provide coaching and support to mutually explore opportunities for application.
6. Model the desired behaviors for the trainee.
7. Provide encouragement, support, and reinforcement for efforts to apply the training.
8. Provide specific opportunities for my direct report to practice the new behaviors and skills.
9. Provide suggestions for continued development.

Our post-course follow-up meeting is scheduled for: *Friday, September 12.*

Signed: *Maria Garcia*

Date: *July 23, 2012*

Source: Jefferson, A., R. Pollock, & C. Wick. (2009). *Getting Your Money's Worth from Training and Development*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.



To get managers more productively engaged and, hence, boost learning transfer and results:

- Answer the WIIFM question for the managers. Be sure they know what the training is designed to accomplish in business terms (D1). Clearly and concisely communicate the training's purpose and its benefits to their department and personnel.
- Facilitate the pre-training discussion. Provide managers with a simple, short script for holding a pre-training discussion. Consider requiring a brief "learning contract" (see sidebar, *Sample Learning Contract*) between the manager and employee as a condition of attendance at high-profile or mission-critical programs. You can also schedule *brief* pre-training teleconferences that both the participant and his or her manager attend together.
- Facilitate the post-training discussion. Provide short, practical, efficient suggestions that managers can use to maximize the results of training (see sidebar, *Post-Training Follow-Up Guide for Managers*). If participants set their own goals, be sure you transmit these to their managers, either by photocopies or electronically through a learning transfer support system. Have participants prepare an "elevator speech" about what they learned and what they plan to do with it.

#### 4. Align rewards, consequences, and systems to support the new behaviors.

Corporate training takes place in a complex system in which there are many conflicting demands on time and resources. In her book, *Beyond Transfer of Training*, Mary Broad listed six factors that support performance in complex systems (see the sidebar, *Six Factors that Support Performance* on the following page). An especially critical factor listed here is "appropriate consequences," which she defines as "recognition, reward, and incentives that are meaningful to performers."

## POST-TRAINING FOLLOW-UP GUIDE FOR MANAGERS

Provide a short, explicit, practical guide for managers like the one below to help ensure that they reinforce the importance of training transfer.

To: Managers of participants in the \_\_\_\_\_ program  
From: \_\_\_\_\_, Program Lead

One or more of your direct reports just attended the \_\_\_\_\_ training program. The program was designed to help your employees be more productive by \_\_\_\_\_.

You can significantly increase the value of the training for your department by holding two brief conversations with your employee—one immediately after they return from training, and the next several weeks later. Guidelines for these conversations follow.

### Immediately after training

On the day your employee returns to work after training, find an opportunity to meet briefly and ask:

- What was the most valuable thing you learned?
- How are you going to use it?
- What help do you need?

Be sure to say that you really want to see them use the training and that you will check back every now and then to see how it is going. This conversation should take only a few minutes but will pay long-term rewards.

### Several weeks later

Scheduling a brief meeting to review the outcomes underscores your expectation that employees will use training to achieve improved performance. Be sure to ask these key questions:

- How have you applied the training to your job?
- What have you achieved as a result?
- What helped the most in (or prevented you from) using what you learned?
- What advice do you have for others attending this program?

## SIX FACTORS THAT SUPPORT PERFORMANCE



Clear performance expectations	Unambiguous communication of tasks, expected results, and standards of performance.
Timely and relevant feedback	Specific, timely, and relevant feedback on performance (both positive and negative).
Appropriate consequences	Recognition, rewards, and incentives for good performance; appropriate consequences for non-performance.
Individual capability	Employee has the necessary physical, mental, and emotional capabilities to perform the job.
Requisite knowledge and skills	Employee has the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes as a result of experience, training, and mentoring.
Required time and resources	Employee has the tools, time, information, and opportunities he needs to perform to expectations.

*Adapted from Broad (2005).*

Recall that in Vroom's Expectancy Model of Motivation, the first condition for motivation is belief that the effort will result in improved performance. But an affirmative answer to the "Will I?" question also requires belief that the performance will be rewarded in ways that are valuable to the individual. That doesn't necessarily mean financial or other extrinsic rewards. The data, as summarized by Daniel Pink in *Drive*, show that intrinsic rewards—often just the acknowledgement of a job well done—are usually more powerful and sustainable than extrinsic rewards.

Thus, to ensure learning transfer, learning professionals must analyze the transfer climate to which the trainees return (see job aid, *Transfer Climate Scorecard* at the back of this issue) and, as much as possible, influence the consequences of using (or not using) the training.

- At minimum, make sure there are no negative consequences of using new knowledge and skills. Also, your performance measures should not contradict the training. An example of this is teaching customer service representatives to listen empathetically to customers, and then measuring their performance only on how quickly they dispense with the call.
- Educate managers on the importance of feedback and how to give it effectively and efficiently.
- Move the finish line for training. Provide credit or certificates of completion only when there is evidence of transfer.

## MAKING SURE TRANSFER IS HAPPENING

A fundamental tool of any process improvement effort is Deming's PDCA cycle. A critical step of that process is the "check" step, in which you assess the outcome to determine whether the process is working and whether the changes you made did, in fact, result in an improvement.

In the context of training and learning transfer, this means that we have to evaluate whether or not the training (and, inseparably, the transfer climate) actually produced an improvement in performance. Saying that "The training was a success, even though performance didn't change," is like saying, "The operation was a success but the patient died." Measures of training effectiveness (for example, end-of-class or level one evaluations) that do not relate to on-the-job performance, fail to answer what the sponsors really want to know: "Are people performing better as a result of the training?"



Even if pre- and post-training test results (level two) show an increase in knowledge and skills, they still don't answer the question of whether on-the-job performance improved. They lead to the common complaint among managers: "Why can they pass the test but are still unable to do the job?"

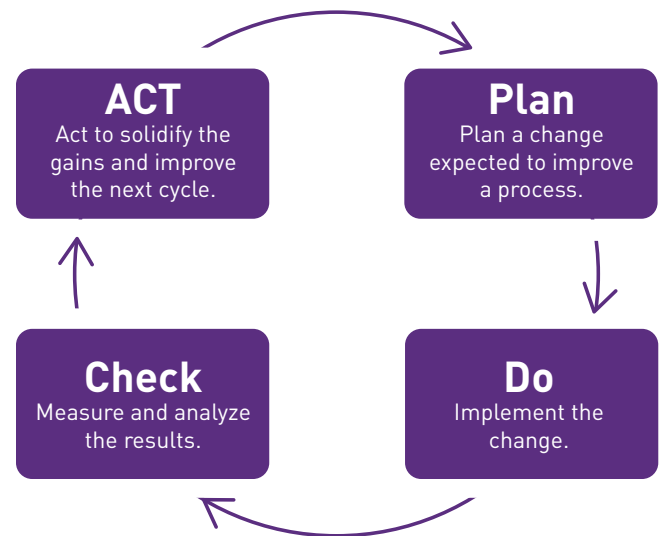
The sixth "D"—Document Results—reminds learning professionals that we need to measure and report the kind of results that matter to the business, typically levels three and four (behaviors and results), both of which include learning transfer.

To demonstrate that learning transfer is, in fact, taking place and contributing to improved performance:

- Discuss expected results and acceptable evidence at the very beginning of the planning process. The outcomes of this discussion should inform the overall design. Leaving it until after the program has been launched increases the chance of failure.
- Measure what the program promised. That is, if the program was supposed to increase leadership effectiveness, you have to agree with the sponsor on relevant and credible measures of leadership effectiveness. If the program was supposed to improve customer satisfaction, then you have to agree on appropriate measurements of customer satisfaction. Exactly *how* you measure the outcomes depends on what they are; but *what* you measure must be directly related to the program's *raison d'être*.
- Report the findings in the forums and formats that the business sponsors find most compelling. Include stories and examples; they will be remembered long after the charts and graphs are forgotten.
- "Sell the sizzle." If you have good results, market them. After all, "If you don't blow your own trumpet, someone else will use it as a spittoon."

As with any other kind of learning, to derive value from this *Infoline*, you need to take action. Use the *Action Plan Worksheet* job aid at the back of this issue to help you target actions to improve the learning transfer climate in your organization.

## DEMINGS'S PDCA CYCLE OF CONTINUOUS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT



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Transfer Impact Calculator:  
[www.forthillcompany.com/support-tools/calculate-your-impact/](http://www.forthillcompany.com/support-tools/calculate-your-impact/)

Transfer Audit Checklist:  
<http://ltsglobal.com/free-resources.html>

### Conferences and Workshops

6 D's® On-site Workshops. In-house, whole team training on the 6Ds Model for Ensuring Learning Transfer. Contact ASTD Enterprise Learning Solutions.

ASTD Learning Transfer Conference.  
Held several times per year in various locations. Visit [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org) for the current schedule.

ASTD Essentials of Learning Transfer.  
A four-session virtual introduction to learning transfer and the six disciplines. Visit [www.astd.org](http://www.astd.org) for the current schedule.



## LEARNING TRANSFER DESIGN CHECKLIST

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### Overall

- ❑ A robust plan is in place for the pre-course period that includes educating managers regarding their role, facilitating a discussion between the manager and participant, and requiring meaningful preparatory work for participants. (D2)
- ❑ The design includes post-instructional support, accountability, and recognition for learning transfer. (D2)
- ❑ The design includes how the on-the-job results will be evaluated. The program sponsors have agreed in advance to the method, timing, measurements, and definition of success. (D6)

### Addressing the “Can I?” Question

- ❑ Performance- and task-analyses have been conducted to identify the vital behaviors and essential knowledge required to perform to expectations. (D1)
- ❑ Material will be presented in ways that emphasize and illustrate its application. Adequate time is provided for participants to practice new knowledge and skills and receive feedback. (D3)
- ❑ The design includes job aids and other forms of performance support to help participants put their learning to work on the job. (D5)
- ❑ Systems and processes are in place to help participants engage their peers and other coaches (managers, experts, and so forth) for feedback, advice, and support for transfer. (D5)

### Addressing the “Will I?” Question

- ❑ Program objectives are stated in terms of what the participants will do on the job following the coursework. The business outcomes are expressed in a way that answers the WIIFM question for participants. (D1)
- ❑ The relevance of each program element has been mapped to the overarching business objectives and will be clearly communicated to participants and their managers. (D3)
- ❑ All the factors that affect performance in addition to training have been considered. The program plans include steps to favorably influence the transfer climate. (D4)
- ❑ Managers are provided with short, specific, practical guides to things they can do to enhance transfer and improve performance. (D5)

### Making Sure Transfer is Occurring

- ❑ There is an evaluation plan that includes collecting and analyzing performance data to support continuous improvement of the program and transfer climate. (D6)



## TRANSFER CLIMATE SCORECARD

Use the following scorecard to rate the transfer climate to which your trainees will return. Rate each item on a scale from negative three to positive three. A score of negative three indicates that the work situation actively inhibits transfer, a score of zero indicates that it neither reinforces nor inhibits transfer, and a score of three indicates that it strongly supports on-the-job transfer and application.

Factor	Description	Rating
Manager's Actions	Managers are actively engaged in the training transfer process. They discuss performance expectations both before and after training, help identify opportunities to apply new skills, set relevant goals, and provide timely feedback on performance.	
Coaching Culture	The culture of the organization regards coaching as an important part of a manager's job. Managers are held accountable for providing meaningful feedback and developmental opportunities to their direct reports; staff development is an important part of a manager's performance review.	
Opportunity to Apply	Individuals have opportunities to apply their new skills and knowledge on the job soon after training. They have the resources they need to do so (time, tasks, assistance, information, materials, and so on).	
Expectations	Trainees expect that they will be required to utilize their new skills and knowledge when they return to work. They are convinced that doing so will help improve their performance.	
Preparedness	Trainees rate the training itself as both relevant and useful. At the completion of the training, they feel prepared to utilize what they learned in their work.	
Work Group Impact	Participants' co-workers have also received training in the relevant skills and knowledge. They accept the new approaches and do not try to force conformity to existing norms.	
Positive Consequences	Individuals experience positive outcomes—both intrinsic and extrinsic—when they use what they have learned. Examples include recognition for making the effort, positive feedback, improved productivity, increased job satisfaction, additional respect, and other forms of recognition, advancement, or reward.	
Negative Consequences	Trainees experience appropriate negative consequences when they fail to apply what they were taught. These vary from a mild reprimand for missed opportunities to harsher consequences for serious infractions, especially with respect to safety, regulatory, or HR infringements.	

## ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

Use the Action Plan Sheet below to reflect on your insights from this *Infoline* and to convert them into specific actions to learn more and continue to improve learning transfer in your organization.

Topic	Insight	Actions I Will Take to Learn More	Actions I Will Take to Improve Transfer
Importance of learning transfer			
The 6 D's®			
Answering the "Can I?" question			
Answering the "Will I?" question			
Impact of Managers			
Making sure transfer is happening			

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