Four vital 'reality' questions to ask yourself

After training:

1. Do you know that each staff member is competent?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2. Do you know that the training has led to a change in the staff member's performance back on the job?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3. Do you know what impact the change in performance has on company results?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4. Are you confident that your training dollar is giving you a good return on your investment?	☐ Yes	☐ No

If you have answered 'no' to any of the four questions above or want to be able to justify the return on your investment in training – we'll be glad to help you with your training evaluation system.

Your guarantee of quality

'PACT **guarantees to meet agreed performance standards.** In addition when providing training services **all participants** signed off as competent by PACT are **guaranteed then to be able to perform to the competence standards** or PACT will retrain at no charge'

PACT

Contact us now – we're ready to help

www.pact.co.nz

One in a series of special reports from

PACT

Evaluating Training: Myths and Reality

Consider this for a moment

Training's underlying driver has to be improved performance – not only individual performance but organisational as well. In fact the two are inextricably linked, particularly in today's dynamic roller-coaster environment of increased competition and change. That's why you must demonstrate the value training delivers to the company's bottom line. After all, that's the true measure of corporate performance.

It's no longer enough to know that the training was well received, that the presenters were polished and very entertaining, that staff enjoyed the experience and welcomed the chance to meet others in the company, and that they thought they learnt a lot.

The ultimate outcome of training is to change performance on the job and, through that changed performance, to impact on the results the company achieves. Evaluating this ultimate outcome requires facing reality and looking at the value your training is delivering.

Are you equipped to meet the challenge of delivering the hard data needed to show that your investment in training is producing bottom line results? To find out about the common myths of evaluation and how to bring some reality to yours, please read on.

Evaluating Training – Myths and Reality

PACT

THE FOUR LEVELS OF EVALUATION

The four levels of evaluation widely recognised are:

Level One: Learner Reaction

Known as the reaction or 'smile sheet', it evaluates the quality of the trainee's experiences.

Level Two: Assessment of Competence

Undertaken during the training, this measures what has been learned. In competence-assessed training, attainment of skills by each individual is measured against specific performance standards.

Level Three: Application on the Job

This is measured as the change in performance, on the job, after the training.

Level Four: Company/Organisation Results

This evaluation can be shown either as a return on investment (ROI) – the value in dollars of the benefits of training over and above the cost of the training – or as the impact on company results. Evaluation at this level, the most important of the four, is often not attempted.

THE MYTHS OF TRAINING EVALUATION

Some of the myths and reasons for not evaluating beyond Level One – the smile sheet – are:

- *'If trainees are happy then it has been a success'*
- *'If trainees have attended the training then they are competent and will apply the skills.'*
- *'If trainees have attended the training and their performance doesn't change you can't really be sure it's the fault of the training.'*
- *'It takes effort and is it really worth it.'*

THE VALUE OF EVALUATING BEYOND LEVEL ONE

Level Two — You know they are competent before they leave the training

Level Three — You can see and measure the changes on the job

Level Four — You find out if your investment has 'paid off'

LEVEL ONE
LEARNER REACTION

LEVEL TWO
ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE

LEVEL THREE
APPLICATION ON THE JOB

LEVEL FOUR
COMPANY RESULTS

REALITY OF LEVEL THREE EVALUATION

This is measured as the change in an individual's or a group's performance, on the job, after the training. Examples of measures at Level Three are:

- Changes in the way sales reps plan sales calls.
- Supervisors implementing coaching discussions with staff.
- Managers improving the way they carry out team briefings.

In all cases, to see if there has been a marked change in performance it is necessary to have a benchmark – usually a measure of performance before the training.

Level Three evaluation nearly always measures soft results based on behaviours or attitudes, although hard results might be measured too.

An example:

A manufacturing company, concerned about falling profit, trained their sales team in pricing strategies. The training was competence tested so they knew at the end of the training that each of the sales representatives was competent. This was a Level Two evaluation.

Back on the job the sales manager monitored representatives pricing orders to see whether they were applying what they had learned – Level Three. This told him whether the pricing strategies were being applied, and where this was not happening the reason was addressed.

REALITY OF LEVEL FOUR EVALUATION

Measurement at Level Four focuses on company results. The measurement of financial return or quantifiable impacts is usually at the division or company level. Examples of these quantifiable results are:

- Improved bottom line
- Improved product quality
- Improved output or productivity
- Faster turnaround time
- Improved customer satisfaction ratings

And so on.

At Level Four hard results are always measured, although soft results – behaviour and attitude – might be measured too.

An example:

The manufacturing company who evaluated the application of pricing strategies on the job by their sales team also measured results at Level Four. They analysed the profitability per representative after three months, comparing the latest profitability results to pre-training results. They continued to analyse every three-months, and were able to quantify the ongoing effectiveness of the improved pricing strategies.