

Agile Transfer Process Model to Help Ensure Successful Learning Transfer from Theory to Practical Application on The Job

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Abstract

Most employees no longer have constant working conditions. In fact, the world of work is subject to constant change. Consequently, successful learning transfer is becoming a central requirement for continuing vocational training (CVT). In this article, evaluation tools and learning transfer tools are outlined in their historical development and their application in practice is discussed. The author's empirical study cited in the article shows that there is a considerable gap between the theoretical findings and their practical implementation in practice. The author developed an agile learning transfer process model that provides an opportunity to close the existing gap between theoretical knowledge and its lack of practical application. The developed learning transfer process model is agile and flexible in its handling and at the same time achieves a high degree of efficiency.

Keywords: *Continuing Vocational Training, Evaluation, Learning Transfer*

JEL Code L2, M12, M53, M54

INTRODUCTION

Does training work? And why does it work?

These two questions summarize the field of tension in continuing vocational training. At the same time, two crucial questions are raised: Firstly, how can continuing vocational training programs be evaluated? Secondly, how can the desired learning transfer be designed and evaluated?

In 2019, 87.6 % of German companies invested a total of € 41.3 billion in continuing vocational training of their employees (Seyda and Placke, 2020, p. 105). This enormous investment sum underlines the relevance of the above-mentioned questions.

This article contrasts the perspective of research and the perspective of companies regarding successful learning transfer. In this context, the author focuses on non-formal continuing vocational training.

The main reason for this is the lack of implementation of scientific results in practice. The agile learning transfer model developed by the author has the potential to close this gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Evaluation

The beginning of evaluation in continuing vocational training are the research findings of Donald Kirkpatrick in the 1950s. He developed a four-level evaluation model. His evaluation model remains the best-known evaluation model of training programs worldwide. Kirkpatrick identified four levels that support the evaluation of continuing vocational training: Reaction, learning, behavior, and results.

The power of Kirkpatrick's model lies in its simplicity (Alliger and Janak, 1989, p. 331). The first level reaction is usually measured using feedback forms. Feedback forms are still the most frequently used tool for evaluating continuing vocational training.

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Level 1: Reaction	The degree to which participants find the Training favourable, engaging and relevant to their jobs.
Level 2: Learning	The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the training.
Level 3: Behaviour	The degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job.
Level 4: Results	The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package.

Figure 1 Level 1 – 4. Source: (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2016, p. 33)

Return on Investment (ROI)

Kirkpatrick's model has been widely criticized. The critics demand a holistic model (Paul Donovan, 2014, p. 164). In 2003, Phillips added a fifth level return on investment (ROI). His model can be seen as a first holistic evaluation model. This fifth level calculates and determines ROI as a key figure in continuing vocational training. Furthermore, it is linked to the cost-effectiveness of training programs (Lee and Pershing, 2000, p. 250).

A common calculation for the ROI is:

$$\text{ROI (\%)} = \text{Net Program Benefits} / \text{Program Costs} \times 100$$

Figure 2 Formel ROI. Source: Adopted from (Phillips, 2003, p. 40)

However, the significance of the ROI is limited. In this regard, the following remarks should be made:

Usually, an observation period of one year has been chosen. Therefore, the result of a training program can be determined within one reporting year. Sometimes, it may happen that the investments of a training program extend over several years.

Furthermore, it is possible that the ROI of a training program is negative, but the training program could have a high value for the organization in the long run (Kellner, 2006, p. 18). For example, a company rolls out new guidelines at great expense over a year. In this case all employees are trained in the same way. The ROI of this measure is negative.

Nevertheless, the added value for the company only becomes apparent after a longer period. An additional problem regarding the calculation of the ROI is that certain effects must be isolated. For example, to calculate

the ROI of a sales training may be difficult if sales-promoting marketing measures have been decided at the same time.

Furthermore, ROI is used to calculate the relationship between the operational expenditure of continuing vocational training and its return. Depending on the definition of the effort, ROI may change. It must be decided whether only actual costs incurred are considered or also expenses incurred through planning, follow-up or work less.

For these reasons, it is obvious that it makes no sense to calculate the ROI for each training program. Furthermore, it is important to question the significance of the ROI for the respective training program. Therefore, it is important to agree with all stakeholders whether and how the ROI should be calculated.

Nevertheless, the calculation of the ROI has been examined in numerous studies. For example the case study described by Philips and Phillips (Phillips and Phillips, 2005, pp. 141–155).

The calculation of ROI is rarely used in practice. In 2015, Srimannarayana carried out a study among learning and development professionals from different companies to investigate evaluation in practice. Only 18.73% of the respondents evaluate ROI (Srimannarayana, 2017, p. 17).

Value on Investment (VOI)

In 2005, Kellner extended the ROI model by a sixth level called value on investment (VOI). The measurement of the VOI represents the entire spectrum of the effects of continuing vocational training (Kellner, 2006, p. 12). In contrast to the ROI, the VOI is determined at a macro level. The VOI comprises six successive phases (Kellner, 2006, pp. 19–21).

The VOI contains no stored algorithms. On a more abstract level it provides guidance for determining the value of a training program in a structured, questioning, and descriptive manner. Furthermore, in a broader sense, VOI prepares a successful learning transfer.

Design- Orientated Evaluation

Gessler's design-oriented evaluation model provides a new perspective on evaluating training programs. This model focuses on the configuration of training programs and takes a more holistic perspective. In this model, program evaluation serves to methodically capture, document, and assess the context, input, process, and products of CVT programs for program design and development. The procedure is a reflexive control on the levels of context, input, process and results in addition to a continuous control of results and impact (Michael Gessler, 2005, p. 16).

The following frameworks shape the design-oriented evaluation approach (Michael Gessler, 2005, pp. 15–16):

Framing 1: Vision and integration

CVT can only be effective if measures and forms of CVT are coordinated and integrated in a program. This requires a common vision.

Framing 2: Objectives and stakeholders

Starting from the vision, objectives are derived that are supported by the stakeholders and steer the continuing education program. Stakeholders should be involved in the process at an early stage.

Framing 3: Contextualization and change management

CVT can be effective if the integrated measures are contextualized, and the organization's processes are aligned with the learning and work processes of the stakeholders involved. CVT programs often require accompanying change management on the operational side.

Framing 4: Commitment

CVT can be effective if the responsible, involved, and affected parties and persons feel committed to the program. This requires self-commitment on the part of management as well as the participants.

Framing 5: Design and evaluation

Design requires evaluation and evaluation requires design. Evaluation planning is part of the design work before the implementation of the CET program begins. Needs analysis and goal setting at the beginning support the subsequent implementation and help with the implementation of the program and evaluation. If the improvement in performance to be achieved can be defined (evaluation), then ways of achieving it can also be determined (design).

The figure below shows the design-oriented evaluation model.

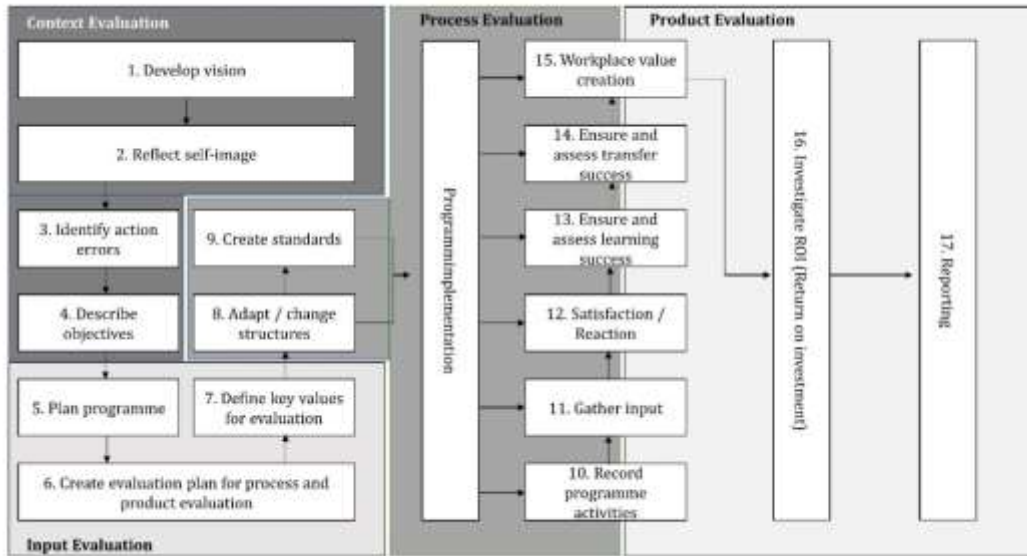


Figure 3 Design-oriented evaluation-model. Source: Adopted from (Michael Gessler, 2005, p. 16)

In the area of context evaluation, the formative character of this model becomes clear. Based on a vision, the self-image is first reflected and then fields of action are identified, and objectives described. The vision includes the state that should be achieved within the company after the training. Observable changes, which may not be included in the calculation of the ROI, can also be derived from the vision. Rather, these changes are to be evaluated through continuous feedback.

In the second framing, objectives and Stakeholders, stakeholder involvement is already recommended in the visioning phase. A goal-oriented cooperation of all stakeholders requires, among other things, an understanding of the trainer for the respective company.

Based on the evaluation models described evaluation of a broad range of continuing vocational training programs can be carried out. However, the models do not go far enough to determine whether successful learning transfer has taken place.

Learning Transfer

Baldwin and Ford’s research on learning transfer extends Kirkpatrick’s model. “For transfer to have occurred, learned behavior must generalized to the job context and maintained over a period of time on the job” (Baldwin and Ford, 1988, p. 63). They developed a learning transfer model as a transfer process.

The basic idea of the model is that transfer of training depends on three different categories of training input: trainee characteristics, training design and work environment. The outcome of training is directly influenced by trainee characteristics and work environment, whereas the impact of training design depends on the levels of training outputs such as learning and retention.

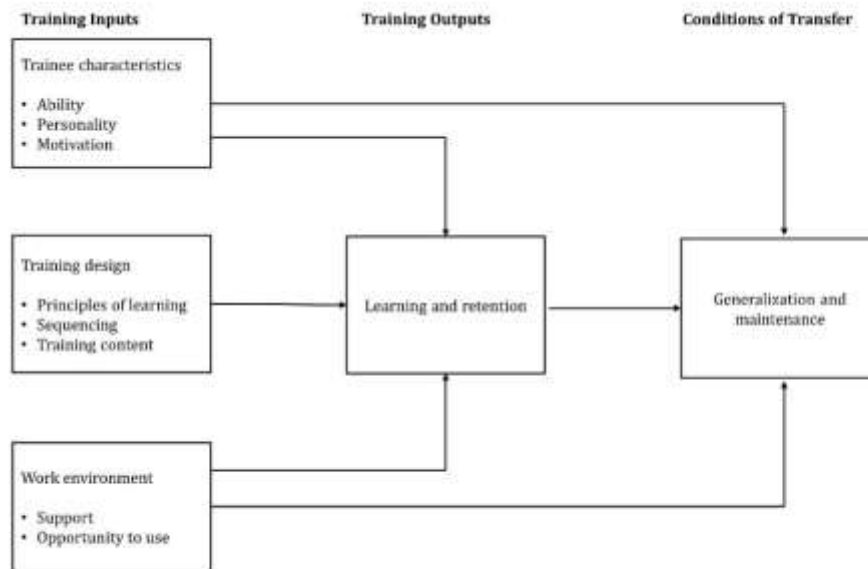


Figure 4 A model of transfer process. Source: Adopted from Baldwin and Ford (Baldwin and Ford, 1988, p. 65)

Furthermore, Baldwin and Ford have defined transfer determinants. These are depicted as sub-items in the figure above. The model allows the use of frameworks for evaluating the impact of each input factor in training.

In the last 30 years, research on learning transfer has generated many empirical studies. The author refers to the updated literature research of Baldwin and Ford. They first describe the development of empirical studies in the period 1988 – 2008, then discuss conceptual approaches to enhance the understanding of the term learning transfer and give an overview of future research questions (Hodgkinson and Ford, 2009, p. 42).

Baldwin and Ford’s model groups the transfer-promoting factors in three groups: factors of the learners (trainee characteristics), training (training design) and workplace (work environment) (Bohlinger et al., 2015, p. 45). However, the model does not answer the question of training design in its entirety.

Over the last few decades, research in this field has taken an increasingly differentiated approach to describe the prerequisites, options for action and responsibilities for successful learning transfer. At the same time, standards and norms have been developed (Jam et al., 2014).

Since Baldwin and Ford's research, a wide variety of learning transfer models have been developed. One example is Blume's model, which is described in more detail here.

Blume developed a dynamic learning transfer model. This model is based on the transfer process model of Baldwin and Ford. It considers training input, the training output, and the conditions of the transfer. The special characteristic of this model is that, in case of failure, new attempts are made for the learning transfer in a loop-like manner. This means that the procedure for learning transfer into practice is constantly changing if necessary.

Blume takes a slightly different view of the transfer process. Those factors that influence behavior in the workplace are evaluated during the training and lead to a three-stage transfer process.

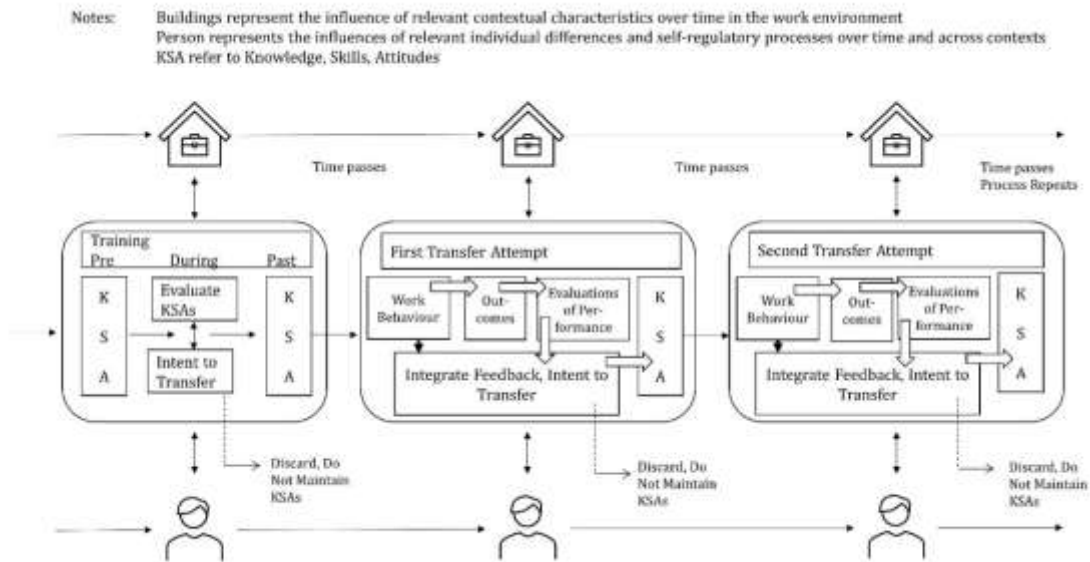


Figure 5 Dynamic transfer model. Source: Adopted from Blume (Blume et al., 2019, p. 272)

The first box shows the basic training process with the associated knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) before and after the training. The KSAs determined after the training form the basis for the first transfer attempt. The behavior in the workplace leads to a certain outcome and is evaluated. Subsequent integrated feedback leads to changed KSAs and a second transfer attempt can be started. This procedure can be repeated.

The house shown in the figure represents context-related, relevant transfer factors such as transfer climate or supervisor support. The person depicted represents the participant and their constant and changing influence of personal characteristics such as self-efficacy.

Each individual transfer attempt represents a self-contained set of framework conditions. The transfer can only be evaluated accurately if the personal characteristics of the participant and the characteristics of the situation are considered, and the evaluation is carried out with consistent parameters.

Transfer-Stärke-Methode®

Developed by Koch, the Transfer-Stärke-Methode® focuses on the interaction between trainee, supervisor, and the supporting work environment regarding successful learning transfer.

The Transfer-Stärke-Methode® (transfer strength method) is a four-step coaching process.

The first step is a transfer strength analysis carried out by an online survey.

In the second step, participants receive a personal analysis. This shows the participant's transfer strength profile before the training and gives them recommendations for further action. In addition, the transfer strength analysis indicates to which extent the participant is supported by the work environment.

In the third step, participants take part in the training. The trainer ideally plans a time slot of about three hours to discuss one transfer strength profile. The goal is to ensure the desired transfer of learning. For this purpose, the participants develop a specific, individual training objective with support from the trainer or a transfer strength coach.

The training is to be followed by a three-month application phase in which the participants implement their objectives on their own. This phase is accompanied by two follow-up contacts by the trainer or coach.

The fourth step is to measure success. The participants again carry out the transfer strength analysis and can thus read off the development of their transfer strength. In addition, the status of the achievement of the individual objective is checked.

The transfer strength method® allows participants to assess their transfer strength before the training and gives them ideas to improve their learning transfer. By identifying possible blockades, the effectiveness of the training can be increased sustainably.

Trainer As Success Factor

Trainers play a key role in continuing vocational training programs. They form the connecting link between all those involved. Firstly, they must understand the objectives of the training program in the context and implement them in the training design.

Secondly, they have direct contact with the participants and shape training output. The trainer supports participants during the training and provide guidance on how to apply what has been learnt in practice.

Numerous framework models exist for the assessment of trainer competences. Exemplary here is the research by Garrick and McDonald. As a result of their research, they require an integrated approach to competence standards.

In this approach the following descriptors of a skill trainer have been included (Garrick and McDonald, 1992, p. 183):

Flexible

Innovative

Unafraid of problems not previously faced

Responsive

Motivating

Adaptive

Problem solver

Creative thinker

Self-motivated

Able to deal with ambiguity

QF2Teach (Qualified to Teach)

Based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQR – Europäischer Qualifikationsrahmen), a further research project QF2 Teach was carried out.

EQR was published by the European Parliament and Council in 2008. It is designed to facilitate the transnational mobility of employees and learners, and to help match supply and demand in the European labor market (European Parliament and Council, 2008, C 111/01).

QF2Teach was carried out in the period October 2009 – September 2011. It was coordinated by the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) in cooperation with partners from Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The project pursued the objective of developing a competence-based qualifications framework of transnational relevance. Therefore, the project focused on a specific professional profile, for which the term ‘Adult Learning Facilitator’ (ALF) stands for numerous specific professional roles in continuing education, such as trainer, instructor, coach, and consultant.

The result of the project for ALF are nine key competences, which are assigned to four areas with their sub-competences: Methodological competence and expertise, social and personal competence.

ISO Standards

On its website ISO is described as follows: ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 169 national standards bodies.

Through its members, it brings experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges (ISO, 2023).

International standards mean that consumers can have confidence that their products are safe, reliable and of good quality.

ISO 9001 is the best-known standard. "It can be used by any organization, large or small, regardless of its field of activity. In fact, there are over one million companies and organizations in over 170 countries certified according to ISO 9001" (ISO, 2023).

"This standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement. ... Using 9001 helps ensure that customers get consistent, good-quality products and services, which in turn bring many business benefits!" (ISO 2023).

In the following, the ISO standards concerning CVT are presented and their application in practice is illustrated.

ISO standards in the field of CVT

Such standards rarely exist in the service sector (Krippendorf and Krippendorff, 2021, p. 32). In 2010, ISO 29990, an international standard for learning service providers (quality management system for educational institutions) was introduced.

ISO 29990 „Learning services for education and training – Essential requirements for service providers“ was published to provide a common guideline for learning service providers in the design, development and delivery of learning services beyond formal education (DIN-Normenausschuß Dienstleistungen, 2019).

This standard has not been developed for the standardization of learning services. Rather, it is intended to serve as a certification standard for education providers and thus enable a standardized certification of management systems of education providers.

This standard has not been able to gain widespread acceptance to date. In Germany, only 50 educational institutions were certified according to this standard in 2015 (Stiftung Warentest).

In view of the complexity and diversity of the global learning service market, ISO published ISO 29993 in 2017 to provide minimum requirements for learning services. This standard was adopted as DIN ISO 29993 in 2018. At the same time, ISO 21001 was developed at the international level to provide a separate management system standard for the education sector. This standard will also be adopted as DIN ISO 21001 in the future (TÜV Nord Cert GmbH, 2020).

The complexity and diversity of the global market of learning services requires standards in the field of continuing vocational training. These required standards are described in ISO 29993 (International Organization for Standardisation, 2018, p. 1).

The fact that international standards have been developed for learning service providers in education and training once again underlines the relevance of evaluation.

„Organizations will be offered more flexibility with standards dealing with learning services on one hand and standards addressing management systems on the other hand. This new standards offering will give educational and training providers new possibilities and opportunities to mix and match as best suits their interests“ (International Organization for Standardisation, 2018, p. 1).

In 2010, the ISO 29990 standard was published for CVT. It includes elements related to the learning services provided by the service provider as well as elements of the management system supporting the processes of the educational institution.

ISO published ISO 29993 in 2017 to provide minimum requirements for learning service providers. On an international level, ISO 21001 was developed to provide educational institutions with their own management system standard.

The fact that only a few training institutes are ISO-certified is remarkable. It indicates that ISO standards for learning services are not necessarily used. To investigate this, the author analyzed the accessible public tenders for educational services (Deutsches Vergabeportal GmbH). As an example, the tender of Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund for approx. 330 seminar days was investigated on the topic of persuasive interviewing. In addition to the 330 event days, 20 trainings, 16 hours of blended learning support and 40 hours of conception were tendered for the entire contract period of six years.

Empirical Study – Online Training Offers

The author's practical experience is that the theoretical findings are rarely put into practice. As already mentioned, the evaluation of a training course using feedback forms is still standard and hardly allows any reliable statements about the effectiveness of the training.

Feedback forms usually ask about the working atmosphere, whether the participants

consider the trainer to be competent and whether the seminar content can be transferred to everyday working life. From the answers, hardly any conclusions can be drawn regarding a successful learning transfer.

In her empirical study, the author examines the question, to what extent offers from seminar providers on an online platform contain information on evaluation and learning transfer.

In addition, the author is interested in whether there is a difference between open seminars and inhouse training courses. Open seminars are training courses to which participants from different companies can register for. This means that a seminar provider publishes a training offer that is then booked by the participants themselves or their employers. The situation is different with inhouse training courses. In this case, a company commissions a training institute to carry out the training. As a rule, in this case, the training content is usually tailored to the client. The author's practical experience with open seminars and inhouse training courses are similar. The training is evaluated by means of feedback forms and a learning transfer design is not part of the training planning.

For this reason, the author carried out an empirical study that analyzes to what extent training courses contain information about the design learning transfer and evaluation.

The author conducted the study in September 2021 to also capture any effects of the coronavirus pandemic that might occur.

The study was carried out on online training offers on the topic of employee appraisals of a continuing education database. Stiftung Warentest examined continuing education databases in 2017. The author selected one of the ten best continuing education databases from this study called Semigator. This continuing education database presents Germany-wide offers around open seminars and inhouse trainings. About 50.000 offers from 1.500 providers are presented.

This study is a secondary data study. For the study, all offers relating to the keyword “employee appraisal” were examined as of 24 September 2021. The study includes 255 offers which are evaluated with the help of the Maxqda-Software.

Research Question

The research questions for this study are:

Do CVT providers offer instruments for evaluation and learning transfer?

Are there significant differences between open seminars and inhouse training?

Hypotheses

The tools for learning transfer developed in the framework of learning transfer research are not applied consistently in practice.

Scope of the Study

To answer the research question the study was carried out in September 2021. 255 offers were found relating to the keyword employee appraisal. The offers were analyzed in relation to the codes of open seminar, inhouse training and with the subcodes of provider, objectives, evaluation, learning transfer, and query participant expectations. All offers that do not have an objective relating to employees' appraisal or evaluating or learning transfer were eliminated.

Code System	Frequency
Code System	398
Open seminars	0
Evaluation	7
Objectives	126
Provider	118
Learning transfer	32
Query participants expectations	5
Inhouse training	
Provider	42
Learning transfer	19
Evaluation	2
Objectives	47

Figure 6 Codes and subcodes. Source: Own figure.

A whole of 118 offers for open seminars were found, registered in the database by 45 different providers.

Concrete learning objectives have been described 126 times in 118 offers. The remaining offers contain a list of learning contents without a precise description of a learning objective.

According to the results of the open seminar offers analyzed, only five offers include a query of participant expectations. Furthermore, seven offers include notices about evaluation.

The mentioned tools for evaluation are:

Exercises based on personal practical cases with feedback

Reflection of the conversation

Product certified according to ISO 29993: 2017

Reflect on one own's approach

Checklists and rules for professional behavior as moderator/meeting leader

accredited certificate for you sets a successful written examination

Final exam (comprehension questions plus evaluation of the participation in the seminar and the processing of the case studies)

A whole of 42 offers for inhouse training were found, registered in the database by 42 different providers.

Concrete learning objectives have been described 42 times in 42 offers. The remaining offers contain a list of learning contents without a precise description of a learning objective.

Like open seminars, the learning objectives are formulated in general terms and do not contain any concrete instructions for implementation.

The results of the study show that there is no evidence of an evaluation or learning transfer design.

Furthermore, no query concerning participant expectations is offered and, only two offers include details about evaluation.

The mentioned tools for evaluation are:

We always flank our seminars with a clear objective, benchmark, and a CIP approach (continuous improvement process)

individual trainer feedback

For the author, a further result of the study is relevant. It relates to the communication process. Both around open seminars and around inhouse training courses, no stringent communication process can be observed.

Even in the current online offers of seminar providers, no end-to-end communication process is outlined. Furthermore, evaluation and learning transfer designs are missing. The results support the hypothesis that no tools are offered.

The limitations of this study are that only one database was investigated. This can be considered representative for Germany. However, it cannot necessarily be concluded that the results are valid throughout Europe. This would require a differentiated investigation of the communication process in the European countries. With a Europe-wide investigation, it would be possible to qualify the results of the AES study in connection with the training design of continuing vocational training institutions in non-formal continuing vocational training.

RESULTS

The research questions for the empirical study can be answered as follows:

Do CVT providers offer instruments for evaluation and learning transfer?

Evaluation instruments and learning transfer tools are not offered to any significant extent. In most courses, the agreement of participant objectives is the method of choice. No specific learning transfer design is offered regarding learning transfer either.

Are there significant differences between open seminars and inhouse training?

Regarding the instruments for evaluation and learning transfer offered, there are no differences between open seminars and inhouse training courses.

Thus, the hypothesis “The tools for learning transfer developed in the framework of learning transfer research are not applied consistently in practice” is confirmed.

The reasons why the theoretical findings are not applied in practice have not yet been conclusively researched. Kirkpatrick's evaluation model is still the standard in the evaluation of further training measures. As already explained several times, not all levels are evaluated. The evaluation of the first level Reaction using feedback forms is the most widely used.

The author has developed a process model that can be used simply and flexibly for the various further training measures. Based on the objectives of the training, it is determined how evaluation and learning transfer can take place.

Agile Learning Transfer Process Model

The model takes effect from the moment the need for further training is determined in the context of non-formal continuing vocational training. The author omits the area of formal continuing education. The reason for this is that formal continuing education usually concludes with certificates, examinations or project work and does not include an evaluation or learning transfer design.

The need for further training relates to a lack of knowledge. This can mean, for example, that the operation of a machine needs to be learned. Or that the competence in conducting complaint discussions should be increased.

Specific objectives for the training are derived from the need. How the missing knowledge is to be imparted can be derived from the objectives. The model distinguishes between "training on the job" and "training near the job".

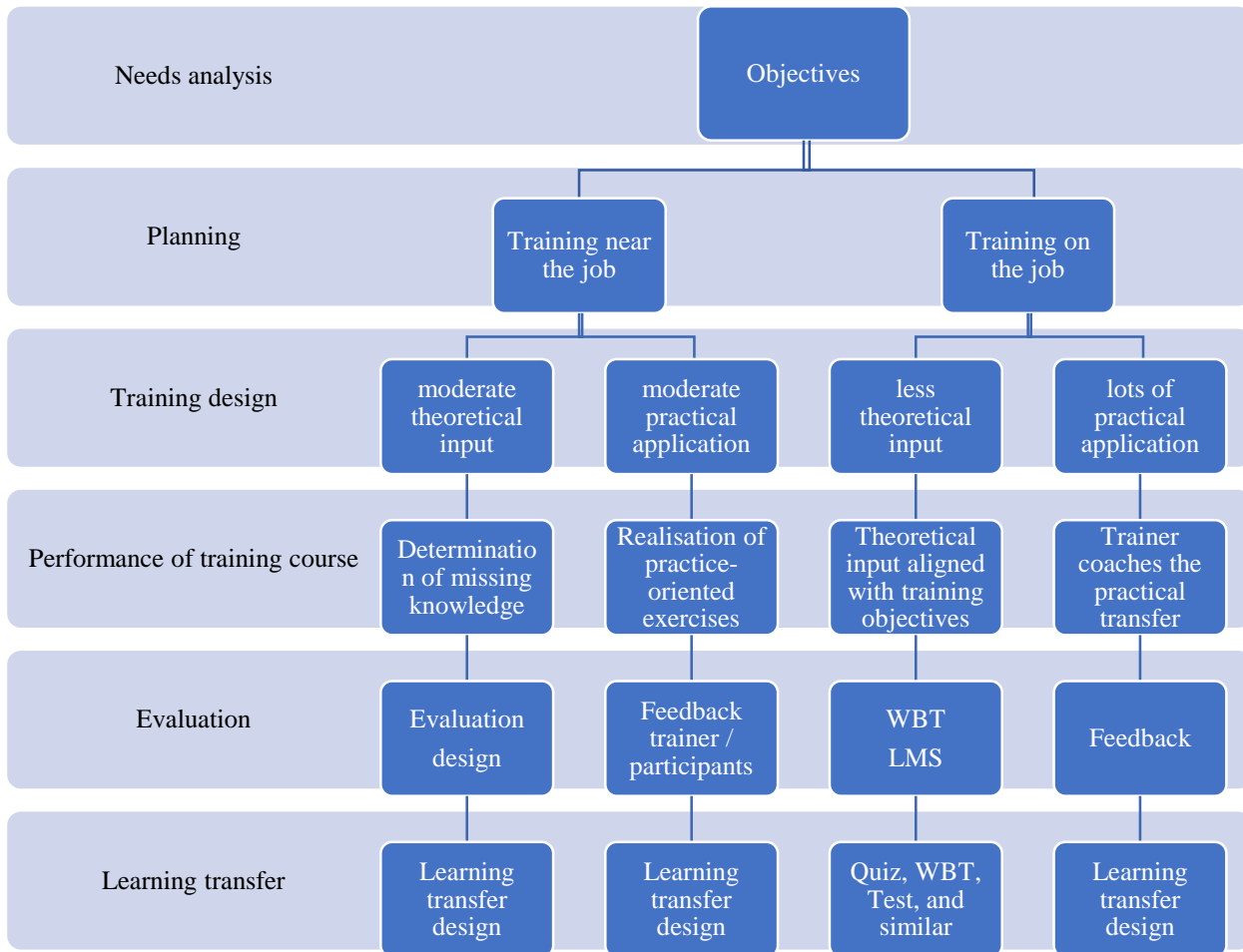


Figure 7 Agile learning transfer process model. Source: Own figure

The individual fields of the process model are described below regarding responsibilities and application in practice.

Needs-Analysis - Objectives

The participants themselves and, if applicable, their superiors are responsible for the objectives of training measures. In other words, in terms of continuous professional development, the impetus for a training measure can also come from the participants themselves, who are intrinsically motivated. More frequently, the objectives of a training measure are agreed as part of annual appraisals between line managers and employees, or because of change processes within the company.

The agreed objectives are communicated with the participants, depending on the planned learning transfer.

Planning - Training NEAR THE JOB

A particular challenge for successful learning transfer is the time gap between training and applying what has been learned in practice. In this case, training planning must consider how what has been learned can be retained. Participants should be able to recall what they have learned if necessary.

However, in many cases the practical exercises during the seminar often do not relate to the participant's current work situation. For this reason, it makes sense for the trainer to involve superiors and colleagues. This makes it possible to initiate support mechanisms for successful learning transfer during the training.

At a minimum, the client's contact person and the trainer or training institute are responsible for planning the training. The client's contact person can be an employee from the HR department, for example. As the client, this person represents the company's objectives on the one hand and the objectives and needs of superiors and participants on the other.

Planning – Training on the Job

On-the-job training involves transfer of knowledge and putting it into practice in the participants' working environment. The focus of this training is on the practical implementation of what has been learned.

The theoretical input is designed to ensure that the practical application is successful. In addition, supplementary information can explain the necessity of the training, increase the participants' motivation to learn and dissolve any reservations or blockages.

In this case too, the client's contact person and the trainer or training institute are responsible. To ensure that the following training design leads to a successful transfer of learning, it is important that the trainer carrying out the training knows the practical application in detail. This enables an on-going comparison with the desired objectives during the subsequent implementation of the training.

Training Design – Training Near the Job

The trainer is usually responsible for the training design. The extent of the teacher's pedagogical/psychological knowledge is of crucial importance (Marx et al., 2017, p. 166). This knowledge is defined as "knowledge for the successful design and optimization of teaching/learning situations" (Marx et al., 2017, p. 167) and appears to be highly relevant with regard to training success (Koch et al., 2022, p. 92).

In practice, this means that the trainer makes a decisive contribution to the success or failure of a training course through the selection of theoretical input and the necessary transfer into practice. In addition to the trainer or training institute, the client's contact person may also be responsible for this phase. They can provide the trainer or training institute with information on the framework conditions for the subsequent evaluation and transfer of learning.

Training Design – Training on The Job

The training design for on-the-job training requires the trainer to have a good knowledge of the working environment and the tasks of the participants. This is the only way to ensure that the trainer can convey the theoretical content using suitable methods and coach their application in practice in a conducive manner. What has been learned should be applied repeatedly in the presence of the trainer. Analogous to Blume's dynamic transfer model, several transfer options ensure transfer success.

The trainer or training institute and the client's contact person are responsible for the training design. It is important to ensure that the client's contact person is familiar with the processes at the workplaces affected by the training. It may make more sense to involve the participants' line manager or the participants themselves at this point.

Performance Of Training Course

The training is carried out according to the training design. This applies to both training near the job and training on the job.

The trainer ensures that the training is always related to the training objectives. They provide well-founded feedback on the practice-oriented exercises. The trainer and participant are responsible for this phase.

Evaluation – Training Near the Job

In the case of training near the job, it is necessary to create an evaluation design before the start of the training program. This design is developed in cooperation between the client's contact person and the trainer. A wide variety of tools can be used. For example, a quiz, tests or WBTs (web-based training) can be used to evaluate the degree of successful knowledge transfer.

Evaluation – Training on The Job

In the case of on-the-job training, evaluation can take place via learning management systems or WBTs. The contact persons at the client and trainer are responsible for this.

Learning Transfer – Training Near the Job

In the case of near-the-job training, learning transfer must be agreed. Learning transfer design is developed in cooperation between the client's contact person, participants, and the trainer. Also, a wide variety of tools can be used. Such as practical workshops, WBTs, coaching on the job or analyzing failure rates.

Learning Transfer – Training on The Job

A learning transfer design must also be agreed for on-the-job training. In addition to direct feedback from the trainer during the practical application of what has been learned, the sustainability of what has been learned must be defined.

Here is an example: If the communication behavior of a telephone hotline is trained in a training course to increase the NPS (Net promotion score), the evaluation of the NPS is one way of measuring the sustainable success of the learning transfer.

DISCUSSION

Over the last 30 years, the field of learning transfer research has changed. It is not only evaluating the effectiveness of CVT, but also reasons why it works.

This is even more important since well-trained employees are seen as an important asset in companies. In addition, a constantly changing working environment leads to the need for employees to undergo continuous further training. Well-trained employees have become a relevant value of the company (Kauffeld, 2010, p. 6). In addition, demographic change must be softened.

The factors defined by Baldwin and Ford that influence training input - trainee characteristics, training design and work environment - have been well researched. The variables influencing participants' motivation and willingness to transfer have been examined in many studies. Reference should be made here to the AES (Adult Education Survey), which examines the participation of adults in lifelong learning across Europe every two to three years.

With the Q4TE or ISO standards, reliable instruments have been created that can support successful learning transfer. Their use in practice is still low. There are many reasons for this. On the one hand, there is no formal training to become a trainer in continuing vocational training. This means that the qualifications and requirements for trainer activities are not regulated and are very heterogeneous. This also means that there is little research into the professional knowledge of trainers. On the other hand, there is no clear-cut communication process for training measures in practice.

The agile learning transfer process model developed by the author is to some extent an analogy to digital order processing. In the sense that only after successful completion of all process steps it is ensured that evaluation and learning transfer have been discussed and agreed upon with the responsible persons.

Parallel to the scientific development of new models and process models, a massive change is taking place regarding the responsibilities and procedures of HR departments in companies. Employees in HR departments have long since become business partners. With their know-how, they contribute significantly to the development and further training of employees.

To ensure that training is effective, and that the knowledge transfer is tailored to the working environment, all participants involved should be included in the training measure from the very beginning. Special attention should also be paid to the pedagogical/psychological knowledge and transfer knowledge of the trainers. The agile learning transfer process model developed by the author can be seen as a recommendation on how to effectively decide about design evaluation and learning transfer for planned training measures.

To date, there have been no studies on how companies assess the learning transfer of training measures. Collecting the data for such a study is complex and requires close scientific monitoring of the training measure. The starting point for such a study would be clearly defined objectives and descriptions of how these can be verifiably achieved. Future research should be dedicated to this exciting investigation.

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- Figure 3 Design-oriented evaluation-model. Source: Adopted from (Michael Gessler, 2005, p. 16) 5
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