
1-1-2006

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Recommended Citation

Giberson, T. R., Tracey, M. W., & Harris, M. T. (2006). Confirmative Evaluation of Training Outcomes. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 19(4), 43-61.

Available at: http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/coe_aos/18

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Confirmative Evaluation of Training Outcomes: Using Self-Report Measures to Track Change at
the Individual and Organizational Level

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Abstract

This article explores the use of an evaluation model of learning and development utilizing formative, summative, and confirmative steps, along with a framework for developing evaluation tools aligned with organizational change goals. A case study is presented in which formative, summative, and confirmative evaluations were used to assess materials and learners following implementation of a new performance management process, tools, and supporting training. A specific model for developing evaluation tools and techniques is introduced as a way to integrate the evaluation process with the specific content of a learning and development intervention, as well as link to higher-order cultural change goals. Results of the case study suggest that evaluation tools can provide evidence of improvement and target areas for further work. Recommendations are provided for the researcher or practitioner interested in applying the same or similar models to evaluation.

Confirmative Evaluation of Training Outcomes: Using Self-Report Measures to Track Change at the Individual and Organizational Level

Evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the merit or worth of a specific program, curriculum, or strategy in a specific context (Guskey, 2000). Evaluation is core to performance improvement as the objective is to gather data to determine whether performance improvement goals have been met, and where additional improvement is required (Stolovitch & Keeps, 1992). Historically, formative and summative evaluations formed the foundation for judging a program in improving performance before, during and immediately after program implementation. Confirmative evaluation expands traditional evaluation to measure long term and expanded performance improvement. Additionally, it assists an organization's change process by identifying areas where additional effort is necessary and by confirming institutionalization of desired changes (Dessinger & Mosley, 2004; Mohrman & Cummings, 1983). This article addresses a need in the literature suggested by Moseley and Solomon (1997), that is, to present examples of how confirmative evaluation measures the improvement of performance in organizations. The purpose for this article is to present a case study describing the implementation of a confirmative evaluation process that integrates individual and organizational change-specific goals with traditional tools of evaluation to improve performance.

Overview of the Case

The Company (TC) in this case is a high-performing organization that leads the shopping mall industry with average per-square-foot annual sales over twice that of the average shopping center (NRB Shopping Center Census, 2003). An organization of 1100 employees, the Midwest based TC owns and operates 25 shopping centers in 11 states, and was listed on the New York Stock Exchange over ten years ago. Key to TC's success is its dedication to hard work, customer

focus, quality, and hiring, training, and rewarding the best and brightest employees. As an entrepreneurial-based organization, TC's culture has focused on recognizing and rewarding individual performance. While clearly driving its success, the executive team recognized, and the needs assessment confirmed, the unintended consequences of its culture included departmental "silos", inter-employee competitiveness, and a lack of team-based performance. The organization's culture and supporting processes led individuals to focus on the here-and-now of their own job, often without a clear view of the company's goals and how their performance supports customers and the business. In the current culture, the executive team did not fully address the long-term improvement of performance as a means of meeting and exceeding corporate goals.

The executive team recognized that in order to improve performance over the long term, there was a need to align the day-to-day and longer-term focus of employees on job-related and organizationally-related outcomes. Several organization-wide initiatives were implemented in order to bring about positive changes in the organization's culture including identification of how every job in the organization contributes to shareholder value, formalization of core values with behavioral examples, and an assessment and redesign of its performance management process.

Company executives chose to support a systematic evaluation process and model incorporating formative, summative, and confirmative evaluation for their new Performance Management Process (PMP) and supporting training. The executives recognized objectivity was critical, and that learning what is or is not working through evaluation was as important as learning that the change was successful. Thus, the executives chartered a team who worked with an external consultant to design the new process and a separate consultant to evaluate the success

of the PMP evaluation. The performance management process and the role of evaluation in the context of TC's culture change to ultimately improve performance is the focus of this case study.

The new process will be described briefly in a subsequent section.

The Evaluation Process and Model

Thoughtful, efficient, and constructive evaluation is at the heart of continuous improvement and is fundamental to unlocking the needed potential of learning for performance improvement (Brinkeroff & Dressler, 2002). Confirmative evaluation is for programs that run for one year or more, making it ideal to evaluate TC's culture change broadly and its PMP redesign specifically. By choosing to support a long-term evaluation process including formative, summative, and confirmative phases, executives indicated their commitment to measuring and owning the entire process and outcome.

Formative evaluation, the first type of evaluation implemented (Scriven, 1967), can be used as a control method to improve program effectiveness (Thiagarajan, 1991). Ideally it is a continuous process incorporated into stages of program development in the form of expert review of program materials, one-on-one evaluation, live or virtual small-group evaluations or a field test or pilot of a program (Van Tiem, Moseley, & Dessinger, 2000). Done correctly, formative evaluation provides specific feedback as well as a measure that can and should be linked back to the needs assessment that led to the program design and implementation.

Summative evaluation includes gathering information regarding the adequacy of a program and using that information to make decisions about utilization (Seels & Richey, 1994). A blend of strategies, such as surveys, observation, interviews, and focus groups is often used to collect data which are then analyzed to determine the success of or changes needed to a program.

Confirmative evaluation extends the cycle beyond formative and summative evaluation (Seels & Richey, 1994), focusing on long-term effects or results over the life cycle of a change program. Data are collected and analyzed related to behavior, accomplishment, and results in order to determine the continuing effectiveness and improvement of programs (Hellebrandt & Russell, 1993; Mark & Pines, 1995), as well as the extent of institutionalization of change in an organization. Thus, confirmative evaluation can demonstrate the results of a program as well as function as a tool to measure individual and organizational performance improvement and the results of a change effort.

The Enhanced Performance Management Process

The Performance Management Process was a tool TC used to measure current performance while guiding the improvement of performance. The Company's Executive Team established a steering committee to head the effort to re-vamp the current performance management process. This committee worked with a large consulting firm to conduct a needs assessment and develop a revised system based upon the results. Key findings of the assessment included:

- Departments valued and implemented the performance evaluation process very differently.
- Aligned, strategic goal setting was not occurring in an effective manner.
- Professional development and coaching to improve performance were low priorities.
- Employees' sense of fairness and equity in the compensation process was very low.
- People felt devalued by the process, despite high levels of satisfaction with compensation available at the company.

A new process was developed with several success indicators identified by the steering committee (Table 1 contains the success indicators).

 Insert Table 1 about here

The details of the new PMP are not relevant for this case study; a brief overview of the new process follows. The redesigned PMP is a fairly traditional goal-based process, whereby company goals are cascaded to each level of the organization, with individuals, teams and departments responsible for aligning their goals to company goals. Each employee's job duties form the basis for individual goals, whereby key tasks are converted to customer outcomes. For each outcome, customer performance expectations (e.g., cost, quality, timeliness, quantity) set the foundation for high, average, and below average performance. Scheduled conversations between supervisor and employee form the foundation for ongoing communication and coaching for improved performance, along with agreed upon developmental opportunities. These conversations occur formally twice per year and informally as requested by the employee. Finally, PMP scores serve as a primary input to determination of compensation decisions. Thus, TC's new PMP encompassed goal setting, coaching, training and development, appraisal/evaluation, and reward/recognition.

Evaluating the New PMP Process and Organizational Change

The Steering Committee created a group of 10 individuals from across the organization representing various locations, ranks, and departments to roll out the new PMP process and tools. These individuals provided input along the way regarding the design and development of the training program. The pilot training included 3 days of face-to-face training for employees (non-

supervisory employees) and 5 days of face-to-face training for those with supervisory responsibility. The training was structured within four modules and focused on the new process and supporting tools (e.g., forms, job aids) as well as the skills and behaviors (e.g., communication, listening, goal setting) required for successful implementation of the PMP. The training utilized a variety of methods, including presentations, case studies, and role-plays to practice the new behaviors. The facilitators were provided with train-the-trainer sessions to ensure consistency in implementation. The rollout plan included the design of an evaluation process with the help of an external consultant who was not involved in the design, development, or implementation of the PMP process.

Evaluation Process Overview. The evaluation began following a full pilot of the materials and training process with employees and supervisors from three shopping centers, corporate technology, and corporate leasing, and included 186 participants. From the perspective of the PMP and training program, the pilot group evaluation resulted in a formative evaluation and enabled the identification of specific improvements for the training and process. Viewed from the perspective of the pilot participants, this evaluation also served as a summative evaluation for this group. Following the results of the pilot session, changes/enhancements were made to the PMP process and tools, as well as the training itself. Approximately 18 months later, the enhanced PMP process and tools were rolled out to the full organization through the revised training program. At the same time the summative evaluation was conducted with the full organization, participants from the pilot group were surveyed to determine the extent to which the skills, behaviors, and values were becoming institutionalized among these employees. Thus, the second evaluation served as a summative evaluation for the full organization rollout, and as a confirmative evaluation for the initial pilot group.

The Evaluation Model. Goal specificity can contribute to the success of an intervention (Goodman & Dean, 1982), thus the PMP committee developed Seven Key Success Indicators, which identified fairly specific organizational outcomes tied to broad culture changes and the needs assessment (see Table 1.). The consultant utilized these Success Indicators and matched them with a model incorporating three levels of change acceptance. The three levels of change acceptance model relied upon participants' self-report of how well they *understand* the principles and practices employed with the PMP and changes in the organization, how much they *value* the new behavioral expectations, and the extent to which individuals and the organization are seen to actually *perform* behaviors consistent with the principles of the desired culture and PMP practices. These levels are similar to Kraiger, Ford, and Salas's (1993) three learning outcomes: cognitive, affective, and behavioral, respectively. Additionally, the model derives from Goodman & Dean's (1982) notion that individual and organizational change follows a five stage developmental process.

Goodman & Dean (1982) identify knowledge of the desired new behavior as the first stage of change. For example, following a training intervention, individuals may understand how to coach employees. The second stage involves actual performance of the new behavior. At this stage, a supervisor would actually coach employees using the new skills and behaviors. Over time, individual preference for the new behaviors over the old suggest completion of the third stage, whereby a supervisor may find that coaching leads to better outcomes and prefer it over previous, more directive management styles. The fourth stage is normative consensus with regard to the appropriateness of the change, perhaps indicated by employees and supervisors expecting coaching behavior to occur as part of doing business. The final stage is value consensus, whereby values and beliefs regarding how to behave are abstracted, generalized, and

incorporated into the organization's culture. At this final stage, behaviors and norms with regard to coaching may generalize to individual and organizational values of consistent, open communication and feedback. Note that the first three stages address individual behavior, while the fourth and fifth stages address organizational-level behavior. As a developmental model, Goodman and Dean propose that individuals at higher stages can be assumed to have completed and incorporated the lower stages.

Our model makes slightly different assumptions, most importantly with regard to the developmental/hierarchical nature of the change process. We assumed that individual and organizational behavior and behavior change do not necessarily follow a linear, developmental progression. For example, with regard to current behavior, it is not uncommon for individuals to respond, "Because we've always done it this way," in response to queries regarding "why things are done the way they are done." This suggests commitment to a performing a particular behavior without understanding or valuing it beyond its historical precedent. Thus, in the context of learning and behavior change, a new hire in such an organization can learn behavior without understanding or valuing it. Similarly, it is entirely feasible for individuals and organizations to value particular behaviors without understanding them, nor actually following through with such behaviors. This could be seen in an organization where "do as I say, not as I do" is common among managers and executives. Similarly, some organizations display posters, provide training, and "talk the talk" of quality, without fully understanding how or why, much less without truly behaving ("performing") in ways consistent with quality management principles. The simplified change acceptance model acknowledges that any combination of understand, value, and performance may be true in an organization with regard to any specific behavior. However, in

the context of a programmatic training-based intervention, the model suggests a fairly sequential process of understanding, valuing, and performing new behaviors.

We assumed that an individual's understanding (understand) of the new process and tools could occur within the training setting. However, given that the new process was part of a larger culture change, we assumed that the culture could get in the way of an individual viewing the new process as valuable (value), or enable the individual to follow through with the new behaviors (perform). For example, if a new supervisor downplays the importance of establishing stretch goals, this will likely influence how valuable the employee views the process, and certainly how likely the individual is to set and achieve stretch goals. Thus, the evaluation model formed a 3 (levels of acceptance) x 7 (key success factors) matrix, enabling the development of survey questions that address success factors at each of the three levels. This framework formed the basis for the summative evaluation of learners. Essentially, the initial evaluation can also be viewed a baseline regarding progress in changing the culture toward the ideals expressed in the success indicators, and an evaluation of the extent to which participants found the training useful

We also evaluated the training itself using two levels of acceptance within each of the four training modules. Questions were developed which addressed the basic content of the modules at the understand and value levels of acceptance. The third level of acceptance, performing, was not included in this part of the evaluation as the training was designed to help participants understand the new process, tools and skills, and value the importance to themselves and the organization. Thus, the formative evaluation of materials focused upon the participants' perception of the effectiveness of the training, as well as the participant's perception of the new PMP process and tools.

The first of the two tools used was a survey. Worthen (1987) states that the development of questionnaires is the most critical and possibly the most underemphasized part of a survey and that the early stages of survey design should center on decision making about the aims of the study and identification of the questions to be answered.

Survey Development. A single survey was developed with three sections, one dedicated to evaluating participant perspective with regard to their own performance and the organizational climate/environment, the second dedicated to evaluating the PMP training, and the final section providing an overall assessment of the PMP process itself. The first section was based upon the 3 x 7 matrix created by the change acceptance model and the organization's 7 key success indicators. The consultant and steering committee discussed alternatives, such as utilizing a combination of a knowledge test to evaluate the understand level along with a survey to evaluate the value and understand levels. The self-report survey model was decided upon to enable 'apples to apples' comparison among the three levels of change, as well as for simplicity.

Individual survey items for the first section were developed by considering the intersections of the 3 x 7 matrix and developing statements that were behaviorally consistent with each goal at each level of change acceptance. For example, the first success indicator states, "company goals are clear." Two sample items at the "understand" level read,

- "I understand the company's goals for this year," and
- "I have read or heard my department's goals for the year."

Similarly, an item at the "value" level for the same success indicator, is

- "TC's goals are relevant to me."

These sample items are self-reports of individual attitude or belief/perspective regarding the company's climate/work environment, which match the attitudinal and cultural outcomes desired from the PMP and other organizational interventions.

The second section of the survey was dedicated to the training, and the goal was to obtain feedback with regard to the individual modules, tools, facilitators, and participant experience. Survey items here were written at the "understand" and "value" levels, and linked to the content and specific outcomes for each module. Sample items for the first module, which dealt with roles and responsibilities within the new PMP, included,

- "I understand my manager's role in the new PMP process," and
- "I understand how my job contributes to shareholder value."

Participants used a 0 – 6 point scale, with 0 representing "Don't Know", 1 = Strongly Disagree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. This scale was selected for two reasons. First, the scale provides newer employees a way to respond to culture-related questions about which they had not yet formulated an opinion ("Don't Know"). The scale also forced participants to indicate their general leanings owing to the lack of a neutral middle point (3 = "Disagree Somewhat", 4 = "Agree Somewhat"). Table 2 contains statistical properties for this section of the survey, and the Appendix contains a list of all items.

Insert Table 2 about here

An initial list of 90 such questions were developed, each question addressing one intersection within the 3 x 7 matrix for section one. The steering committee reviewed the draft questions for relevance, word choice, and total length of the survey. The committee and

consultant agreed upon a final list of 64 questions, with the first 33 items addressing the new performance management process and tools, the next 22 items addressing the training process, and the final 9 consisting of “overall questions”. Participants were also able to provide written feedback at the conclusion of the survey. Cronbach’s alpha for the survey factors range from $\alpha = .74 - .92$. Statistical properties for all survey factors are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Focus Group Development. Focus groups were used as a follow-up to the formative evaluation to obtain employee interpretation of the formative evaluation results and more in-depth evaluation of potential problem areas (Phillips, 1997; Subramony, 2002). For this study, the focus groups were effective because they generated a large amount of information regarding actual or perceived opportunities within the PMP in the organization. The focus group questions were developed by the consultant and steering committee, and consisted of two basic question groups:

- What worked/didn’t work during the pilot, and what needs to be done to improve the training and the process?
- What was your personal reaction to the training and the process? Including what did you think? What did you feel? What concepts or principles should be kept or added? What are some of the practical applications from the training?

Participants were then shown the results of the survey process, including the evaluation model and high-level results for the three levels and each of the success indicators. Finally, participants were asked to provide specific recommendations for improving the training and PMP process.

Formative Evaluation of Materials

The survey was conducted at the conclusion of the final day of training using a traditional paper-pencil format, with a minimum of demographic questions, including participant location,

organizational level, and gender. Several weeks following the survey, the results were analyzed, and two focus groups were conducted to clarify the results and to obtain specific suggestions for improvement.

Formative Evaluation Results. The survey analysis consisted of calculating means for each of the four modules based upon their respective questions. Overall, the modules were evaluated fairly positively, with a pattern emerging regarding participant's preferences for certain content. The Roles / How I Contribute and the Coaching Modules received the most positive evaluation. There may be several explanations (e.g., recency effects on both counts); however, based upon comments from the focus groups and the survey write-in responses, individuals seemed to like the exercises that link each job to shareholder value, and the coaching tools. Module 2 dealt with goals and there were several fairly negative comments regarding the goal setting process, and some problems in operationalizing the goals for some roles (particularly for jobs that are process vs. deliverable oriented). Also, in the words of a participant, "Module 2 is the module that participants really have to work on some difficult content and put to paper something they'll do . . .", which may have contributed to a somewhat lower score. Table 2 contains these overall results.

Participants provided over 200 write-in comments, many of them quite lengthy and well thought through. Consistent themes with regard to the training included:

- Shorten each module to ideally less than four hours.
- Simplify the training by better clarifying steps and tools.
- Space modules more closely together, such as a few weeks apart to ensure retention.
- Provide additional facilitation and presentation training to the facilitators.

Several participants suggested that, while the new process was better than the old, it needed quite a bit of additional work. Themes that were of most concern to participants regarding the PMP process itself were:

- The process is confusing, with too many steps.
- Roles and responsibilities within the process are unclear.
- The supporting tools require an entire handbook.
- Managers may not be bought into the process; it will not work without them.
- The link between job descriptions and goal setting is unclear.

Program Changes. Based upon the survey results, write-in comments, and focus groups, several changes were recommended by the consultant to the steering committee.

- Each module should be shorter, ideally 2 hours.
- Simplify the training by better clarifying steps and tools.
- Space modules more closely together, such as a few weeks apart to ensure retention.
- Incorporate more activities and fewer lectures.
- Provide additional facilitation and presentation training to the facilitators.

The following changes to the PMP process itself were recommended:

- Streamline the process by reducing the number of steps.
- Simplify the supporting tools and forms to the point of needing little or no training to use them.
- Clarify the link between job descriptions and goals.
- Ensure visible top-leadership commitment to the process.

Following a discussion of the results, the steering committee agreed and made the changes to the process and training in preparation for full organizational roll out of the PMP process and

training. The Steering Committee provided a detailed report to the Executive Committee, which agreed with their interpretation of the results and changes made to the program.

Summative Evaluation of Learners

Summative evaluation occurred twice in this evaluation process. The first summative evaluation results were collected at the same time as the formative evaluation of materials, based upon the pilot group's outcomes. The second summative evaluation occurred following full rollout of the training and process to the organization.

Pilot Group. The summative evaluation results for the pilot group were generally consistent with predictions; that is, the participant scores were highest for understand, lower for value, and lowest for perform. In terms of the steering committee's success indicators, participant results suggest highest scores for "department and individual goals are aligned" and lowest scores for "Cross-functional Teamwork is Increased." Table 1. contains the full results. These results were generally in line with our expectations as well, since aligning individual goals requires understanding of goals and how to align and set them, which seems reasonable to learn within a training context. In contrast, cross-functional teamwork required several changes at the individual and organizational culture level before the new behavior would be realized. The survey results also suggested that participants preferred the new process over the older process and identified receiving effective feedback and reaching performance goals as the two most important components of the new process.

Full Organization. For the full organization roll-out, the survey itself was modified in several ways. First, the consultant and steering committee reviewed the results from the original question set and agreed to questions that should be kept. A total of 29 of the original 33 questions addressing the success indicators were included in the new survey. Second, several

questions were dropped, most notably those addressing the PMP training modules, as survey length was becoming an issue within the organization and the training itself would not be offered again in this form. Third, several new questions were developed and then finalized with the steering committee. These new questions primarily addressed the “perform” level of the evaluation framework, as we anticipated additional progress in behavioral change in the organization owing to changes in the culture that were premature during the original summative evaluation (e.g., sharing cross-functional goals). Lastly, the survey was conducted on-line versus paper and pencil via a secure, anonymous survey software program hosted on the company’s server. Based upon the improvements made to the process and training from the pilot group formative evaluation, we anticipated that the summative evaluation results for the larger organization would be higher than summative results for the pilot group.

A total of 511 non-pilot individuals completed the summative evaluation. Results were consistent with our expectations, that is, summative evaluation results for the organization were higher than for the pilot group, and these differences were significant ($p < .05$). While these results were generally encouraging, focus groups were conducted to further explore areas for improvement (see below).

Confirmative Evaluation of Learners

The confirmative evaluation occurred simultaneously with the full organization summative evaluation, which was approximately 14 months following the pilot group’s PMP training. Dessinger & Moseley (2004) suggest confirmative evaluation typically occurs 3 – 14 months after implementation, placing 14 months at the extreme end of this timeframe. Given the nature of the changes (behavioral/cultural) and year-long cycle of the PMP, 14 months was agreed upon as a realistic lag to begin the confirmative evaluation. Pilot participants were

solicited to complete the evaluation survey at the same time as the full organization participants. A total of 123 of the original 187 (66%) pilot participants completed the survey the second time. We expected that pilot participants would report higher scores on understand, value, and perform than their own summative evaluation scores on these factors. We also anticipated that the full organization's summative scores would be higher than the pilot group's summative scores, owing to improvements made in the process, tools, and training.

Results of the confirmative evaluation were on track with our expectations; scores were higher on understand, value, and perform than the pilot group's summative evaluation results and these differences were significant ($p < .05$); means and standard deviations are presented in table 1.). These results suggested that for some individuals, the new PMP was working fairly well. Supervisors tended to rate the new PMP more positively than employees ($p < .05$). In order to better understand these results and offer specific improvement recommendations, the consultant conducted several focus groups 2 months after the survey results were finalized. A total of 11 focus groups were conducted with 7-12 participants in each, with 6 conducted online via meeting manager software and speakerphone with shopping mall employees from around the country, and 5 focus groups conducted in person with corporate headquarter staff. Each focus group was carefully scripted, with the summative evaluation results presented and explained, followed by posing several questions. These questions included:

- Can you provide general or specific examples of events that have happened or perceptions about the PMP?
- What do individuals mean when they report that the PMP process does not apply to their job or to themselves?

- Why do supervisors tend to rate the process as more fair and useful than non-supervisory employees?
- Training, communication, and resources are provided to explain the link between APS, job descriptions, and compensation. What would you say is clear or not clear?
- Generally speaking, how effective are managers/supervisors in terms of communicating, managing, and following through with the PMP process?
- Overall, what would you say is working and not working in terms of the PMP?
- How much of people's perception might be related to not understanding the process versus not liking it?

The focus group results suggested several key issues from both the employee and manager perspectives. Key issues identified by employees included:

- How goals are set. They are supposed to be set by employees and discussed and reviewed with managers, but end up being set by managers and given to employees.
- Fairness in rewards. Managers set the goals for employees, and then get bonuses when employees achieve them; employees achieving them don't get bonuses.
- Performance measurement. While goals are set and criteria are set in advance, there are no standards within or across departments, leading some individuals to have much higher (lower) standards than others.
- Confusing process. The overall PMP process is generally regarded as confusing and having additional, unnecessary steps and unclear supporting tools.

Overall, participants agreed that the process was successful to the extent that supervisors supported it in word and in action.

Key issues for supervisors included,

- Criteria for evaluating goals. Supervisors suggested that the “stretch” aspect of goal setting was gone, likely due to lack of criteria for setting performance requirements.
- Meaningless rewards. Supervisors complained that they are not able to give meaningful pay increases to those who perform well.
- Confusing tools. While supervisors generally understood the process better than the employees, they complained that the supporting tools and forms were confusing.

Following these focus groups, the steering committee developed a presentation of the results and recommendations for the executive leadership who recommended the steering committee further refine the process in line with participant suggestions. Executive leadership also requested that an additional follow-up confirmative evaluation occur in another 18 months.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The focus of this article is on evaluation itself; however, one purpose for evaluation is to improve performance through identification of needed enhancements in the program evaluated. As we reflect on this evaluation effort, there are several principles that we believe enabled the successful use of this long-term evaluation process that could generalize to the evaluation of any performance improvement program. Specifically,

- Link programs and evaluation to core organizational philosophy, principles, goals and performance outcomes that are valued by top leadership. Decisions regarding what to link to should be driven by the management philosophy of top leadership. Many leaders will be interested in linking measures to bottom-line business outcomes. At TC, the executives were actively managing the culture and attempting to change it, thus making behavioral and cultural factors their preferred link for evaluation measures.

- Position evaluation as a continuous improvement tool, rather than simply a way to measure outcomes or performance. At TC, evaluation was seen as an integral part of the change process, making evaluation a feedback loop rather than “bad news” or an excuse to scrap the change program. Formative, summative, and confirmative evaluation were included upfront as part of the change process, requiring no additional negotiation with leadership to use these important tools.
- Choose measures that will be convincing to leaders and the larger organization. In this case, broad participation ensured credibility among employees, while upfront input and agreement from executive leadership ensured their buy-in regardless of results.
- Develop measures that match the desired outcomes. At TC, the desired outcomes were primarily at the cultural level; thus, the focus of items was primarily at the attitudinal/perception level linked to desired cultural changes.
- Use multiple measures. In this case, surveys and focus groups were used. The examples provided by focus group participants were invaluable for interpreting survey data, and for ensuring the steering committee and executive leadership understood the impact the process was having on individuals and the organization. The survey results provided a simple, clear, numerical index to summarize where and how progress was made, and where the culture required additional change.
- Provide timely feedback. The Executive Team was the first to learn of the results during each evaluation phase. However, the larger organization received feedback through reports from managers, newsletters, etc. to ensure participants understood where the information they provided went, how it was used, and what would happen next.

These were organization-specific learnings; however, the process exemplified in this paper - utilizing a long-term evaluation process and asking the right questions – generalizes to any organization interested in improving performance improvement practices.

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Table 1. Evaluation of Learners: Overall Means and Standard Deviations for Each Success Indicator and Levels of Commitment to Change

	<u>Pilot Summative</u>		<u>Full Org.</u>		<u>Pilot</u>		<u>Items</u>	<u>α</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Summative</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Confirmative</u>	<u>SD</u>			
<u>Success Indicator</u>									
A. The Company’s Goals are Clear	4.8	1.3	5.1	1.2	5.3	1.1	5	.87	
B. Department/Individual Goals Aligned	5.0	1.1	5.3	.99	5.6	.87	4	.82	
C. Understand business and how they contribute	4.8	1.0	5.2	.84	5.5	.75	4	.74	
D. Key players retained; Low Performers move on	4.4	1.0	4.7	.94	5.0	.85	5	.75	
E. Celebrate successes and learn from failure	4.0	1.2	4.5	1.2	4.9	1.1	4	.80	
F. Cross-functional goals are shared	4.8	1.1	5.1	1.0	5.4	.81	4	.75	
G. Cross-functional teamwork is increased and enhanced	<u>3.6</u>	<u>1.2</u>	<u>3.4</u>	<u>1.1</u>	<u>4.9</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>.85</u>	
Mean/Total	4.31	1.13	4.13	1.04	5.46	.93	33*	.80	
<u>Level of Acceptance</u>									
Understand	4.6	.98	5.4	.93	5.7	.79	10	.88	
Value	4.3	1.0	5.1	.97	5.4	.83	10	.86	
Perform	<u>4.0</u>	<u>.98</u>	<u>4.8</u>	<u>.91</u>	<u>5.2</u>	<u>.79</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>.88</u>	
Mean/Total	5.0	.99	5.0	.94	5.4	.80	33	.87	

Notes: Scale = 0 (Don’t Know), 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 6 (Strongly Agree). There were a total of 32 items in this section, analyzed as success indicators, and levels of acceptance. Pilot N = 187, Full organization N = 511, Pilot Confirmative, N = 123. All differences significant, $p < .05$.

Table 2. Formative Evaluation of Materials: Overall Means and Survey Characteristics for Training Module

<u>Training Module</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>α</u>
1. Understanding organizational roles & how I contribute	4.6	.99	7	.89
2. Conversations & communication	4.4	1.1	7	.89
3. Providing constructive and timely feedback	4.4	.99	5	.84
4. Coaching for improved performance	<u>4.7</u>	<u>.99</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>.92</u>
Mean/Total	4.5	1.0	22	.89
<u>Level of Acceptance*</u>				
Understand	4.7	.89	15	.92
Value	<u>4.4</u>	<u>.96</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>.86</u>
Mean/Total	4.6	.93	22	.89

* “perform” questions were not asked with regard to the PMP training evaluation.

Notes: Scale = 0 (Don’t Know), 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 6 (Strongly Agree). N = 187. This survey was only used for formative evaluation pilot participants. Each section was analyzed two ways; first by level achieved (understand, value, perform), and second, by success indicator or training module.

Appendix

Success Indicator	Questions
Company goals are clear	<p>U* I have read or heard TC's company goals for this year.</p> <p>U I understand TC's company goals for this year.</p> <p>V TC's goals are relevant to me.</p> <p>V TC's goals are relevant to my department.</p> <p>P I can contribute to the success of TC's goals.</p>
Department / Individual goals are clearly aligned with Company goals	<p>U I have read or heard my department's goals for this year.</p> <p>U I understand my department's goals for this year.</p> <p>V My individual commitments are clearly linked to my department's goals.</p> <p>P I am able to accomplish my individual commitments.</p> <p>P I have made written commitments for results.</p>
Employees have a better understanding of the business and how they contribute	<p>U Using the PMP process, I better understand TC's business.</p> <p>U Using the new performance management process, I better understand how I contribute to the success of TC.</p> <p>U Using the new performance management process, I understand how I contribute to the success of The Company.</p> <p>P My manager and I typically agree upon the difference between "achieved" and "exceeded" for my performance before finalizing my commitments.</p> <p>P My manager and I have renegotiated my commitments during a mid-year conversation.</p> <p>P The measures indicating "achieved" and "exceeded" for my performance against commitments is clearly documented on my Commitment Tool.</p>
Employees with low performance improve or	<p>U TC has high expectations for individual performance.</p> <p>V Lower performing individuals are held accountable to improve.</p>

Success Indicator	Questions
move on	<p>V TC provides support for individuals to improve their performance.</p> <p>V TC's environment helps retain high performers.</p> <p>P Individuals are held accountable for achieving key department goals and individual commitments.</p> <p>P Lower performing individuals tend to leave TC over time.</p>
There are clear examples for celebration of success and learning from failure	<p>P My department celebrates individual achievements.</p> <p>P TC recognizes individual achievements.</p> <p>P TC recognizes departmental / Center's achievements.</p> <p>P TC celebrates organizational achievements.</p> <p>P Individuals are recognized and rewarded for results.</p>
Cross-functional commitments are shared	<p>U I understand how my department relies on other departments to be successful.</p> <p>U I understand how my department supports other departments to be successful.</p> <p>V Our department's goals are cross-functional.</p> <p>V There is a clear link between my department's goals and the goals of other functions / departments in TC.</p>
Cross-functional teamwork is increased and enhanced	<p>U I understand how my department relies on other departments to be successful.</p> <p>U I understand how my department supports other departments to be successful.</p> <p>V Departments in TC work together effectively.</p> <p>V Cross-functional teamwork has improved over the past 6-8 months at TC.</p> <p>P Cross-functional teamwork occurs between my department and other</p>

Success Indicator	Questions
	<p>departments.</p> <p>P Individuals are recognized and rewarded for results.</p> <p>P Teams are recognized and rewarded for results.</p> <p>P Cross-functional teams are recognized and rewarded for results.</p>
Module 1	<p>U I understand my manager’s role and responsibilities in the performance management process.</p> <p>U I understand my role and responsibilities in the performance management process.</p> <p>U I understand the how jobs add to shareholder value.</p> <p>U I understand how my job responsibilities contribute to Shareholder Value.</p> <p>V The performance management training was effective in explaining the employee’s and manager’s roles and responsibilities in performance management.</p> <p>V I could explain the shareholder value and explain how an employee contributes via their “commitments.”</p> <p>V The performance management training was effective in explaining and applying concept of shareholder value.</p>
Module 2	<p>U I understand how performance against goals will be tracked.</p> <p>U I understand the three elements of conversation dynamics (Personality, Performance, and Relationship).</p> <p>U I understand the concepts behind coaching discussions.</p> <p>V The performance management training helped me to develop my own goals.</p> <p>V Having productive conversations will help improve the relationship</p>

Success Indicator	Questions
	<p>between my supervisor and me.</p> <p>V The performance management training helped me to develop my commitments.</p> <p>V Knowing the three elements of conversation dynamics (Personality, Performance, and Relationship) will contribute to the success of my coaching discussions.</p>
Module 3	<p>U I understand the elements of effective feedback (Expectation, Observation, Assessment, Consequences).</p> <p>U The performance management training was effective in explaining the elements of effective feedback.</p> <p>U The performance management training was effective in building my skill in having the ‘tough conversations.’</p> <p>V The performance management training was effective in explaining the three elements of conversation dynamics.</p> <p>V The tools supporting the Four Conversations will help me follow through with the Conversations.</p>
Module 4	<p>U I understand the coaching role.</p> <p>U I understand the Coaching Model.</p> <p>V The performance management training was effective in explaining the Coaching Model.</p>
Overall	<p>U The performance management training was delivered at a level appropriate to my abilities.</p> <p>U There is enough time during the performance management training to learn and practice the new skills.</p>

Success Indicator	Questions
	V Overall, the skills taught through the performance management training will improve my performance.
	V The discussions with peers during the performance management training contributed to my learning.
	V The new performance management process will help improve my performance.
	V The performance management training was a good use of my time.
	V The new performance management process appears fair and honest.
	V Since creating my commitment for results, there are fewer obstacles to performing my job.

*U = Understand, V = Value, P = Perform.

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