PDP Communiqué

Performance-Driven Training: The Challenge of Measuring Success

Eugene J. Monaco,
Executive Director and Public Service Professor,
Professional Development Program

The public sector and not-for-profit organizations that PDP partners with continue to pay particular attention to accountability principles, such as customer expectations, internal business processes, resource utilization, cycle time, cost savings, quality, technology, and growth and learning. Meeting accountability standards and evaluating employee performance in the area of growth and learning is of considerable interest to PDP because it serves as a key indicator of the success of its training programs. How to measure what difference training makes in performance and outcomes remains a major challenge for assessing PDP's overall effectiveness as a training organization in the areas of employee growth and learning.

We do know that providing training for employee advancement has become of less value to organizations than development that ensures a skilled workforce, one that is productive and aligned to business objectives. Consequently, organizations are increasingly concerned that training investments are justified in terms of improved organizational outcomes. Therefore, evaluation models that measure the impact of training on organizational level outcomes are more valued (Koslowski, 2000). This shift demands that training meet organizational outcomes which have become the new norms for management. Training needs to be focused, effectively designed, and delivered in a manner that maximizes the transfer of learning to the job. This is not an easy task to accomplish, especially in public sector organizations.

Determining the link between learning and performance also challenges researchers. Over the past several decades, numerous studies have been done to measure the effectiveness of training as it relates to organizational outcomes. Some longitudinal studies have demonstrated that training increased objectively measured organizational productivity over time beyond the effects of prior organizational productivity (Holzer et al 1993 Zwick, 2006). At the same time, these studies have also found the effects of increased productivity obtained to be small. Other studies show that training has generated an organizational climate that better promotes employee commitment to the organization. This has been measured by better performance in support of the organization's objectives (Gelade and Ivery, 2003). Still other studies have attempted to demonstrate the Return on Investment (ROI) that training produces. Phillips' ROI fifth level evaluation (1997) is the most widely used process by which to evaluate training and performance improvement programs. Results

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
State University of New York

Carol Young — 2007 recipient of the PDP Distinguished Extended Learning Award of Excellence.

MARK SCHMIDT

VOLUME 20, SPRING 2008

Eugene J. Monaco, Executive Director and Public Service Professor

GEORGE DOWSE

of many of the ROI studies show that there continue to be serious issues in the effective measurement of the costs and benefits resulting from training (Murray and Etendioglu, 2007). Discussion on the best ROI formulas to use continues to be contentious.

The question then remains as to what are the best ways to approach measuring the effect of employee learning with quantifiable increased organizational performance. The 2007 *ASTD State of the Industry Report* has described a wide range of methods used by the BEST organizations, which include a total of 42 national and international companies who have aligned learning with performance. These approaches should be given serious consideration by organizations wanting to make inroads in the area of performance measurement by directly linking learning with performance. Some specific methods that these companies are using include employing corporate strategic plans to guide development and delivery of learning initiatives, establishing curricula tied to organizational goals, providing learning maps that link skill development to career progression, mapping individual roles to core organizational competencies, using surveys to identify employee learning needs and tying them to desired organizational performance outcomes, requiring a minimum number of training hours per employee, connecting training accomplishments with performance reviews, and requiring employees to have annual individual learning plans aligned with corporate strategy and goals. This is a rather aggressive agenda to follow, and not every situation may apply, but it is one that needs to be actively pursued if organizations are serious about accountability measurements and tracking performance improvement of employees. PDP plans to work closely with its sponsors over the coming year to track many of these performance indicators.

Did You Know?

- 88% of participants in a customized performance management program system reported their performance goals were now linked to organizational needs and 21% felt that the new performance goals had a positive effect on organizational outcomes.
  — imakenews.com

- In North America, 69% of companies surveyed fear they will experience a dearth of executive talent. Only 14% of the companies surveyed believe their workforces are capable of adapting to change, and only 6% of organizations are confident of their ability to assess their human capital and use it to make strategic decisions.
  — Workforce Management 2007

- In a recent Spherion study, 64% of workers said their level of commitment to their employer is based on the promise of long-term job security. 62% of workers said they have confidence in making a living outside of the traditional/corporate work structure and becoming a contractor, free agent or contingent worker (an increase of eight percentage points from 2003). 31% of workers plan to look for a new job in the next year. 37% of workers said they don't have the training needed to meet their career goals. 29% of workers said their company has put less effort into retaining employees and only 13% have put in more effort to keep them on the job.
  — Spherion study 2007

- The number of undergraduate computer sciences majors in the U.S. actually fell by 40%. Only 5 million new workers are entering an American workforce that is expected to lose 25 million over the next 12 years.
  — Paul Weinberg 2007

- Since 1956, nearly 60% of math and science laureates have been Americans. Nearly 30% of people with science and engineering degrees in the labor force are age 50 or older. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that by the year 2010, America will face a skilled-worker shortage of 8 million, increasing to approximately 14 million by 2020.
  — Industry Week 2007

Program Design for Accountability: Getting to Outcomes

Larry Pasti, Director, Bureau of Planning Design & Intervention, NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Accountability is a central feature of public policy, providing the foundation for reporting requirements, program evaluation, and the basis for effective management. Simply and directly — it's about results. Agencies have an obligation to customers and communities for producing results and being accountable for the use of public resources. Social service delivery in New York State occurs in what is referred to as a "locally administered" relationship. Responsibility for planning, resource allocation, and accountable service delivery is therefore shared by state and local government.
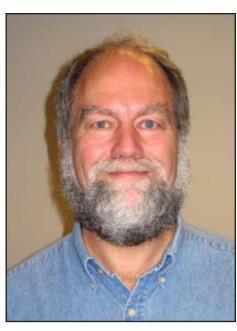
A renewed commitment to results is reflected in the new statutory requirement for performance or outcome-based provisions as part of any preventive services delivered pursuant to Section 409-a of the social services law beginning January 1, 2008. To support this commitment, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is working with the Professional Development Program (PDP) to provide counties with a range of learning experiences and technical assistance called Getting To Outcomes™ (GTO™). Designed to increase county capacity to implement outcome-based county level planning and delivery of child welfare preventive services, GTO™ was selected as an approach to be used in an intensive nine month training design with nine selected counties.

GTO™ incorporates the essential steps of planning, implementation, and evaluation in a set of ten accountability questions. The approach includes assessment of needs/resources, development of goals and outcomes, identification of best practices, assessment of fit with the community, assessment of capacity to deliver services, development of a plan, implementation (process evaluation), evaluation of participant outcomes (outcome evaluation), continuous quality improvement, and sustainability of the program. Designed to achieve results, GTO™ is useful with both individual programs and community level planning.

The length of training and technical assistance provided supports the county's application and use of GTO™ in their contracting and planning. When disseminating new ideas or models it is important to follow initial exposure to and training about the model with TA during implementation to enhance institutionalizing the approach. The training design includes a pre-visit with the county and a two-day workshop. This is followed by three additional onsite technical assistance visits supplemented by regular conference calls and contact over an eight-month period. There will also be a one-day "booster session" attended by all of the nine counties that will refresh the initial training and encourage sharing among the counties. Nine counties of the initial twenty-one that applied are involved in the first phase of training. Additional counties will be provided this opportunity in the future.

Other state agencies are also working with their county partners to improve outcomes and show results. OCFS will continue to connect with those efforts around common needs assessments, county planning, and integrated program development to better realize the common commitment to results.

Larry Pasti

This work builds upon a joint Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and OCFS effort last year in which twenty-nine staff from the two agencies received in-depth training on GTO™ over the course of a year. Additional training and support on other approaches to outcomes will also be provided. This recognizes that counties are at different levels in their use of outcome provisions. Developing county peer-to-peer learning will be one of the strategies employed. PDP is an important partner in this work, bringing in both their training expertise and the rich resources of the University. This initial rollout includes a subcontract partnership with one of the GTO™ developers and a team from Finger Lakes Law and Social Policy Center, Inc.

Performance Measurement: Ensuring Accountability

Marc Holzer, Dean, School of Public Affairs and Administration, and Executive Director, National Center for Public Performance, Rutgers University-Newark

Daniel Bromberg, Director, Public Performance Measurement and Reporting Network, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark

In early November 2007, the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University's Newark Campus, hosted the First Annual Public Performance Measurement and Reporting Conference. Key themes were reporting, technology, collaboration, and benchmarking. According to the conference presenters—a mix of scholars and practitioners—these were the core themes that the field of public management must continue to advance.

REPORTING—Performance reporting continues to be a subject of both great concern and great controversy. Although guidelines exist (The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) defines 16 criteria), there has been little consensus as to implementation. Reporting continues to take place in an inconsistent manner across the United States. Reporting is an essential part of performance measurement for citizens, elected officials, and managers. Reports must be consistent, be easily accessible, and involve multiple perspectives on each service area.

TECHNOLOGY—Some of the best practices arising in the field of performance measurement are technology-enhanced projects. The Performance Management Dashboard has aided the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board not only in measuring their performance but in reaching their performance goals. Other conference presentations demonstrated how technology-enhanced projects can increase the ease and visibility of performance reporting by facilitating the dissemination of performance information. The Web, combined with accessible software, now provides cost-effective modes of publishing and distributing performance measures on an accurate and timely basis.

COLLABORATION—Public managers cannot work alone in developing systems of performance measurement. Not only did the presenters stress citizen participation as an integral part of government performance measurement, but they expressed concern for a more integrated approach involving all stakeholders. Local politicians, business leaders and especially citizen groups must be involved in performance measurement. From the initial stages of developing performance measures to the concluding stages of reporting and soliciting feedback, collaboration must be emphasized. The distinctive characteristic of performance measurement is that it is not only a management tool, but a vehicle for stakeholder access to government.

BENCHMARKING—Benchmarking continues to trigger hesitation on the part of many public managers. Fears of unfair comparisons and media scrutiny inhibit managers' willingness to benchmark. Even so, at the conference, benchmarking emerged as a necessary component. An initial recommendation was that managers benchmark services against their own past performance. Advanced techniques are available, such as Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA), which is a step towards developing agency-specific benchmarks.

Performance measurement is not only a management tool. It is a mode of ensuring accountability. If done properly, performance measurement incorporates multiple stakeholders and provides easily accessible and accurate reports. It does not solve the problems associated with accountability in government. It does, however, add momentum toward true accountability. The First Annual Public Performance Measurement and Reporting Conference provided a venue for many of the above ideas in terms of discussion and exploration. There is, of course, much room for improvements in the measurement and reporting of public and non-profit services, and those efforts will themselves result in improved levels of service to the public. Please visit the Public Performance Measurement and Reporting Network website to download all presentations from the conference and join in the dialogue at http://ppmrn.rutgers.edu/. Membership in the Network is free and includes full text access to thousands of published resources.

Marc Holzer

Daniel Bromberg

4

News and Views

New Project Awarded to *PDP*

The Bureau of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Office at the NYS Department of Health recently announced that PDP has been selected to receive award of the Integrating Tobacco Use Interventions into NYS Chemical Dependency Services project. Work under this two-year, four-million-dollar project is slated to begin on January 1st.

Through this project, PDP will work closely with substance use disorder treatment and educational providers across the state to develop a statewide training program designed to assist treatment providers in implementing new tobacco control regulations and policies and integrating clinical interventions for tobacco dependency.

PDP Graphic Designer Leaving to Follow His Muse

For twenty-two years the work of George Dowse has graced a full range of Rockefeller College publications and materials: newsletters, brochures, posters, conference folders, and of course, the public face of PDP—the Communiqué. After a graphic design career spanning over three decades in the private sector and with PDP, George is moving on to devote time to his other pursuit—painting. An award-winning painter, George will be taking up his brush and palette full time. George reflected on his career at PDP, "I can't imagine a better place than PDP for a graphic designer like me to have worked for so long."

While many of his responsibilities have been part of planned projects, George developed a reputation for stunningly creative responses to unan-ticipated assignments. The public policy environment is dynamic—filled with emerging priorities, initiatives, and new and interesting problems to solve. This is the environment that we work in— one in which George has risen time and again to spontaneous demands for materials and special requests. Always calm, creative, and focused, George Dowse developed a reputation for results, high standards, and a ready smile. He taught us a lot about the power of graphics to communicate and how important it is to think about message and layout right from the start. When you read the *Communiqué* or see the PDP logo, brochures, or display materials, his hand is there.

"George has been a valued part of our success for a long time," remarked Executive Director and Public Service Professor Eugene J. Monaco, "He helped change the face of PDP. He will be missed."

PDP All Staff Meeting

Over 140 people were welcomed by PDP Executive Director and Public Service Professor Eugene J. Monaco to the annual PDP All Staff Meeting on October 26th. Held in the Campus Center Ballroom, it included a State of PDP Address; recognition of years of service; and the presentation of awards for Outstanding Trainer, Outstanding Team, and the Director's Award for exemplary performance in representing PDP. Highlighting the event was a presentation by UAlbany Assistant Vice President and Controller, Kevin Wilcox, who discussed the relationship between PDP and other university centers.

RON FANCHER

Kevin Wilcox, UAlbany Assistant Vice President and Controller
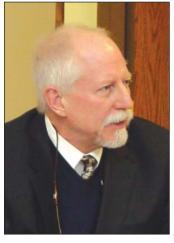
Extended Learning Leadership Award

MARK SCHMIDT

Pictured here with PDP Executive Director and Public Service Professor Eugene J. Monaco, Carol Young, Director of Continuing Education, School of Public Health, University at Albany (retired) and Associate Clinical Professor, Health Policy, Management and Behavior, received the 2007 PDP Distinguished Extended Learning Award of Excellence on November 14, 2007. Made annually, the award recognizes outstanding contributions and sustained commitment to excellence and public engagement in the field of continuing professional education.

PDP Hosts Fall 2007 Faculty Exchange

Education and training are particularly powerful mechanisms for policy implementation - the process of translating rules and regulations into operating programs. Twice each year the Faculty Exchange represents a conversation at the intersection of research and practice that explores the training implications of public policy issues.

On December 7th, a group of faculty, staff, and community members engaged in a stimulating conversation about the enormously complex issue of immigration. Brief presentations by Rey Koslowski, Associate Professor of Political Science, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy; Judith Saidel, Associate Professor of

Public Administration, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy and Executive Director, Center for Women in Government and Civil Society; and Deanna Cooper, Senior Education Specialist, Rockefeller College Professional Development Program, were followed by a spirited discussion moderated by PDP Assistant Director Kary Jablonka. Included in the session were immigration vs. immigrant policy; the notion of transnational communities; linking voices of new immigrant communities with the policy process; and the challenge of translating policy changes into effective training programs.

PHOTOS: GEORGE DOWSE

| Kary Jablonka | Judith Saidel | Deanna Cooper | Rey Koslowski |

PDP

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
State University of New York