

## Syllabus

### Course Overview

Evaluation is an integral part of the human performance improvement process. It can be used to help define performance gaps, and to ascertain the effect of performance interventions. However, evaluation is often perceived as taking too much time and adding costs and complexity. This is especially true in these fast-paced, budget-conscious times, where stakeholders want more action and less analysis. Evaluation is often a neglected process, but it is essential for two reasons: It can improve performance interventions and it can show how a particular intervention affects organizational performance.

Well-executed evaluations can add value to the performance improvement process by demonstrating the positive contributions of the interventions, including cost savings and improved business results. This requires evaluators to have technical skills to develop efficient and effective evaluations, as well as good communication and selling skills to convince stakeholders of the worth of the evaluation process.

### Evolving Levels of Evaluation

For the last several decades, Donald Kirkpatrick's four levels have been the guiding light for evaluation of learning. More recently, a fifth level has been added to address return on investment questions. With the shift from training to performance improvement, some authors are questioning how well these four or five level models serve evaluators today. This course is based on the Targeted Evaluation Process as defined by Combs and Falletta (*The Targeted Evaluation Process*, 2000). The core of the Targeted Evaluation Process is to join with stakeholders to identify specific evaluation questions and dimensions. This is a major deviation from most evaluation models, which are based on Kirkpatrick's four levels—reaction, learning, application, and results. In addition, this course emphasizes linking performance interventions with business results and evaluating the effect of the intervention in business terms.

This course provides an overview of several evaluation models and focuses on defining critical evaluation questions. These critical questions serve as the central core of an evaluation plan, guide selection of measurement tools, and provide an outline for reporting the evaluation results. Other topics include:

- Linking to business results.
- Working with stakeholders.
- Organizational context.
- Return on investment.
- Evaluation project management.
- Using technology for data collection.

In addition to your readings and discussions, you will work on a mock evaluation project for related performance improvement interventions. By the end of the course, you will have a complete evaluation plan and a final report of the evaluation results using mock data or actual evaluation studies.

#### Reference

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1562861409.

### Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Analyze and diagnose systems for performance strengths and deficiencies.
- 2 Evaluate workplace performance, learning strategies, and interventions.

### Course Prerequisites

*There are no prerequisites for this course.*

## **Syllabus >> Course Materials**

### **Required**

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

### **Integrated Materials**

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the [Course Materials](#) page on Campus for more information.

Miscellaneous Item

Access to this textbook provided by permission of authors Dr. Wendy Combs and Dr. Salvatore Falletta.

Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001). *Rapid evaluation* [PDF]. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 9781562862879.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 9781562861407.

Book

Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story: Evaluation made simple, credible, and effective*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler. ISBN: 9781576751862.

## Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). [Using evaluation to measure and improve the effectiveness of human performance technology initiatives](#). In J. Pershing (Ed.). *Handbook of human performance technology* (pp. 287–311). San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.
- Kaplan, R., & Norton, D. P. (2000). [Having trouble with your strategy? Then map it](#). *Harvard Business Review*, 78(5), 167–176.
- Phillips J. J., & Phillips, P. P. (2003). [Using action plans to measure ROI](#). *Performance Improvement*, 42(1).
- Phillips, J. J. (2006). [Return on investment measures success \[Electronic version\]](#). *Industrial Management*, 48, 2.18–23.
- Phillips, J. J., & Phillips. (2004). [Return to sender: Improving response rates for questionnaires and survey](#). *Performance Improvement*, 43(7), 40–44.
- Plant, T. E., & Douglas, J. S. (2003). [Strategic performance measurement: The case of Mississauga Transit](#). *Performance Improvement*, 42(5), 20–27.

## External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- [Balanced Scorecard Institute](#). (2013). Retrieved from <https://balancedscorecard.org/Home/tabid/495/Default.aspx>.
- Horton, W. (2001). [Chapter 7: Calculating return-on-investment](#). In *Evaluating e-learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD. Retrieved from <http://horton.com/consulting/evaluating/samplechapter.pdf>
- [International Society for Performance Improvement](#). null
- International Society of Performance Improvement (ISPI). [Code of ethics for certified performance technologists](#). Retrieved from [http://www.ispi.org/ISPI/Credentials/ISPI\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8b8db682-5734-4be7-b952-33fdbabfb78d](http://www.ispi.org/ISPI/Credentials/ISPI_Code_of_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8b8db682-5734-4be7-b952-33fdbabfb78d)

## Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

## Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

## External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Horton, W. (2001). [Perspectives of evaluation](#). In *Evaluating e-learning*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 9781562863005.
- Horton, W. (2001). [The value in evaluation](#). In *Evaluating e-learning*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 9781562863005.

- U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) <https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). [Summary of the HIPAA privacy rule](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html) <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html>

## Projects

### Project >> Intervention Evaluation

#### Project Overview

Training and Performance Improvement is a very systems-based approach to workplace performance. To carry out these interventions, you must be able to examine an organization, or a system, from a variety of strategic perspectives and construct interventions that focus on workplace performance. You will use individual assignments that are completed throughout this course to demonstrate this and to create the final project.

Each and every unit analyzes and evaluates the organization as a system through the context of performance interventions. You will be concerned with evaluation of typically high-level issues focusing on individual and workplace performance. Many assignments evaluate workplace performance, learning strategies, and interventions as they apply to improving personal and organizational performance. The focus of these assignments is on the measurement and evaluation theory, principles, and procedures. You will also be expected to demonstrate your ability to analyze and diagnose systems for performance strengths and deficiencies.

To make this project more valuable to you, try to use a real situation in either your present or past experience as the basis for this project. The setting for this project may be a work environment, a church group, a civic or volunteer organization, or any organized group of people who share a vision and goals. Since you will be posting information about your project for other learners to critique, please make sure that you do not use real names or places. For example, you may use a real situation as the basis for your evaluation plan but invent the data for the analysis and results sections. Or, you may have a real performance improvement problem in mind and need to invent the interventions as well as the data.

As part of the course project, you will conduct an evaluation of related performance improvement interventions. As you define the interventions, make sure that you have two or more interventions. At least one intervention should be a learning intervention and at least one should be a non-learning intervention. Make sure you are familiar with the interventions selected and the organizational environment for this mock evaluation project.

Your project will include an evaluation plan, project management plan, as well as conclusions and recommendations. You will select your topic in Unit 1 and then build up to the evaluation plan and project management plan due in Unit 7. In Unit 9, you will examine the return on investment (ROI) on one of your interventions. In Unit 10, you will have a chance to elicit feedback from your instructor and fellow learners before submitting your final project for grading.

Your final evaluation report and presentation should include each of the course building blocks completed in the previous units as listed below.

- Unit 1: Intervention descriptions.
- Unit 2: Impact maps, strategy maps, and measure of results.
- Unit 3: Stakeholder definition and organization context.
- Unit 4: Targeted evaluation questions.
- Unit 6: Measurement tools selection.
- Unit 7: Evaluation plan.
- Unit 8: Sections draft.
- Unit 9: ROI presentation.

These building blocks do not need to appear in this specific order, but they do need to be clearly identified within the paper. Also include a table of contents that lists the name of the building block and the page on which it is located.

NOTE: Combine the blocks into as few attachments as possible. For example, you may post a PowerPoint file for the presentation and one comprehensive Word document containing all aspects of the report.

## Unit 1 >> Evaluation Perspectives and Models

### Introduction

In 1959, Donald Kirkpatrick introduced a four-level model intended to clarify the various ways of evaluating learning and training interventions. The four levels are:

- Level 1: Reaction.
- Level 2: Learning.
- Level 3: Behavior.
- Level 4: Results.

With the transition from training to performance improvement, many evaluators have questioned the utility of this model for measuring non-learning interventions. Consequently, they developed new evaluation models with more emphasis on how learning and non-learning performance improvement interventions affect the business results of the organization. These newer evaluation models use Kirkpatrick's four levels as the standard of comparison.

In this unit, we will explore several evaluation models and discuss the myths and mistakes of implementing Kirkpatrick's four levels. We will also discuss why evaluation is often an overlooked component of human performance improvement.

### Readings on Evaluation Models

What is the value in evaluation? As you read the studies, think about the kinds of evaluation you have experienced. Have they been adequate? What, if anything, should be done differently? What are some factors that help or hinder evaluation programs?

*The Targeted Evaluation Process* by Combs and Falletta (2000) is the primary textbook for this course. Most of the course project learning activities will be based on the model described in this book. How does this model differ from Kirkpatrick's four levels, and why did the authors feel the need to change?

*Rapid Evaluation* by Barksdale and Lund (2001) describes another evaluation model. Much of the emphasis in this book is on organizational evaluation strategies, with occasional mention of strategies for evaluating individual performance improvement interventions. This book provides a good supplement to Combs and Falletta's *The Targeted Evaluation Process*.

*The chapter by Brinkerhoff (2006) considers how evaluation is a necessary activity in HTP interventions. For Brinkerhoff, the process of HPT interventions in organizational and individual performance is an inexact science requiring iterative strategies.* As you read this chapter, make an outline of the five-phases he lists for conducting an evaluation.

Brinkerhoff's model is continued in *Telling Training's Story* (2006).

*Evaluating E-Learning* by Horton provides the perspective of a particular type of intervention that has unique technological factors—which sometimes help and sometimes hinder evaluation. Note how evaluating e-learning interventions is similar to or different from evaluating other types of interventions.

Compare the steps in the evaluation models presented in the resources. Try to match the steps across these models. How are they similar and how are they different? What factors might cause you to choose one model over another?

#### References

Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001). *Rapid evaluation*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-287-1.

Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story: Evaluation made simple, credible and effective*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler. ISBN: 1576751864.

Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Handbook of human performance technology*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer. 287–311.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-140-9.

Horton, W. (2001). *Evaluating E-learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD. ISBN: 1-56286-300-2

## Learning Activities

### u01s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In the Barksdale and Lund text, [Rapid Evaluation \[PDF\]](#), read the preface and pages 1–14.
- In the Combs and Falletta text, [The Targeted Evaluation Process \[PDF\]](#), read the preface and Chapters 1–3.

## Optional Readings

You are not required to complete the following readings, but you may find them helpful as you work through the course:

- Horton, W. (2001). *Evaluating E-learning*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 9781562863005.
  - Chapter 1, "[Value of Evaluation \[PDF\]](#)."
  - Chapter 2, "[Perspectives of Evaluation \[PDF\]](#)."

### u01s2 - Optional Self-Assessment and Development Plan

In the Combs and Falletta text, *The Targeted Evaluation Process*, complete the self-assessment on page 29 and the performance evaluator development plan on page 31 (1a).

 **Portfolio Prompt:** You may choose to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources

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[ePortfolio](#)

### u01s3 - Your Online ePortfolio

Online ePortfolios serve two key purposes: 1) to support learning and reflection, and 2) to be used as a showcase tool. Your learning journey can be documented, and ePortfolios contribute to lifelong learning and growth through reflection and sharing. Online ePortfolios can also be shared with employers and peers to present artifacts that demonstrate your accomplishments at Capella.

## Using ePortfolio to Prepare for Your Capstone

Your program may culminate in a capstone course. At that time you may be required to show evidence of your learning throughout the program by referring to multiple assessments that you have created. You will be telling a story about your learning throughout the program using artifacts you have collected during many of these courses.

## Using ePortfolio to Build Your Career

As you are preparing to tell your story in the professional world, leverage your ePortfolio artifacts to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies you have gained through your program in professional conversations, performance reviews, and interviews.

To do that, reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained from your courses and the elements you have put in your portfolio, along with how you have already applied these things to your professional life or how you might apply them in the future.

Next, create your story or talking points to tell your professional story.

## Saving Your Documents to ePortfolio

You will need a place to store your documents in an organized fashion so that you can access them at a later date. Do not rely on the courseroom to store your assignments for you as you will lose access to the courseroom after you have completed the course. Capella uses a cloud-based portfolio platform to facilitate your organization of the artifacts you create throughout your program.

To make an online portfolio useful, it is essential that it is organized clearly and that important files of any format are accessible. Read the [Online ePortfolio Guidelines \[PDF\]](#) to ensure you set up your online portfolio correctly. For more information on ePortfolio visit the Campus [ePortfolio](#) page.

## Privacy Statement

Capella complies with privacy laws designed to protect the privacy of personal information. While you may voluntarily share your own information publicly, you are obligated to protect the personal information of others that may be associated with your academic or professional development. Before sharing information and material in any ePortfolio that is set up to be shared externally to your program at Capella, please consider privacy obligations in relation to protected populations who may be included or referenced in your academic or clinical work. Refer to the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) and/or the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#) if you have specific questions or concerns about your choices.

### u01a1 - Intervention Descriptions

For your course project, select a setting plus two or three interventions designed to improve workplace performance. For each of these interventions, you will plan an appropriate evaluation. At least one intervention must be a training intervention and at least one intervention must be non-training. Try to find two interventions that relate to the same performance issue, such as improving customer satisfaction with both customer service training (training intervention) and a new job aide (non-training intervention) for the customer service phone representatives.

This could be a project you worked with in another course, from your work environment, or a volunteer activity. Ideally, this will be a real situation. If you do not have a real situation to work with, review some case studies of performance improvement interventions from your readings in prior courses and define a fictional project modeled after one or more of these case studies. The gap analysis and cause analysis should already be completed and the interventions selected. Remember to select interventions and an organizational setting that you understand.

1. For this assignment, briefly identify the type of organization chosen and provide a preliminary description of the performance gap and cause analysis which led to these interventions. Remember that you will be posting this information, so assign a fictional name to the organization even if it is a real situation.
2. For each intervention, briefly describe the purpose, goals, scope, and expected results. This description should be no more than one page per intervention.

It is recommended but not required that you compile the building blocks into one paper as you proceed through the course. They should follow the order noted in the Project Components table. The building blocks need to be clearly identified within the paper using APA formatting guidelines. Also include a table of contents that lists the name of the building block and the page on which it is located.

Submit your paper in the assignment area for instructor feedback. **Note:** You will also post your paper to this unit's Feedback discussion for feedback from your fellow learners.

### u01d1 - Feedback

Post the short intervention description paper prepared for this unit's assignment. Be sure to give your evaluation project a fictitious, distinctive name that you will use throughout the course, and include this name in the subject line for your post.

Compare the models you read about this week in relation to your interventions.

## Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least two other learners, and respond with relevant feedback. Your feedback should include references to the models discussed in this unit's readings.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

**u01d2 - Evaluation**

Reflect upon the unit activities and your personal experiences with evaluation.

1. Compare the steps in the evaluation models presented in the readings this week. What are the major similarities and differences?
2. Based on your own experiences, what three steps across all the models have you encountered least often? What three steps have you encountered most often? Why do you think these are the most frequent steps?
3. What kinds of evaluation problems or challenges have you encountered in the past? (2i).
4. Why have few organizations conducted thorough evaluations of their performance improvement interventions?
5. As performance evaluation professionals, what can we do to change this situation? (1a).

## Response Guidelines

Read the posting of at least one other learner and respond with relevant feedback about the evaluation process.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

**u01d3 - Optional - Self-Assessment and Development Plan**

Based on the self-assessment and the performance evaluator development plan you completed in this unit's optional study, discuss the following questions.

1. Reflect upon the self-assessment and development plan. What are your general impressions of the assessment? Are there any results you would like to share?
2. Would you like some suggestions for a development strategy for a particular competency? List your questions here.

## Response Guidelines

Read the posting of at least one other learner and respond with relevant feedback. Include your response to your peer's questions concerning their development strategy.

 **Portfolio Prompt:** You may choose to save this discussion to your ePortfolio.

[ePortfolio](#)

## Unit 2 >> Focus on Results

### Introduction

The whole purpose of performance improvement interventions is to close a gap between the current and desired performance states. Ultimately, successful performance improvement leads to improvement in the financial standing and effectiveness of the organization. Thus, evaluation strategies need to include measures to show how the intervention affected an organization's performance. These results are not always measured in financial terms alone. The desired results may involve compliance with regulations, increased market share, customer retention, and other strategic goals of the organization.

This unit explores methods of linking interventions to an organization's performance and selecting appropriate measures to track improvement in the results. The topics in this unit are designed to help you link your interventions and evaluation plans to your organization's strategic goals and justify your performance improvement initiatives as integral components of operational plans. Two major techniques are featured: Brinkerhoff's (2006) impact maps define a line-of-sight relationship between skills and results. Kaplan and Norton (2001) use strategy maps and balanced scorecards to align interventions with organizational strategies.

## Linking Interventions to Strategies and Performance

As the emphasis shifts from training to performance improvement, the focus of evaluations must also shift from measuring learning to measuring how an organization is affected by the interventions. The primary goals are to link the interventions and evaluation measures to the main goals of the organization and to define the contributions of the interventions in terms that are meaningful to executives and other stakeholders. It is difficult to justify making investments in interventions that do not contribute to organization goals. Remember that organizational goals are not always monetary. They could relate to being good corporate citizens, increased market share, compliance with government regulations, or improved safety for consumers and employees. This unit explores a few of the many methods of accomplishing this shift.

As you complete this unit, reflect on the sequence of events such as planning evaluations, selecting measures, defining gaps, and selecting interventions. The models discussed in this unit have different orientations, and therefore address these events in different orders.

## Unit Readings

Brinkerhoff calls his approach the Success Case Method (SCM). He uses impact maps to define a line-of-sight between worker skills or job tasks and organizational goals. These maps apply to both training and non-training interventions. Pay particular attention to the three core components of impact maps: capability, knowledge and skills, and key results. These are important distinctions and should be included in your impact maps. In addition, there are many variations in impact maps, and the maps you create for your project should match your organizational structure and vocabulary. Take note that impact maps evaluate "the intended organizational outcomes" (Brinkerhoff, 2006). You will not be creating exhaustively detailed and complete maps showing all skills required. Only include the parts that illustrate the linkage between your interventions and organizational goals.

### Balanced Scorecards

This unit contains only a brief overview of strategy maps and balanced scorecards. There are entire workshops offered on these topics alone, and a wealth of information is available via the Internet. Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton published *The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action* in 1996. Since then, many companies jumped into developing balanced scorecards, with varying degrees of success. Kaplan and Norton (2001) studied the successful implementers and reported the results in a second book, *The Strategy-Focused Organization: How Balanced Scorecard Companies Thrive in the New Business Environment*. A key to successful implementation of balanced scorecards is to define corporate strategies, then align business units and initiatives with that strategy.

### Strategy Maps

Strategy maps are the tool used to define strategy and align initiatives with strategic themes. As you read these materials, pay particular attention to the structure of the strategy map (see template on page 96 of the Kaplan and Norton article). Also, pay attention to the relationship between the strategy map and the balanced scorecard. Study the example on pages 70–71 of a strategy map and balanced scorecard corresponding to one strategic theme. The balanced scorecard term *initiatives* are comparable to the term *interventions* in performance improvement jargon. The Balanced Scorecard Collaborative Web site offers a short multimedia tutorial on [strategy focused organizations \(SFO\)](#). You may also find many examples of strategy maps in the handouts for their Net conferences. These examples can also be found on other Web sites, and you only need to look at a few. You will need to use your time well and not get carried away with the plethora of sites dealing with balanced scorecards. You may want to note a few sites to explore later.

The final article describes a case study of strategic performance measurement applied at Mississauga Transit (Plant and Douglas, 2003). This case study shows some practical and relevant examples of performance measures and illustrates how these measures are linked to overall organizational strategies.

As you read these articles, think about how the techniques apply to your evaluation project. The project building block to complete during this unit is a description of how the interventions link to overall organizational strategy and selection of measures or indicators to track. Look for specific measures of results.

### References

Brinkerhoff, R. (2006). *Telling training's story*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1996). *Translating strategy into action: The balanced scorecard*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press. ISBN: 0-87584-651-3.

Kaplan, R., & Norton, D.P. (2000). Having trouble with your strategy? Then map it. *Harvard Business Review*; 78(5), 167–176.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2001). *The strategy focused organization*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press. ISBN: 1-57851-250-3.

Norton, D. P. (n.d.). [Learning center](http://www.bscoll.com/bsc_online/learning/). Retrieved from [http://www.bscoll.com/bsc\\_online/learning/](http://www.bscoll.com/bsc_online/learning/)

Plant, T. E., & Douglas, J. S. (2003). Strategic performance measurement: The case of Mississauga Transit. *Performance Improvement*, 42(5). 20–27.

#### Course Resources

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Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story: Evaluation made simple, credible, and effective*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler. ISBN:9781576751862.

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Kaplan, R., & Norton, D. P. (2000). [Having trouble with your strategy? Then map it](#). *Harvard Business Review*, 78(5), 167–176.

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Plant, T. E., & Douglas, J. S. (2003). [Strategic performance measurement: The case of Mississauga Transit](#). *Performance Improvement*, 42(5), 20–27.

### Learning Activities

#### u02s1 - Studies

## Readings

Complete the following readings:

- In the Barksdale and Lund text, [Rapid Evaluation \[PDF\]](#), read pages 15–19.
- In the Brinkerhoff text, read "Chapter 5: Constructing a Simple Impact Map Training Model" pages 71–82 and pages 164–165.

Read the following articles:

- Plant and Douglas, "[Strategic Performance Measurement: The Case of Mississauga Transit](#)." 7 pages.

The following required reading is available full-text in the Capella University Library. Search for the article by clicking the linked title and following the instructions in the Library Guide.

- Kaplan, R., & Norton, D. P. (2000). [Having trouble with your strategy? Then map it](#). *Harvard Business Review*, 78(5), 167–176.

#### u02s2 - Balanced Scorecard Collaborative

Review the resources available from the [Balanced Scorecard Institute](#):

- About the Balanced Scorecard.
- Articles and White Papers.
- Examples and Success Stories.
- The Nine Steps to Success.
- Performance Management.

#### u02d1 - Impact Map

Following the guidelines provided by Brinkerhoff (2006), create an impact map showing the linkage between each selected intervention and the organizational goals for your evaluation project. You may create an impact map for each intervention or combine them into one map. Remember the authors' caution that impact maps are evaluations against organizational goals. (1a, 1b, 1d and 2f).

When complete, post the impact map. Describe any issues or questions you had as you completed the impact map. Do you have any specific questions for your fellow learners or instructor?

## Response Guidelines

Read the posting of at least one other learner and respond with relevant feedback. Respond to your fellow learners' questions, if applicable.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

### u02d2 - Results and Measures

Based on the impact map, strategy map, or balanced scorecard created in the unit activities, write a short paper, approximately one paragraph per intervention that describes how the intervention is linked to organizational results, and what the appropriate measure or measures are for tracking success. Be specific about the key business metrics that relate to your interventions. Are these measures routinely recorded now and if so, how frequently? Write this paper as a section in your overall evaluation plan. Include your impact map, strategy map or balanced scorecard with the paper.

## Response Guidelines

Read the posting of at least one other learner, and respond with relevant feedback.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

### u02a1 - Results and Measures

Based on the impact map, strategy map, or balanced scorecard created in the unit activities, write a short paper, approximately one paragraph per intervention that describes how the intervention is linked to organizational results, and what the appropriate measure or measures are for tracking success.

- Be specific about the key business metrics that relate to your interventions.
- Are these measures routinely recorded now and if so, how frequently?
- Include a short introduction to remind readers of the client setting.
- Write this paper as a section in your overall evaluation plan, which you will create later. Submit your paper in the assignment area.

**Note:** This paper will also be posted for feedback in this unit's Results and Measures discussion (1a, 1b, and 2f).

### u02d3 - Optional - Map or Scorecard

If you are working with an organization that has already created strategy maps and balanced scorecards, obtain copies that include initiatives corresponding to the interventions in your evaluation project. If necessary, amend the organizational scorecard to include your interventions. Be sure to change to your fictional organizational name and places. If you do not have an existing strategy map or scorecard, you may make a rough outline of a strategy map or a balanced scorecard table for the organization and interventions in your evaluation project.

Choose the one with which you have the least experience, define the alignment of your interventions with the organizational strategy (to the best of your knowledge), and identify the potential measures (1a, 1b, 1d). **Note:** You are not expected to hold meetings with stakeholders and create comprehensive strategy maps or balanced scorecards.

When complete, post the strategy map or balanced scorecard.

## Unit 3 >> Stakeholders and Organizational Context

### Introduction

Interventions are not implemented in a sterile laboratory environment, but rather in a real world filled with other events and people who have their own goals, issues, and opinions. This unit introduces the Success Case Evaluation technique that will help you gather information about the contextual factors influencing performance.

The first two steps in the Targeted Evaluation Process (Combs & Falletta, 2000) are:

1. Partnering with stakeholders.
2. Understanding the intervention and organizational context.

Several of the readings in Unit 1 stressed the importance of partnering with stakeholders and improving communications with all parties. Stakeholder support is critical to the success of any evaluation project. Equally important is an understanding of the organizational context in which the interventions are implemented and the evaluation conducted. In this unit, we will explore both of these topics. You will use checklists to help identify the stakeholders and context for your evaluation project.

### The Role of the Stakeholder

It is people who make organizations work, and it is these people who are the stakeholders in your intervention. Who are the key players for your project? What are their expectations and priorities? You need to understand how all the various players feel about the interventions and how they can affect or be affected by the interventions. You need to build a deliberate plan to win sponsors and supports for your project. You also need to analyze the risk of excluding some stakeholder groups from participating in the evaluation planning and design.

### Organizational Context

Training and performance improvement projects do not occur in isolation. Both internal and external factors can influence the success of interventions and the success of an evaluation project. You also need to consider the effect of organizational values, mission, strategy, culture, political climate, market position, policies and procedures, problem history, and experience with similar interventions. The Targeted Evaluation Process provides a handy job aid to prompt an analysis of the organizational context.

### Success Case Evaluation

The chapters by Brinkerhoff (2006) present yet another model for evaluation—Success Case Evaluation. This model is compatible with the Targeted Evaluation Process and provides a good transition into this unit because it stresses the fact that interventions are implemented as part of a larger performance system. Any evaluation of an intervention must also include the overall performance system and organizational environment factors. The Success Case Evaluation methodology helps identify the influence of the larger performance system. As you are reading these chapters, consider how the same techniques can be used for non-training interventions as well.

### Applying Stakeholder and Context Information to Evaluation

It is critical to think through these factors at the beginning of a project and plan for contingencies. This knowledge will help formulate important evaluation questions and help you interpret the results. Knowledge of stakeholders will guide communication activities throughout the project, as well as smooth the way for implementing the evaluation activities. During this unit, you will document some information about stakeholders and organizational context that will help you communicate with your fellow learners. Later in the course, you will edit this document to create a diplomatic version for inclusion in the formal evaluation plans and reports, which in the real world are intended for a broad distribution.

- Planning Note: While this is a relatively short unit, the next one is long. As a result, you may wish to get a head start by reading Chapters 4–8 in *The Targeted Evaluation Process* (Combs and Falletta, 2000) and by skimming Chapters 4–8 in *Rapid Evaluation* (Barksdale and Lund, 2001) and Brinkerhoff (2006) pages 17–55 and 60–61 "Meet and Discuss the Study with Key Stakeholders."

#### References

Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001), *Rapid evaluation*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-287-1.

Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2005). Chapter 13: Using evaluation to measure and improve the effectiveness of human performance technology initiatives. Pershing, J. (ed.) *Handbook for human performance technology*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer. ISBN: 10: 0-7879-6530-8.

Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story*. San Francisco: Berrett Koehler.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-140-9.

#### Learning Activities

##### u03s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In Brinkerhoff, read pages 17–55: Chapter 2, "How the Success Case method works: Two Basic Steps," and Chapter 3, "Success Case Method Strategy-Building Organizational Learning Capacity."
- In Brinkerhoff, read pages 60–61 from Chapter 4, "Meet and Discuss the Study with Key Stakeholders."
- In the Combs and Falletta text, [The Targeted Evaluation Process \[PDF\]](#), read pages 15–18 covering Steps 1 and 2.
- In the Barksdale and Lund text, [Rapid Evaluation \[PDF\]](#), read Chapter 3, "Communicating and Gaining Commitment to the Strategy," pages 51–56.

##### u03a1 - Stakeholder Definition and Context Assessment

Write a short paper that:

Part 1: Defines the stakeholders for your evaluation project. Include the following information with subheadings:

1. Clearly list the stakeholders for each intervention and for the evaluation project itself. Be as specific as possible in identifying people without mentioning real names; just mention their roles.
2. In the Combs and Falletta text, use Table 2-2 on page 16 to inventory the information needs for each stakeholder.
3. What are the expectations and priorities for each stakeholder with respect to the interventions and the evaluation?
4. Of the total list of stakeholders, whom would you invite to a meeting to define the target evaluation questions? Why did you choose those stakeholders?
5. What are the risks of not including each of the stakeholder groups in the evaluation design?

Part 2: Describes each of the organizational context factors, using Table 2-3 on page 17 in the Combs and Falletta text. Include a separate summary of the organizational context as it relates to each of the interventions.

When complete, submit your paper in the assignment area.

##### u03d1 - Stakeholder Definition and Context Assessment Draft

Post your draft of this unit's assignment, the Stakeholder Definition and Context Assessment. After receiving feedback from your instructor and peers, submit your assignment by the deadline.

## Response Guidelines

Once you have posted your assignment draft, read the draft of at least one other learner and give scoring guide-based feedback.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

### u03d2 - Success Case Evaluation

What do you think about the success case evaluation method? How have you used similar techniques in the past? In what ways might this technique be more successful than traditional statistical evaluation techniques? What might be some impediments to implementing success case evaluations?

## Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least one other learner, and respond with relevant feedback regarding success case evaluations.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 4 >> Evaluation Questions and Dimensions

### Introduction

In previous units, you have defined the interventions, linked them to the overall organizational strategy, identified key stakeholders, and defined the organizational context. Now it is time to be specific about what will be included in your evaluation project and what will be excluded. This is accomplished by identifying appropriate evaluation questions in concert with your key stakeholders. Each stakeholder has unique insight into the intervention and overall performance system that can generate important and meaningful evaluation questions.

## Asking the Right Questions

In *The Answer to How Is Yes: Acting on What Matters*, Peter Block (2002) states, "Getting the question right may be the most important thing we can do" (p.13). This unit focuses on getting the questions right. For the moment, we will set aside the issue of how we will answer these questions and concentrate on formulating the questions themselves. Sometimes there is a tendency to gather and analyze data because it is easy to do or because it has always been done that way. On the other hand, sometimes we avoid certain evaluation questions because they are difficult to measure. These pitfalls can increase costs and reduce the value of the evaluation. However these pitfalls can also be avoided if we focus on the right questions.

Why are you conducting this evaluation? What do you hope to gain? What is the scope of the evaluation? These questions define the overall evaluation project. It is also important to involve your stakeholders in making these decisions and planning the project. Think about the Mississauga Transit case study described in Unit 3. How did they use stakeholders to define the targeted evaluation questions?

## Unit Readings

During this unit, you will complete Step 3 of Combs and Falletta's (2001) Targeted Evaluation Process—targeting evaluation questions and identifying evaluation dimensions. As you read the learning activities in *The Targeted Evaluation Process*, pay attention to the differences between broad evaluation dimensions and specific evaluation questions.

You have already read the Brinkerhoff article "Using evaluation to measure and improve the effectiveness of human performance technology initiatives" in Unit 1. You will find some very good examples of specific evaluation questions on pages 299, 301–2, 303, 305–6, and 309. Consider the applicability and implications of these questions to your project.

As you skim the sections in *Rapid Evaluation* (Barksdale and Lund, 2001), focus on gathering ideas for evaluation dimensions and targeted evaluation questions. Also, reflect on the nature of the evaluation levels defined by Kirkpatrick and whether or not they imply certain evaluation dimensions.

As a final part of this unit, review the Knowledge Management discussion on pages 79–84 of *The Targeted Evaluation Process*. Are there any intellectual capital metrics that might relate to your evaluation project?

#### References

Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001). *Rapid evaluation*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-287-1.

Block, P. (2002). *The answer to how is yes: Acting on what matters*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Brinkerhoff, R. (2006). Using evaluation to measure and improve the effectiveness of human performance technology initiatives. In *Handbook of human performance technology* (pp. 287–311). San Francisco: Pfeiffer. (Coursepack). Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-140-9.

### Learning Activities

#### u04s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In Combs and Falletta text, [The Targeted Evaluation Process \[PDF\]](#), review step 3 in Chapter 2 (pages 18–20), and read Chapters 4–8, pages 35–84.
- In Barksdale and Lund text, [Rapid Evaluation \[PDF\]](#), read pages 18–23 and Chapter 2 (pages 31–50). Then skim Chapters 4–8 (pages 57–126), focusing on ideas for evaluation dimensions and targeted evaluation questions relevant to your course project.

Review the following material:

- In Brinkerhoff's chapter, "[Using Evaluation to Measure and Improve the Effectiveness of Human Performance Technology Initiatives](#)," from the *Handbook of Human Performance Technology*, review pages 299, 301–302, 305–306, and 309. Note: *The Handbook of Human Performance Technology* can be accessed through the Capella University Library, where you can download Chapter 13.

#### u04a1 - Evaluation Questions

Compile an organized list of targeted evaluation dimensions and questions for your interventions. Use the suggested table in the Project Template.

- Remember that the targeted evaluation questions define the purpose and focus of the evaluation. They are not specific questions to include on a survey.
- Group similar targeted evaluation questions by evaluation dimensions.
- Use the Evaluation Questions and Dimensions template to guide your completed work.
- Limit the number of evaluation questions for each dimension to no more than five.

**Note:** This is another building block that will eventually become part of your written evaluation plan for your course project. When you have completed the assignment, submit your questions in the assignment area. This table will also be posted for feedback in this unit's Feedback on Questions discussion (1a, 1d, 2f, 1b, 2d, 1f, and 2f).

#### Course Resources

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Targeted Evaluation Questions Template

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Targeted Evaluation Questions Example

#### u04d1 - Feedback on Questions

Post your list of evaluation dimensions and targeted evaluation questions from this unit's assignment.

- Reflecting upon your situation, describe some of the reactions you might expect from stakeholders at a brainstorming session to define targeted evaluation questions. How might you handle the situation?
- What feedback would you like from your fellow learners on your posted evaluation dimensions and targeted evaluation questions? (1a, 1d, 2b, 2f, 1b, 2d, 1f, and 2f).

## Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least two other learners, and respond with relevant feedback. Pay particular attention to the type of feedback requested from your fellow learners. Be sure to address each of their requests.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 5 >> Evaluation Tools, Technology, and Techniques

### Introduction

Much has been written about measurement, and some researchers specialize in this topic alone. Combs and Falletta (2000) provide a good, concise overview of this topic as it relates to the targeted evaluation process. They include step-by-step procedures and helpful checklists for selecting and developing measurement tools. As you are reading through this chapter, consider how you might use each type of tool (surveys, interviews, focus groups, observation, key business metrics, and knowledge and performance assessments) for your course project.

### Unit Readings

Step 4 in *The Targeted Evaluation Process* is "Designing the tools, technology, and techniques" (Combs & Falletta, 2000). In Unit 4, we addressed the importance of *what* to ask. In this unit, we turn to the question of *how* to measure. You will identify appropriate tools and technology to measure each of your targeted evaluation questions. The readings in this unit provide a number of helpful checklists for critiquing your evaluation tools. You will also explore creating and delivering surveys via the Web.

The *Rapid Evaluation* text (Barksdale & Lund, 2001) provides additional worksheets and job aids to help you select and create appropriate measurement tools. While most of this material was skimmed in Unit 4, we will now focus our attention on the tools.

Finally, the article by Phillips & Phillips suggests effective strategies for improving survey rates.

### Online Surveys

A major part of this unit is the creation of a 10 item survey that you will eventually implement via a web-based survey tool. You will create the contents of the survey and you will search the Internet and select an online survey tool to use. You will then implement the survey online and send notices to your sample population to access and complete the survey. Ideally, this survey will be relevant to your course project. If possible, use a real world situation with a real survey sample. You always have the option of using your fellow learners, instructor, family, and friends as your survey participants. If this is the case, be sure that you gear the questions to your audience. You will report on the results of this survey in Unit 8.

#### References

Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001). *Rapid evaluation*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-287-1.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-140-9.

Phillips, J. J., & Phillips. (2004). Return to sender: Improving response rates for questionnaires and survey. *Performance Improvement*, 43(7), 40–44.

### Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In the Combs and Falletta text, *The Targeted Evaluation Process*, read Chapter 9.
- In the Barksdale and Lund text, *Rapid Evaluation* [PDF], read Chapters 2, 4, and 5. Note: You skimmed Chapters 4 and 5 in Unit 4. This time, focus on the evaluation tools.

Read the following article:

Phillips, J. J., & Phillips, P. P. (2004). *Return to sender: Improving response rates for questionnaires and survey*. *Performance Improvement*, 43(7), 40–44.

## u05d1 - Short Online Survey

### Survey Development

Select a topic and target audience for a short survey that you could use for your project. You can administer this survey to your friends, colleagues, and other learners in this class to collect data that you will be analyzing in Unit 8. Write at least two targeted evaluation questions on this topic. To measure these questions, create at least ten survey items and instructions and provide a short introduction to the survey to help your instructor and fellow learners provide appropriate feedback. In the introduction, include the context, target population, and targeted evaluation questions.

### Select an Online Survey Tool

Conduct an Internet search for "online survey tools" and explore at least five Web sites for online tools. Many of these sites offer free trial versions for a limited time. Select a tool to use for your online survey. You will deliver your survey using this tool in Unit 6.

What online survey tool did you select? Briefly describe your rationale for selecting this tool. Provide a Web address for others to locate this tool.

### Initial Posting

Post the following elements:

- Short introduction.
- Two targeted evaluation questions, at least ten survey items, and instructions for taking the survey.
- Name, Web address, and rationale for your online survey tool.
- Any issues or questions you had as you created this survey.

### Response Guidelines

In your Combs and Falletta text, using the checklist on page 90 as a guide, review the draft surveys and provide constructive feedback. Try to view each survey from the vantage point of the target population, and also for the stakeholders. Provide relevant feedback to at least two of your fellow learners.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 6 >> Evaluation Tools, Technology, and Techniques Continued

### Introduction

Units 4 and 5, explored what to measure and how. Now we will turn our attention to selecting the appropriate tools and technologies to measure each of your targeted evaluation questions. More and more surveys are delivered via the Internet for all sorts of purposes. Even for interventions that do not use technology, consider the wide range of technological options, such as optical scanning, phone, fax, e-mail, and Internet software when planning your measurement tools. You will also administer the online survey started in Unit 5.

## Learning Activities

### u06s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In Barksdale and Lund text, *Rapid Evaluation* [PDE], read Chapters 6–9 focusing on the evaluation tools.

### u06s2 - Preparation - Gathering and Analyzing Data

In preparation for the assignment in Unit 8, you need to create your online survey based on the targeted evaluation questions you created in Unit 5.

Revise the survey questions based on the feedback received from your instructor and other learners. Using the survey tool you selected, create an online survey with the revised items. Be sure to link your survey questions to the targeted evaluation questions chosen for the survey you developed in Unit 5.

Follow the instructions for the online survey tool that was selected, and invite people to complete the survey online. Keep track of how many people you ask to complete the survey and the number or percentage of respondents. Be assertive about asking your instructor and class members to respond to your survey. Send the invitation via e-mail with the link to the survey tool. Also invite as many other friends, family members, and colleagues as appropriate.

**Note:** Trial versions of online survey tools have time limitations (sometimes only ten days), so you should complete this activity near the end of Unit 6 and follow up at the beginning of Unit 8. In between, you can monitor the response rate and keep track of the time remaining. Be sure to download the results of the data collection before the administration period has closed.

Course Resources

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Measurement Tool Selection Example

### u06a1 - Measurement Tools Selection

Identify at least one measurement tool for each of the targeted evaluation questions documented for your course project (in the Unit 4 Evaluation Questions assignment).

- Write a paper using a combination of narrative and tabular format to document your selections. Be sure to include an introduction and summary.
- Identify the following components for each evaluation question:
  - Measurement tools.
  - Contents of measure.
  - Population.
- Use the Measurement Tools Template and Example to guide your work.

When complete, submit your work in the assignment area.

Course Resources

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Measurement Tool Selection Template

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Measurement Tool Selection Example

## u06d1 - Measurement Tools Selection Discussion

Post your Measurement Tools Selection from this unit's assignment as an attachment. Describe any issues you had as you completed the measurement tools. What feedback would you like from your fellow learners on your measurement tools?

### Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least two other learners, and respond with relevant feedback. Be sure to address the requests of the learner when responding.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 7 >> Evaluation Plans and Project Management

### Introduction

In planning your evaluation, you will complete the last part of Step 4 in *The Targeted Evaluation Process* (Combs and Falletta, 2000) by considering techniques of evaluation research design, sampling strategy, and tool reliability and validity. Careful attention to these evaluation techniques is necessary to improve the meaningfulness and credibility of the evaluation results.

### Measurement Tools

In the previous unit, you selected measurement tools for each of your targeted evaluation questions. Now you will need to decide when, where, and how often these tools will be implemented. For example, will you take critical measures both before and after the intervention? Will you identify a control group to help isolate the effects of the intervention? Will you need to measure everyone's performance or just take a small sampling?

Next you need to consider: How good are your measurement tools? Consider the concept of reliability—will the tool always give you the same result even when administered by a different person or a second time? This is extremely important if the measures are to have any credibility. Validity is another important concept. Are you really measuring what you think you are measuring? The data collected is meaningful only if the measurement tools are valid.

The purpose of evaluating interventions is to build the business case for continuing the intervention and to build credibility for initiating similar interventions in the future. To withstand scrutiny, the evaluation plan must collect the appropriate data at the appropriate time from an appropriate sample while using valid and reliable tools.

### The Evaluation Plan and Management Plan

The evaluation plan, which you create in this unit, integrates and expands the course project building blocks you produced in earlier units. It is comparable to an evaluation plan you would propose to an internal or external client in the real world. In this unit, you will also create a project plan to manage the implementation of the evaluation. The management plan should address issues such as cost, schedule, risks, and resources. It should also include tools for tracking progress against the plan. Project management is an entire subject in itself, and many people make project management their profession. This area requires a great deal of attention to detail, and ideally, the evaluation will be integrated with the design and development of the interventions themselves, under one overall evaluation plan. In this unit, we will focus primarily on identifying all the evaluation-related tasks to be performed and in establishing a general schedule.

#### Preparing for the Unexpected

"The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men, gang aft agley" (Robert Burns, 1785). We live and work in the real world and things do "go oft astray." Budgets are reduced, resources are unavailable, key sponsors leave, and yet the evaluation must go on. It is wise to consider some possible risks and potential contingencies. What issues might arise, and what can you do to either avoid them or deal with them when they happen? Take the time to do a risk analysis of your evaluation and project management plans. Be prepared.

Together, the evaluation plan and the management plan mirror the real-world activities of planning, implementing, and managing an evaluation project. The evaluation plan is worth 10% of the course grade. The corresponding project management plan is worth 5% of the course grade. In this unit, you will post both of these plans to receive feedback from your peers and instructor. You should then incorporate the feedback received. You will be asked to post the revised plans in Unit 10.

## Reference

Burns, R. (1785). *To a Mouse, On Turning Up Her Nest with the Plough*.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development. ISBN: 1-56286-140-9.

## Learning Activities

### u07s1 - Studies

Read the following excerpts from your textbooks:

- In the Combs and Falletta text, *The Targeted Evaluation Process*, read pages 104–109, which cover techniques, and Chapter 12 on managing evaluation projects (pages 131–136).
- In the Barksdale and Lund text, *Rapid Evaluation [PDF]*, read pages 23–30 and Chapter 10 (pages 135–140).

### u07a1 - Evaluation Project Compilation and Management Plan

If you have not done so already, compile a complete evaluation plan for your course project incorporating any relevant feedback received from your instructor and fellow learners in previous unit activities. You have completed items 1 through 7 on the list below in previous units. Now as part of this assignment, you will complete items 8 through 17 and then submit the completed plan.

To review, your document should include the following elements clearly labeled:

1. Title page.
2. Table of contents.
3. Introduction, including a description of the chosen organization and performance gap.
4. Description of interventions including the purpose, goals, scope, and expected results.
5. Description of how each intervention is linked to business results, and what the appropriate measures would be for tracking success.
6. Description of the purpose of the evaluation. Provide a list of the evaluation dimensions and targeted evaluation questions to be addressed. Explain any deliberate omissions.
7. Description of data collection plans including the following 5 components:
  - Description of measurement tools including type, technology used, length, and cross-reference to targeted evaluation questions.
  - Evaluation design including timing of measurement and use of control or comparison measures. Incorporate into this discussion any plans to continuously evaluate ongoing interventions.
  - Sampling strategy.
  - Discussion of plans to verify the reliability and validity of the measurement tools.
  - Discussion of issues such as risks, constraints, and potential ethical dimensions.
8. A task breakdown showing evaluation tasks such as:
  - Create each measurement tool.
  - Gather data with each tool.
  - Analyze data.
  - Document results.
  - Present results, conclusions, and recommendations.
9. A timeline (Gantt chart) indicating when each task will be performed and how it fits with the overall development and implementation of the interventions.
10. Identification of resources needed for each evaluation task.
11. Roles and responsibilities.
12. Discussion of risks and contingency plans to ameliorate their effect.
13. Plan and tools for monitoring progress.
14. Plans for communication and problem escalation.
15. Summary, including reference to the corresponding project management plan.
16. References.
17. Appendices (if appropriate).

When complete, submit your paper in the assignment area.

### u07d1 - Evaluation Plan

Post the evaluation plan created for this unit's assignment (1a). Describe any issues or questions you had as you completed the evaluation plan. Do you have any specific questions for your fellow learners or instructor?

## Response Guidelines

Read the draft of at least one other learner, and respond with scoring guide-based feedback. Be sure to address the requests of the learner when responding.

## Unit 8 >> Gathering and Analyzing Data and Reporting Results

### Introduction

Once you have planned your evaluation, it is time to create and implement your measurement tools. After that, the next step is to interpret the results of the evaluation and communicate these results to the stakeholders. This is a critical part of the overall evaluation process that requires analytical and investigative skills to properly interpret the results and to make sure you have not overlooked some key factor. As you gather and analyze the data, you may uncover some surprises in the results. Tact and diplomacy are also important skills when writing the results, recommendations, and conclusions. The evaluation report itself may be the most visible part of the entire intervention to some of the stakeholders. It needs to clearly communicate the context and findings. Well-executed evaluations can enhance the credibility of evaluators and performance technologists.

## Data Analysis and Statistics

There are many books and courses on data analysis and statistics. There are also many Web sites with interactive tools on this topic. Some of the online survey and assessment tools have built-in statistical analysis tools. Consequently, this unit does not go into depth on statistical analysis, but rather provides an overview of data types and appropriate descriptive statistics.

In this unit, you will create a miniature, but complete, evaluation report based on your online survey (Unit 5). This will give you an opportunity to analyze real data you have collected. For the complete course project, you will probably not have the opportunity to collect and analyze all the data, so you will have to invent some of the results in order to proceed with the rest of the unit. Inventing data is permissible here only because of the time limitations of this unit, and the logistics involved. If, on the other hand, you do have access to real evaluation data, then use it. Real data will often yield unanticipated results and makes the interpretation and recommendations much more interesting and meaningful. In real life however, you should never invent data, as it is highly unethical.

For each of the measures in your evaluation plan, you will need to determine what kind of data you have collected and how to analyze it. These results then need to be interpreted. Especially when you obtain unexpected results, you may need to look for explanations such as unanticipated events, poor tool quality, or other data to explain the results obtained.

## Conclusions and Communication

Once you have analyzed the data and interpreted the results, it is time to draw some conclusions and make recommendations. This, of course, is the purpose of the evaluation. Communicating the results, conclusions, and recommendations also requires careful analysis. Go back to Unit 3 and look at your analysis of the communication needs for each of the stakeholders. This should provide guidance on how much detail to provide for each person. Both of the primary texts for this course (Combs and Falletta, 2000; Barksdale and Lund, 2001) also provide outlines of evaluation reports.

In general, you will need a comprehensive written final report of the evaluation as well as a short executive summary. Both of these pieces, the report and presentation, are required in your course project. In this unit you will draft the data analysis, interpretation of results, conclusions, and recommendations sections for the final evaluation report of your course project. You will post this final report in Unit 10.

## Ethical Issues

Many choices are made during the course of planning and evaluating interventions, and sometimes ethical issues arise. For example, informed consent was not obtained from the participants, misleading information regarding the evaluation was given to the participants, the promise of confidentiality was not kept, or the owner of the evaluation is under pressure to deliver only positive results. Professional societies such as the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) and Association for Talent Development (ATD) have provided a Code of Ethics to guide your choices. Review your evaluation plan and try to anticipate what ethical issues might arise.

### References

- Alden, J. (2006, May/June). Measuring the "unmeasurable." *Performance Improvement*.
- Barksdale, S., & Lund, T. (2001). *Rapid evaluation*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development.
- Brinkerhoff, R. O. (2006). *Telling training's story: Evaluation made simple, credible and effective*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development.
- International Society of Performance Improvement (ISPI). (2002). *Code of ethics for certified performance technologists*. Retrieved from [http://www.ispi.org/ISPI/Credentials/ISPI\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8b8db682-5734-4be7-b952-33fdabafb78d](http://www.ispi.org/ISPI/Credentials/ISPI_Code_of_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8b8db682-5734-4be7-b952-33fdabafb78d)

### Learning Activities

#### u08s1 - Studies

Complete the following readings:

- In the Combs and Falletta text, *The Targeted Evaluation Process*, read Chapters 10 and 11 (pages 111–129).
- In the Barksdale and Lund text, *Rapid Evaluation [PDF]*, read Chapters 11 and 12 (pages 141–153).
- Read the "Code of Ethics for Certified Performance Technologists" on the [International Society of Performance Improvement \(ISPI\) website](http://www.ispi.org/ISPI/Credentials/ISPI_Code_of_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8b8db682-5734-4be7-b952-33fdabafb78d).

#### u08a1 - Gathering and Analyzing Data

Draft the methodology and results section of the final evaluation report for your course project. If you have actually collected data, then analyze that data now. If you do not have actual data, then invent the summary data for each measure including sample size, mean, mode, median, range, and summary of open-ended comments.

- Make sure some of the measures yield unexpected results to create a more interesting discussion of your report.
- Include a discussion of the analysis of the data for each of your measurement tools. What statistical analysis and comparisons did you do? What results did you get? Include tables, charts, and graphs as appropriate.
- Provide some interpretation of the results and performance data and the effect of a possible intervention on customers, suppliers, and employees.
- Describe any anomalies revealed and any follow-up investigation you have done to understand the results obtained.
- Describe any issues, such as an event that interfered with the intervention, and thus, skewed the results obtained.
- Include a summary of the results obtained from the evaluation.
- Include a section for conclusions and recommendations.

When complete, submit your paper in the assignment area.

### Course Resources

## u08d1 - Analyze Results

Refer back to the online survey you created and implemented in the Unit 6 Preparation - Gathering and Analyzing Data study. Explore the data analysis and graphic presentation available with the online survey tool you selected. Print out the data analysis reports if you can and, if possible, download the results to your own computer so that you can include them in your evaluation report.

Create a short evaluation report. You may only have one short paragraph for some of the sections as it only covers one short survey and not a full-blown evaluation project. Be sure to include the actual survey items (1b, 1d, 2g, 2h, and 2i).

Post your compiled report with the data analysis reports. Describe any issues or questions you had as you completed the online survey and analysis of results. Were you satisfied with the return rate and the data collected? Do you have any specific questions for your fellow learners or instructor?

## Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least one other learner and respond with relevant feedback. Be sure to address the requests of the learner when responding.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## u08d2 - Ethical Issues

Consider the following ethical topics in a short paper. In your discussion, address factors that lead to the issue, ways to avoid the issue, and responsibilities of performance evaluators. If appropriate, share experiences you have had in the past, but be sure to use fictional names of people and organizations (2e).

- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Obtaining informed consent.
- Withholding intervention from a control group.
- Pressure to produce positive results.

## Response Guidelines

Read the postings of at least one other learner and respond with relevant feedback.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 9 >> Return on Investment (ROI)

### Introduction

In a world of tight budgets, more senior executives are asking if the dollars spent on training and performance improvements are worth it. To answer these questions, increasingly, chief learning officers and performance improvement consultants are being asked to calculate the return on investment (ROI) for their interventions and initiatives. In this unit, you will explore several different ways of determining ROI for training and non-training interventions.

Executives are accustomed to seeing an ROI analysis before they undertake strategic initiatives. Performance consultants can increase their credibility by demonstrating a positive ROI for their interventions. The perception of training and performance improvement might even change from only an expense to an investment with positive results.

After an intervention has been implemented, another ROI analysis should be done. This can provide support to roll out the intervention in other parts of the organization, or increase the likelihood of gaining support for other similar interventions in the future.

## Cost and benefit discussion

In the preparation of ROI analysis, it is not uncommon to encounter soft data, which seemingly cannot be easily measured using statistical tools. This data often has significant impact on the success of the intervention project. To accurately analyze program costs, it is important to consider if the soft data is credible and if it can be linked to other hard data or statistical measures. Phillips, Phillips, Stone, & Burkett (2007) encourage connecting hard and soft data to validate program benefits.

Please note that normally a project management plan would include cost data, but this is being omitted from this exercise due to time constraints and its coverage in the ED7675 ROI course.

## Isolating ROI

For more information on ROI in training and performance improvement, please search other Internet articles and books about ROI. ATD, Performance Improvement and the optional articles section of this course provide excellent additional resources.

### References

Association for Talent Development (ATD). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.atd.org>

International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI). (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.ispi.org>

Phillips, P. P., Phillips, J. J., Stone, R. D., & Burkett, H. (2007). *The ROI fieldbook: Strategies for implementing ROI in HR and training*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

### Course Resources

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[International Society for Performance Improvement.](#)

## Learning Activities

### u09s1 - Studies

Complete the following:

- In the Barksdale and Lund text, [Rapid Evaluation \[PDF\]](#), read pages 111–113.
- In Brinkeroff (2006), read "Drawing Compelling Conclusions," pages 133–155.
- Read Horton's (2000) "Chapter 7: Calculating Return-on-investment" in [Evaluating e-learning](#).
- Read the article "[Return on Investment Measures Success](#)," by J.J. Phillips (2006).
- Read Phillips and Phillips's 2003 article [Using action plans to measure ROI](#) in *Performance Improvement*, volume 42, issue 1, pages 24–33.

### u09s2 - Evaluation Report and Presentation

Continue to work on your evaluation report and presentation for your course project. Also, if you have not already done so, you should update the evaluation and project management plans submitted in Unit 7 based on the feedback received from your instructor and other learners.

### u09a1 - ROI Presentation

Create a visual presentation summarizing your evaluation report to deliver to upper management and sponsors of the evaluation effort. Include each course building block component as listed in the project description.

- Gear your presentation to the known interests of the stakeholders.
- Focus on the gathering of data on costs and benefits activities involved in demonstrating potential return on investment (ROI).
- Indicate if the interventions had a positive impact on the department or organization. It is not necessary to calculate the actual ROI; simply discuss the benefits and costs which would be involved in an actual calculation.
- Create handouts as appropriate to support your presentation. Use a presentation application such as Microsoft PowerPoint. You will post this presentation for your peers to read and discuss in this unit's Presentation of Project discussion.

Submit your presentation in the assignment area and Presentation of Project discussion area.

### u09d1 - Presentation of Project

Post your presentation as an attachment. Describe any issues or questions that emerged as you completed the presentation. Do you have any specific questions for your fellow learners or your instructor?

## Response Guidelines

Read and respond to one or more postings by your fellow learners. Try to think of other potential areas of benefit that should be included. Can you suggest ways to quantify their non-financial costs and benefits? (1a, 1d, 2i, 2d, and 2i).

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

### u09d2 - ROI Discussion

Write a short paper contrasting the evaluation of results models Phillips and Brinkerhoff's Success Case Method. How would the use of either model affect the results of your project? How would the Phillips and the Brinkerhoff models assist with the presentation of the intangibles or soft data of your project?

## Response Guidelines

Read and respond to at least one posting by your fellow learners.

Course Resources

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Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

## Unit 10 >> Posting Projects

### Introduction

In this unit, you will post your course project and have the opportunity to receive feedback from your instructor and fellow learners. If you want feedback on specific aspects of your course project, state these areas when you post the project in the discussion area. You will then have the opportunity to make any necessary revisions based on the feedback you receive.

## Learning Activities

### u10a1 - Intervention Evaluation

Complete your final evaluation report and presentation. This report should include each of the course building blocks completed in the previous units as listed here.

- Unit 1: Intervention descriptions.
- Unit 2: Impact maps, strategy maps, and measure of results.
- Unit 3: Stakeholder definition and organizational context.
- Unit 4: Targeted evaluation questions.
- Unit 6: Measurement tools selection.
- Unit 7: Evaluation plan and project management plan.
- Unit 8: Sections draft.
- Unit 9: ROI Project Presentation.

These building blocks do not need to appear in this specific order, but they do need to be clearly identified within the paper. Also include a table of contents that lists the name of the building block and the page on which it is located. **Note:** Combine the blocks into as few attachments as possible. For example, you may post the PowerPoint file for the presentation and one comprehensive Word document containing all aspects of the report.

When complete, submit your paper in the assignment area.

 **Portfolio Prompt:** You are required to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources

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[ePortfolio](#)

### u10d1 - Optional - Feedback on Evaluation Project

Post a draft of your final evaluation report and ask for feedback on specific areas from your fellow learners.

### u10d2 - ePortfolio Confirmation

Continual updating of your ePortfolio is critical to the completion of your degree. It is important that you add files to your ePortfolio as you progress through your program, as you will eventually lose access to your courses and the files in them. Return to the assignment area for your course project and ensure that you have added your final deliverable to your ePortfolio.

Post a statement to this discussion indicating that you have uploaded your file to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources

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[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

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[ePortfolio](#)