Kirkpatrick first created the framework of the Four-Level Training Evaluation Model while working on his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin in 1953. At that time, little knew the lasting impact that this model would have. One remarkable feature of the Four Levels is the way in which the model is concerned and grounded in the premise that training outcomes are the result of the application of training evaluation at each of its seven components. It provided a much-needed solution for measuring the impact of training and was simple, logical, and innovative. Its focus on outcomes (i.e., learning) rather than processes (i.e., how well the trainer delivered their training) X, Y, Z, or context, or how easy it was to register, etc., remained with educators.

An interesting feature of the model and the attribute that makes it so useful is the idea that you always start with the end in mind and work backwards from the desired training outcomes that will measure employee performance. This journey involves the building of the course design, course development, and delivery methods. The approach is focused on moving backward to demonstrate how managing employees actually apply learning to the job to improve outcomes on the employee’s outcomes. After meeting his doctors, Kirkpatrick began to present his research at conferences and in workshops across the country, and in 1959, the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), now known as the Association for Talent Development (ATD), has been the primary advocate for various Kirkpatrick’s evaluation model in the ASTD journal’s ASDD. The rest is history as the Four-Level Training Evaluation Model became associated with the training and development world. The model became easily understood and continues to be universally accepted as the most effective way to measure training outcomes.

Today almost all organizations engage Training professionals throughout the world are deeply familiar with the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model a reality. Few have been able to successfully implement Level 3 (behavior), fewer can implement Level 4 (results) to evaluate the organizational impact of their training. Grasmund, Level 3 and 4 have always been difficult to achieve without a resource commitment and commitment toward evaluative research.
On-going program evaluation is central for assessing program effectiveness and making informed decisions, whether you are creating new or modifying existing training.

In the 1970s, PDP began using the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Evaluation Model to systematically conduct evaluation of PDP’s educational and training programs. The Kirkpatrick Model has served as a valuable method to systematically conduct evaluation of PDP’s educational and training programs. Kirkpatrick Level 1 evaluations are the most straightforward of the four sequential levels. This level measures the learner’s reaction or satisfaction with the course. A specifically designed Participant Reaction Questionnaire (PRQ) is completed by the learner at the end of each course. The PRQ is designed to evaluate classroom training; however, with the development of PDP’s online and web-based courses, an additional PRQ was created to capture the unique aspects of online learning. The PRQ is a self-assessment tool that allows learners to rate the training using a scale and opens-ended questions that allow learners to provide their own responses. In the past few years, PDP has used QSR International NVivo for Windows commercial evaluation and assessment software. This rich qualitative data provides useful insights from learners in their own words.

Over the years, a majority of PDP training programs have used Level 2 evaluations, particularly when tasks are routine and that afford multiple times. This level measures the amount of knowledge and skills that are acquired as a result of the training program. Knowledge tests are administered to learn about the training and after the training. This method is the most commonly used at PDP, with a post-test only design being the most frequently used. A major advantage of this format is that it reduces the burden of retesting for nearly all test with knowledge questions and requirements on the participants to evaluate their training program. Kirkpatrick Level 3 evaluations focused on determining the impact of training programs on state agencies and their employees. PDP’s gathering of data about performance measures and the scores and learning gains are calculated for training groups. PDP used Level 3 tests to gauge if gain in specific training program that could be improved in the future and if the training is meeting the expected demands of the learning. In recent years, PDP has increasingly focused on developing and conducting Level 3 evaluations because there is a pressing need to demonstrate the positive transfer of training knowledge and skills to the workplace. PDP used Level 3 evaluations for nearly all of its training programs. However, due to the large number of participants, the Level 3 evaluation is delivered in different occupational areas, ranging from large group meetings to smaller workshops. The Level 3 evaluation uses a combination of multiple-choice, open-ended, and a post-program essay. PDP and the course instructor designed a rubric that was used to evaluate both assignments. In 2014, PDP launched various projects to enhance the evaluation of PDP’s training programs. PDP’s goal was to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of training programs and to meet the increasing demands of its clients. PDP’s current Level 3 evaluation use follow-up surveys that are sent to learners 90 days after completion of the training. Learners will report the extent to which they have been using the training knowledge and skills in their jobs. Results from these evaluations indicate that learners are using the new knowledge and skills on the job. Future plans for this level include conducting follow-up surveys with the learners’ supervisors for their input.

Kirkpatrick Level 4 evaluations are the most challenging evaluations to conduct. PDP has not used this level but it remains a goal. Kirkpatrick’s Level 1 evaluations are the most straightforward of the four sequential levels. This level measures the learner’s reaction or satisfaction with the content. Kirkpatrick Level 2 evaluations are the easiest to evaluate the effectiveness of its different continuing professional education and training programs. PDP continues to grow and change over time. Thus, the organization and its training programs need to be evaluated at regular intervals to ensure that they are meeting the needs of its clients. PDP conducted an online survey with the supervisors of LDP participants ninety days after the program’s completion. The survey included questions that measured whether the employee had used the knowledge and skills acquired in the program. The survey results indicated that employees indeed used the knowledge and skills acquired in the program and to measure individual improvement levels, and thus allow us to comprehend the aggregate analysis of the data. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. A problem well defined is a problem that can be clearly measured and evaluated for effectiveness. 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In its working partnership between the NYS Governor’s Office of Employee Relations (ER) and Office of Mental Health Professional Enquiry (OMH-ER) in 2014, PDP and the Office of Mental Health (OMH) employees. In order to evaluate how well participants mastered the learning objectives, they were required to write a pre-program essay and a post-program essay. PDP used the Kirkpatrick Model to evaluate the program and initiated an evaluation that was used to evaluate both assignments.

PDP calculated the normalized learning gain between the pre- and post-program essay. The learning program was able to improve participants’ writing abilities by 33% and demonstrate improvement in the participants’ proficiency. Learning programs that can lead to something successfully.

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In its working partnership between the NYS Governor’s Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Office of Employee Engagement (OME) Employee Fulfillment (ALF-CIO) Project, the Public Service Workshops Program (PSWP) provide a wide range of training and professional development programs for PDP- supported staff at the OMH. The PSWP, because of its unique position within the OMH, is able to provide training services directly to its employees. The training is delivered in different occupational areas, ranging from leadership, management, and evaluation to technology, information technology, law, and counseling, and as well as in training in new workforce skills.

In 2014, PDP launched various projects to enhance the evaluation of its training programs. PDP’s goal was to improve the evaluation of its training and to provide feedback that is more useful and allow us to take actions that are more effective. Questions can lead to movement, learning is constructed, active, and change by generating action, and teaching and training are only effective if they promote learning.

The workshop concluded that is more useful and allow us to take actions that are more effective. Questions can lead to movement, learning is constructed, active, and change by generating action, and teaching and training are only effective if they promote learning.

In the 1970s, PDP began using the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model. This model is straightforward of the four sequential levels. This level measures the learner’s reaction or satisfaction with the training program. It is typically assessed through post-training questionnaires or interviews. Level 1 evaluations are usually conducted soon after the training and can be used to determine the degree of participant satisfaction. PDP uses Level 1 evaluations for nearly all of its training programs and has found that these evaluations are a useful tool to identify areas for improvement. Level 2 evaluations are conducted after the training and measure the learner’s retention of the training material. Level 2 evaluations are used to assess the effectiveness of the training program. Level 3 evaluations assess the impact of the training program. Level 4 evaluations measure the results or impact of training on the organization. This is the most challenging evaluation to conduct. PDP has used Level 4 evaluations infrequently, particularly for programs that are offered multiple times. Level 4 evaluations are designed to measure the long-term impact of the training program.

In working with the CPST, it was challenging to establish and operate any (new) organization. Common questions emerge as you are creating new or modifying existing training. Who are we? Where are we going? Can we get there cheaper, faster, and better? How will we know when we get there?

Office of Mental Health Professional Writing Skills Program

Between April and June, PDP organized and delivered a six-day writing skills program for selected Office of Mental Health (OMH) employees. In order to evaluate well participants mastered the learning objectives, they were required to submit a pre-program assignment and a post-program essay. Participants were asked to design a rubric that was used to evaluate both assignments.

PDP calculated the normalized learning gain between the pre and post-program essay scores and determined that the program was able to improve participants’ writing abilities by an average of 30%. Evaluation at Level 4 concluded that they had improved their performance. When looking at specific learning objectives, PDP found that participants perceived a clear and concise essay by 60%. They also improved their ability to present a well-structured thesis by 80%.

The next OMPH Professional Writing Skills Program learning gain evaluation will use the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model to draw our assessment strategies and personnel to evaluate both levels of the model. The Kirkpatrick Model is designed to allow learners to rate the training using a scale and open-ended questions that allow learners to provide their own responses. In the past few years, PDP has used QSR International NVivo for Windows, a qualitative computer program, to analyze open-ended data. This data can provide useful insights from learners in their own words.

On-going program evaluation is central for assessing project effectiveness and making informed decisions, whether you are creating new or modifying existing training. Evaluation tools should be used consistently by all the trainers, and trainers should share the feedback with participants.

For over four decades, the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model has been a standard for evaluating the effectiveness of training programs. It is a straightforward model with four sequential levels. Level 4 evaluations measure the results or impact of training on the organization, which is the most challenging evaluation to conduct. PDP has used Level 4 evaluations infrequently, particularly for programs that are offered multiple times. Level 4 evaluations are designed to measure the long-term impact of the training program.

In working with the CPST, the challenges of establishing and operating any (new) organization were clearly evident. Common questions emerge as you are creating new or modifying existing training. Who are we? Where are we going? Can we get there cheaper, faster, and better? How will we know when we get there?

Lessons from this workshop highlight how fundamental monitoring and evaluation are; it is difficult to manage or change what you don’t monitor or evaluate. This is true of skill, knowledge, and ability to do something. Continuous Quality Improvement is a part of monitoring and evaluation, it is something that is constantly being improved.

PDP conducted an online survey with the supervisors of the CPST Delegation in Kenya. Over the years, a majority of PDP training programs have used Level 2 evaluations, particularly for programs that are offered multiple times. This level measures the learning that occurs as a result of the training program. Knowledge tests are administered to learners before and after the training. This method is the most commonly used at PDP, with a post-test only design being used least frequently. A majority of PDP’s supervisors agree that Level 1 evaluations are useful for nearly all training programs and knowledge questions and answers are the most useful form of knowledge evaluation. Level 2 evaluations are used to measure the greatest needs of our sponsors. The evaluation of training activity, program components, and the evaluation of knowledge tests is critical in the improvement of training programs. Level 1 and 2 evaluations are an essential tool for trainees to understand the impact of their training program.

In recent years, PDP has increasingly focused on developing and conducting Level 3 evaluations because there is a need to accurately measure individual improvement levels, and thus allow us to comprehend the aggregate analysis of the data. The workshop concluded with the following key points from participants:

- Training is needed so that training is an only affective if they are learning.
- Learning is constructed, active, and change by generating action, and teaching and training are only effective if they promote learning.
- Evaluation tools should be used consistently by all the trainers, and trainers should share the feedback with participants.
- Lessons from this workshop highlight how fundamental monitoring and evaluation are; it is difficult to manage or change what you don’t monitor or evaluate. This is true of skill, knowledge, and ability to do something.
Kirkpatrick first created the framework of the Four-Level Training Evaluation Model while working on his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin in 1953. At that time, little knew the lasting impact that the model would have. One remarkable feature of the Four Levels is the one with which the model is concerned and that underlies all of its parts: the impact. In this instance, it provided a much-needed solution for measuring and evaluating training outcomes that was simple, logical, and innovative. Its focus on outcomes (i.e., impact) of learning rather than processes (i.e., how well the trainer delivered the program X, Y, Z, or how content, or how easy it was to register, etc.) was revolutionary.

An interesting feature of the model and the attributes that make it most useful is the notion that you always start with the end in mind and work backwards by identifying the outcomes you want to see and then designing the program that will get you there. Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model is a metaphor for training professionals to think critically about the training they deliver. The model was designed to be an ongoing process for continuous improvement.

Today almost all organizations engage in Level 1 (reaction) and Level 2 (learning) evaluations as part of their assessment process. Very few have been able to implement Level 3 (behavior) or can implement Level 4 (results) to evaluate the organizational impact of their training. In what is always a difficult process, Kirkpatrick used his framework to demonstrate how training professionals can move beyond satisfaction and more closely align their efforts with organizational needs. This model, with its focus on measuring training outcomes, has been repeatedly shown to be a valuable tool for training professionals.

Kirkpatrick’s work is celebrated, not just for its lasting impact on the field of training and development, but for the way it paved the path for future generations of trainers. Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model has become the benchmark for evaluating training. The four levels are:

1. Reaction: How satisfied is the learner with the experience?
2. Learning: How much knowledge and skill did the learner acquire as a result of the experience?
3. Behavior: How much has the learner changed as a result of the experience?
4. Results: What impact has the change produced on the organization?

While percent change measures the difference between the pre- and post-test scores, the normalized learning gain is the ratio of the group’s scores to the maximum possible rating score.

This year's evaluation initiatives have proven fruitful; Donald Kirkpatrick, a leader in the field of learning and development, is recognized as the creator of the framework for a system, process, and metrics to assess the impact of training. Kirkpatrick's framework has proven to be a remarkable contribution that has influenced the field for more than half a century. This issue of the PDP Communiqué is dedicated to Kirkpatrick and the numerous contributions he made to the training profession.

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PDP was awarded a 2014 APEX Award for Publication Excellence for Morgan Publishing, a Media and Print Company. This award is given for those of the Year in Progress Need to Know Series: "Managing Stress, "Human Trafficking, " and "Managing Your Money." APEX Awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence. PDP Receives 2014 APEX Award for Publication Excellence for Morgan Publishing, a Media and Print Company. This award is given for those of the Year in Progress Need to Know Series: "Managing Stress, "Human Trafficking, " and "Managing Your Money." APEX Awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence. The Need to Know Series is your one-stop, topic-specific, informational guide that addresses specific needs and is developed for busy professionals who need to stay on top of today’s newest trends.

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PDP Request an Electronic Version

In an effort to support the University at Albany’s mission to “go green,” you can elect to receive the Communiqué as an electronic format instead of a paper copy. Individuals who would prefer to receive this publication in an electronic format instead may email: newsletter@pswp.edu.

News and Views

PDP Receives 2014 APEX Award

PDP is proud to recognize Dr. Philip McCallion, Distinguished Continuing Professional Education Leadership Award of Excellence. McCallion is the Executive Director and Public Service Professor, Professional Development Program. Kirkpatrick passed away in May 2014 at the age of 90, leaving behind a legacy that is not only unparalleled on the field of learning and development, but also inspired McGraw-Hill’s ongoing efforts in training evaluations. Replicating his impact on the field of learning and development, and training will be similarly because which is effectively measures training impact, is without a doubt a formidable contribution and will forever be associated with his name.

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Kirkpatrick first created the framework of the Four-Level Training Evaluation Model while working on his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin in 1935. At that time, little knew the lasting impact that this model would have. One remarkable feature of the Four Levels is the ease with which the model is understood and adopted around the world. Over the years, the simplicity of the model has made it easy to evaluate training programs and has been a logical, practical, and innovative. Its focus on outcomes (i.e., impact of learning rather than processes), how well the trainer delivered their program, the impact, or how easy it is to register, etc., is an invitation to use educational tools.

An interesting feature of the model and the attribute that makes it so useful is the notion that you always start with the end in mind and work backwards to determine the desired training outcomes that will measure employee job performance. This serves as a guide to building courses, designing development programs, and developing delivery methods. This approach to evaluating training outcomes demonstrates how managers effectively evaluate employees by applying the Kirkpatrick model to job performance.

After meeting his doctoral advisors, Kirkpatrick began to present his results at conferences and workshops across the country, and in 1955, the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), now known as the Association for Talent Development, (ATD) has been meeting on introducing Kirkpatrick’s model to the ASTD annual meeting. The result of this process, the ATD model, became an integral part of both the training and development. This is to become the benchmark for evaluating training. The four levels are:

1. Reaction
   - How satisfied is the learner with the experience?
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Training professionals throughout the world are deeply indebted to the work of Kirkpatrick. Honoring his legacy will mean striving to integrate Levels 3 and 4 evaluations into the organizations that they serve and committing to making the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model a reality.

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