

TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION: RESEARCH SUMMARY

Background

The lack of follow-through in applying learning objectives from training programs delivered online plagues corporations here in the U.S. and worldwide. Research has shown that 60 to 90 percent of the job-related skills and knowledge imparted in all training programs are not being implemented at all. Organizations can spend valuable resources providing online training programs but there is no way that training can benefit the organization if it is not applied by the trainee. The question of how to ensure that the knowledge imparted in training programs gets applied for the benefit of the individual and the organization motivated this study.

Implications

It is troublesome to consider that such a simple question could be easily dismissed given the amount of resources being spent on training programs and the growing popularity of online training events. It is in the best interest of organizations to study how to ensure that the knowledge imparted in training programs gets applied. Without understanding what strategies can be included to allow learners to apply the knowledge when they are back on the job, the probability of the program's success and thus the return on the training investment is significantly diminished.

Methodology

A mixed-method doctoral research study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania evaluated the compliance of learning objectives of two groups, a treatment group (n=19) and a control group (n=21). Both groups received the same online training program but only the treatment group received a specific action planning instructional strategy focused on helping the individual comply with the learning objectives. The quantitative data was collected from survey questions measuring the level of compliance with the learning objectives 30 and 45 days post training. The qualitative data was obtained from semi-structured interviews with the trainees who participated in the study.

Research Findings

The quantitative data indicated that the treatment group was more successful in applying the learning objectives from baseline than the control group at both the 30-day follow-up and the 45-day follow-up. The use of the action planning instructional strategy was established in the qualitative data as the reason for the increase in application of the learning objectives.

Qualitative data revealed the usefulness of using an instructional strategy like the action plan because engaging in this process:

- ◆ Forced learners to consider their own shortcomings and identify significant obstacles to the accomplishment of learning objectives
- ◆ Made them feel pressure to follow through and comply
- ◆ Made them consider the importance of personal responsibility

In conclusion, utilizing instructional strategies that focus on the application of knowledge can:

- ◆ Eliminate or shorten the "knowing-doing" gap
- ◆ Allow for the verification of the understanding of the training content by documenting how the learning objectives will be applied
- ◆ Get learners to commit to apply what they have learned on their own terms
- ◆ Allow for the evaluation of learner's performance against what they committed to

About Us

Turning the knowledge imparted in training programs into action is essential to the success of any training program. Gaining a deeper understanding of what works best to ensure the application of knowledge is what Facilitador is all about. We are constantly asking ourselves: what strategies can we include to allow learners to extract the knowledge they need when they are back on the job from this learning experience?

To learn more, contact us at (954) 455-5866.