

Strategies for Transfer of Quality Practices

Beth Rous, Ed.D.

University of Kentucky

STAGES OF TRANSFER PROCESS¹**Intention to Transfer**

This is the motivation of staff to apply new skills and knowledge to his/her workplace. If staff leave the learning environments with little or no intention to apply what was learned, then it is highly unlikely they will demonstrate a high degree of transfer.

Initiation

Refers to attempts to apply any aspect of what was learned. However, just because application of new knowledge/skills is attempted, application of new knowledge/skills will not necessarily be maintained.

Partial Transfer

Partial transfer occurs when 1) only some of the knowledge/skills learned are applied and/or 2) when some or all of the newly learned knowledge/skills are applied inconsistently, from time to time.

Conscious Maintenance

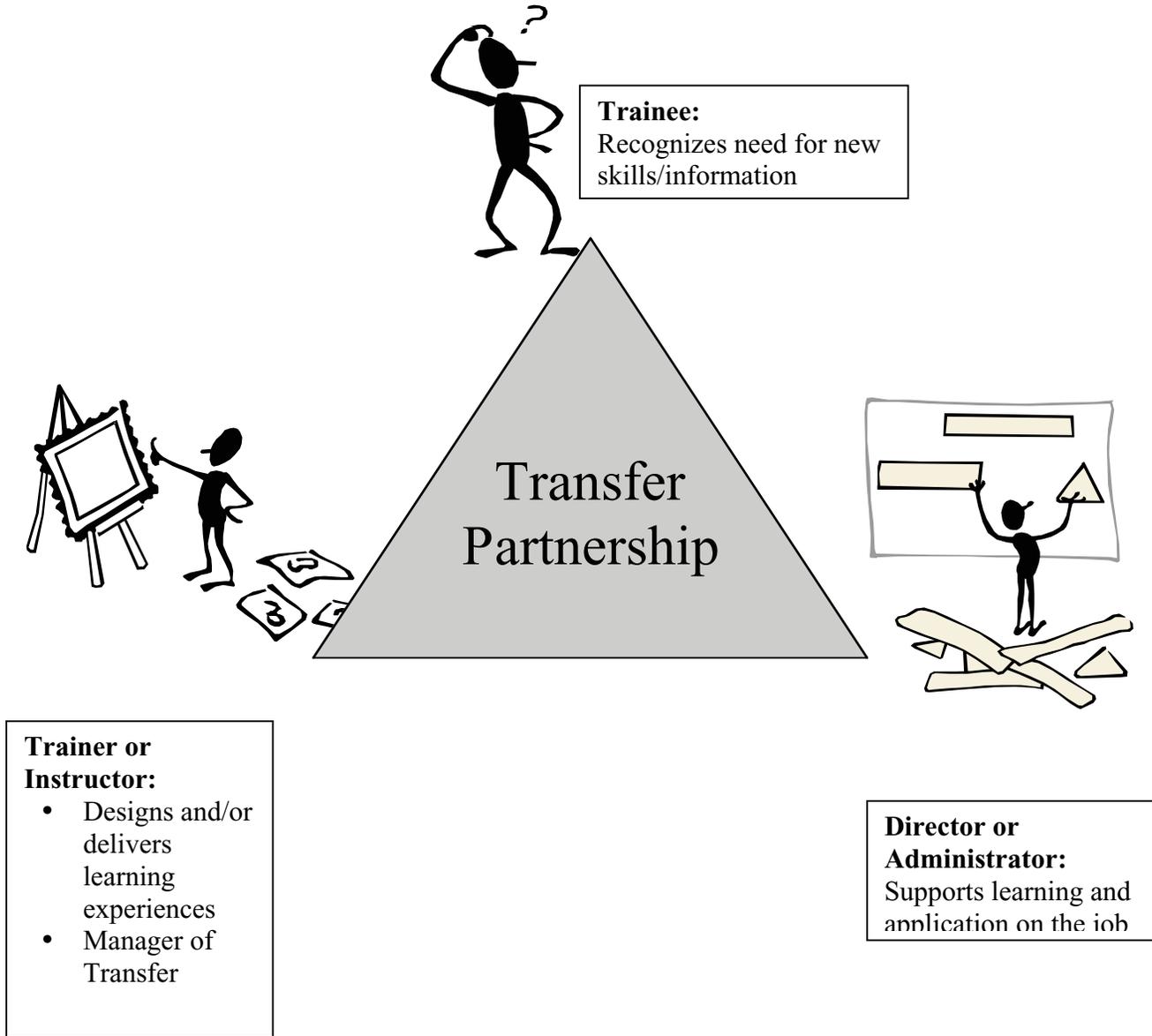
During this stage, the learner makes a conscious decision to apply what was learned on the job over a period of time so that job performance is permanently enhanced.

Unconscious Maintenance

During this last stage of the transfer process, the learner has fully incorporated the new skills/knowledge into his/her repertoire of work behaviors and therefore applies the new skills/knowledge unconsciously without making a conscious decision to do so. At this stage, transfer has been successfully completed.

¹ Source: Foxon, M. (1993). A process approach to the transfer of training. Part 1: The impact of motivation and supervisor support on transfer maintenance. *Australian Journal of Educational Technology*, 9 (2), 130-143. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet9/foxon.html>.

TRANSFER PARTNERSHIP²



² Broad, M., & Newstrom, J. (1992). *Transfer of training: Action-packed strategies to ensure high payoff from training investments*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

TRANSFER STRATEGIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND TRAINEES³

Before Professional Development Activities Transfer Strategies

- Build transfer into performance standards.
- Administrators and staff collaboratively complete needs assessment to identify opportunities for growth.
- Use gaps in knowledge and competency as a basis for selecting professional development opportunities.
- Develop a contract for learning and applying new skills and knowledge with staff.
- Take advantage of opportunities to learn more about specific training sessions prior to sending staff.
- Review instructional content, outcomes, materials and WII-FM for the program.
- Involve both administrators and staff in the design of professional development activities by helping to develop real-life work-related scenarios/examples, etc.
- Brief staff on the importance of the professional development activities including training and course objectives, content, process and application to the job and the established link between practices promoted and evidence of effectiveness.
- Clarify program expectations of the staff member after the professional development activities.
- Determine overall outcomes to be achieved through the professional development activity including ultimate impact on children, families and the program.
- Use pre-training materials such as background reading, self-assessment exercises, pre-training projects, etc., to help staff get ready for training and think about ways they might use the training back at the workplace.
- Discuss how the administrators or supervisor will help staff apply new knowledge/skills after returning from training.
- Offer rewards, special acknowledgments and promotional preference to trainees who demonstrate new behaviors.
- Allow staff to participate in professional development activities together.
- Provide a positive learning environment (timing, location, and facilities).
- Plan to participate in professional development activities if at all possible.

During Professional Development Activities Transfer Strategies

- Prevent interruptions of the process or event.
- Support the transfer of work assignments to others.
- Communicate support for the activity.
- Monitor attendance and attention to the professional development activity.
- Recognize staff participation.
- Point out conditions under which a specific skill can be applied back at the job.
- Participate in transfer action planning.
- Plan assessment of transfer of new skills to the job.

Following Professional Development Activities Transfer Strategies

³ Source: Kentucky Training into Practice Project, Director's Seminar, 2003

- Plan for staff reentry after an event or activity
- Debrief staff.
- Set mutual expectations for improvements.
- Physically and psychologically support transfer.
- Provide opportunities to practice new skills.
- Provide supports for measuring behavior change and impact
- Reduce job pressures initially.
- Provide a reality check.
- Compare action plan with progress
- Have staff participate in transfer-related decisions.
- Give positive reinforcement, encouragement and rewards.
- Publicize successes.
- Give promotional preferences.
- Provide role models.
- Schedule staff briefings for co-workers.
- Arrange practice (refresher) sessions.
- Provide and support the use of job aids.
- Provide coaching and mentoring.
- Provide positive, constructive feedback.
- Provide a safe environment and enough time for practicing new skills.
- Provide resources needed for application of new knowledge/skills.

SAMPLE AFTER TRAINING ACTION PLAN

1. Two transfer strategies I plan to incorporate into my work environment are:
 -
 -

2. The individual steps I will need to take to use these strategies as well as any obstacles I may face and resources I might need include:

Individual Steps	Potential Obstacles & Ways To Overcome	Resources & Assistance Needed

I am committed to achieving my goals by _____ (date).
 I will contact a buddy to encourage and assist them in accomplishing these goals.

Signature: _____ Current Date: _____

EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES⁴

In planning professional development to improve student learning the order of these levels must be reversed. You must plan backward starting where you want to end and then working back. - Gusky

The purpose of a professional development evaluation is to measure and describe outcomes at a scheduled point in time. There are four critical levels of evaluation

Reactions

- Can collect immediately following the professional development activity
- Determine what you want to find out
 - ✓ Perceived usefulness of what was learned
 - ✓ Physical environment
 - ✓ Participant materials
 - ✓ Learning aids
 - ✓ Learning activities
 - ✓ Trainer/Instructor competency
 - ✓ Learning environment
 - ✓ Content
 - ✓ Does it meet the stated outcomes?
 - ✓ Is it as efficient as possible?
 - ✓ Is it as engaging as possible?

Learning

- ✓ Can collect immediately following the professional development event
- ✓ Measure the learning so that quantitative results can be determined
- ✓ Use a before-and-after approach so that learning can be related to the program
- ✓ Compare knowledge to the written learner outcomes for the learner as measures of learning
- ✓ Where possible, use a control group (e.g., not receiving training) to compare with the experimental group that participates in the professional development opportunity

Behavior Change

- Measures learner s use of new knowledge and skills
- To what extent has the professional development activity actually resulted in the new behaviors
- Have the new skills been translated into behaviors on the job
- Isolate and focus on the variables that professional development has control over, not variables such as support in the workplace, reward, supervision, etc.
- Conduct a systematic appraisal of on-the-job performance on a before-and-after basis

⁴ Gusky, T. R. (2002) Does it make a difference? Evaluating professional development. *Educational Review*, vol. 59, no. 6, pp. 45-51, March; Kirkpatrick, D. (2000). Techniques for evaluation training programs. In John A. Woods and James W. Cortada (Eds.). *The 2000 ASTD training and performance yearbook*, pp. 3-10, New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Conduct a post appraisal three months or more after the professional development activity
- ✓ To change job behavior, you must have the following:
 - ✓ Desire to improve
 - ✓ Recognize weaknesses
 - ✓ Work in a permissive environment
 - ✓ Have help from someone who is interested and skilled
 - ✓ Have an opportunity to try out new ideas

Results

- ✓ What is the impact of the professional development activity on organizational objectives?
- ✓ Does the behavior change make a difference in the children's learning outcomes? Into family outcomes?
 - ✓ Match professional development to child outcomes, standards and assessment processes.